Visual Rhetoric, Iconography
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Rediscovering the Visual in Rhetorical Tradition: Persuasion as Visionary in Suasory Discourse

The history of culture is in part the story of a protracted struggle for dominance between pictorial and linguistic signs [...] Among the most interesting and complex versions of this struggle is what might be called the relationship of subversion, in which language or imagery looks into its own heart and finds lurking there its opposite number.

(Mitchell 1986: 43)

Given the definition of imagery and language as an array of relationships, it might be easy to conclude that language and imagery are essentially the same.

(Fleckenstein 2002: 13)

1. Introduction

In recent years the struggle Mitchell points to has been tamed and transformed into a common academic interest blooming in accordance with the ubiquity of visual information in mediatized human communication. “The growth of scholarly interest in visuality marks a cultural reality: that images have become a predominant means of transmitting information in the 20th century and may be even more so in the 21st,” Scott Heller emphasizes (1996: A8). Thus, there seems to be no more need to fiercely fight for the ‘rights’ of the pictorial in human cognition and communication. Without risking suspicion from academia, one can easily state that the visual plays a dominant role in sensing-cognizing the world, in constructing and concerting meanings, in human coexistence and communication. The prevalence of images has apparently won over the scepticism of science towards the non-verbal and thus we can claim that no thinking, learning and speaking is conceivable without the pictorial-visual taken into account.

Nevertheless, rhetoric, a faculty that has long been identified as organically verbal still owes a lot to the rediscovery of the visual. Although a noticeable paradigm of visual rhetoric (Helmer–Hill 2004) has been built upon the assumption
that the lexicon of rhetoric is applicable to the pictorial, one may still doubt if this is the main visual potential the discipline of persuasive speech has. Rhetoric is at hand when the source of persuasion in pictures (structure, visual proofs, visual tropes) is to be explained; however, discussions of the visual within the rhetorical, and the visual drive of rhetorical force, stay disperse and remain non-mainstream.

The present chapter is one that endeavours to highlight rhetoric as visual (and not visual as rhetorical). Sixth in a line of discussing the visual capacity of rhetorical communication this paper focuses on persuasion as visionary in suasory discourse. Debated as it is, persuasion is at the heart of rhetorical practice. Though it has been “one of the great continuing mysteries of rhetoric and related discourses” (O’Keefe 2001: 575), we can state that persuasion manifests the capacity of communication to attract attention, move minds, evoke emotions, alter attitudes, facilitate actions, transform people and change situations. Its power has widely been attributed to either the rational (logos) or the emotional (passions) proofs. This misleading duality has led to the political suspicion toward and academic dismay of the non-argumentative rhetorical speech and the overestimation of cognitive thinking and speaking.

With a well-supported audacity we shall claim that behind rhetorical persuasion there is a non-abstract, sensual communicative existence to which visual is the source of knowledge, experience and expression. Founded in the culture of orality, rhetoric has an original connection to seeing. Rhetoric and the rhetorical style is persuasive because of its visionary – making audiences to see, to feel, to enact – potential that is rooted in the speaker’s visual-sensual encounter with the world.

As the extensive analysis of rhetorical treatises of two millennia cannot be aimed at here, I limit myself to bring up some of the core ideas and terms justifying this claim. The quest for the visual in rhetorical persuasion will be pursued without chronological rigour – rather, with an eagerness to identify intellectual nods in classical and modern rhetorical tradition that can further center critical contemplations.

As part of a series dedicated to the topic, this present paper strives to highlight relevant elements of the rhetorical system after already having dwelt on ars memorativa (the semi-conventional, picture- and space-based system of remembering texts), phantasia (the inner sense of the speaker and the listener, that entails imagination, cogitation and memory), ingenium (the creative force in meeting, cognizing and expressing the world), enargeia (the energizing force that guide orators to create vivid descriptions and to make their audiences to picture what is said in order to persuade), ekphrasis (the rhetorical description that unfolds
before the audience’s eyes) and acumen (the sharpness in speech that represents and triggers sensual and cognitive discovery). Following the path into the treasury of visual tools in the garden of rhetoric, the function of wonder (thaumazein), the connection between the verbal and visual and between the visionary and the persuasive-charismatic will be investigated. Nota bene, this path sometimes leads us to the margins of rhetorical tradition, a place where logic is replaced with energy, the concrete is preferred over the abstract, and the verbal blends with the visual. It is a place where great authors and grand efforts (like Vico or Condillac) are wasted because of the domineering canon. This is what can make this quest even more invigorating, and hopefully, inspiring.

2. Honeycomb

Rhetoric, in the most general sense, can be regarded as a form of mental or emotional energy imparted to a communication to affect a situation in the interest of the speaker. […] So understood, rhetoric is a feature of all human communication […]. Even when thought of as the theory and practice of public address in a literate society rhetoric is not solely a western phenomenon. The earliest known rhetorical handbook is The Instructions of Ptahhotep, composed by an Egyptian official sometime before 2000 b.c.e.; it gives advice about how to speak and when to keep silent if brought before a judge or ruler. Some of what is said resembles precepts in the Old Testament, as in Psalm 16: “Pleasant speech increases persuasiveness […] Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body” (Kennedy 2007: 7).

Rhetorical language is bound to times, places and personalities; it is situational and subjective.

Working with images and metaphors, rhetoric “make[s] manifest,” revealing relationships through sudden and ungrounded insight into the data, issues, and questions philosophy and science approach rationally. It supplies the inventive capacity rational language lacks, the “firsts” without which rational language cannot get under way. Rhetorical language therefore always has a priority “and provides that which deduction can never discover” (Grassi 2001: 97) – as Crusius writes (Crusius 2001: xiv). Where does this non-deductive sweetness and primacy of words stem? Explanations of natural sign-relations and imitation – suggesting that the word imitates (does not represent or describe) the world – offer an answer to this question, but not to the practice and the influence of the rhetor. How are the rhetorical attitudes, sensitivities and influences operated in order to create the non-abstract sensual experience, ‘amazement’, in order to move the audience? The key to this may be the ‘wonder’ gained by experience and through speech.
3. The Amazing

By nature, all men long to know. An indication is their delight in senses. For these, quite apart from their utility, are intrinsically delightful and that through the eye more than the others. For it is not only with a view to action but also when we have no intention to do anything that we choose, so to speak, sight rather than all the others. And the reason for this is that sight is the sense that especially produces cognition in us and reveals many distinguishing features of things (The Metaphysics, 980a)

– as Aristotle posits in the famous introductory lines of The Metaphysics (980a). In her effort to base the sources of non-cognitive thinking, Hannah Arendt (1981: 58) corrects the first English sentence in the paragraph saying that literally translated it would rather read: “All men desire to see and to have seen”. Knowledge then emerges from seeing, from experiencing the world as it is given to the senses.

There is then an immediacy of seeing and being shocked by the world, a sublime trauma, a deep fascination that brings truth with itself. This truth is gained from experience from the world commonly inhabited, from common sense. It may not be irrefutable but is definitely speakable. This is the truth that stands at the roots of philosophy, of rhetorical persuasion and this is the truth gifted through thaumazein, wondering. Wonder is the initial shock of seeing something not yet revealed. It is the shock that arises tension and awakens attention; it is what marks the human encounter with the world. Grassi considers wonder of primary importance to the essence of philosophy and gives a brief explanation of how thauma (wonder) integrates seeing and learning:

The grammarian and lexicographer Hesychius gives in his lexicon the following synonyms for thauma: ekplexis (shock); xenisma (estrangement); and for thaumazein: theasthai (to look) and manthanein (to learn, to understand). […] The etymological connection established both in antiquity and in modern times between thaumazo and theaomai points to the area in which the interpretation of the term thaumazein is to be looked for: on the one hand in ‘seeing’, and on the other in the domain of ‘immediacy’, which establishes the relationship between ‘wonder’ and ‘emerging vision’, already present in the prephilosophical use of the term thaumazein. […] Questions arise only when something demands clarification, because uncertainty would be intolerable. In other words, we must find ourselves in the realm of an originary tension for our ‘at-tention’ to be awakened. That is why the estrangement referred to by Hesychius in his lexicon is related to shock (Grassi 1994: 5–6).

The wondrous emerges from the connection of events that are not in causal relation, but reveal an inherent, necessary affiliation. It occurs within the system of nature, and brings a surprising consequence with itself. The apparent coincidence, the correlation, the connection that is expressed in the thauma proves itself to be inevitable for the receiver. Mere chance which has no connection with preliminary
and upcoming events is not wondrous; it has only a short-term effect of surprising us. True *thaumaston* rather puts us off our everyday experiences and thus awakens emotions. Surprise is swept off by these emotions and we come to the conclusion that ‘this must be the way it is’ (Simon 1999; Poulakos–Nathan 2012). Arendt comments:

In other words, what sets men wondering is something familiar and yet normally invisible, and something men are forced to admire […]. The wonder that is the starting point of thinking is neither puzzlement, nor surprise, nor perplexity; it is an admiring wonder. What we marvel at is confirmed and affirmed by admiration which breaks out into speech […]. In short wonder has led to thinking in words; the experience of wonder at the invisible manifest in the appearances has been appropriated by speech, which at the same time is strong enough to dispel the errors and illusions that our organs for the visible, eyes and ears, are subject to unless thinking comes to their help (Arendt 1981: 143–144).

Wonder sets up a cognitive chain that brings pleasure, passion and learning with it. Aristotle specifies the role of wonder among the aims of genres of speech in his *Rhetoric*.

And to learn and to admire are usually pleasurable; for in admiration there is desire, so the admirable is desirable, and in learning there is the achievement of what is in accordance with nature. […] Since to learn and to admire is pleasurable, other things also are necessarily pleasurable, such as, for example, a work of imitation, as in painting and sculpture and poetry, and anything that is well imitated, even if the object of imitation is not in itself pleasant; for the pleasure [of art] does not consist in the object portrayed; rather there is a [pleasurable] reasoning [in the mind of the spectator] that “this” is “that,” so one learns what is involved [in artistic representation] (On Rhetoric, 1371b).

The immediacy of wonder, its energizing (epistemological) force to discover the unrevealed and the urge to speak about it is what makes rhetorical speech “touching,” “moving” and memorable. The classical orator had to have a general competency to apply the accumulated wisdom of the common culture to the particular case to move his hearers’ minds and engage their passions (Halloran 1994: 331–332). The speaker acted in a known world where common sense prevailed over specialized knowledge and where the influence of the speech stemmed not from the actual newness of the information but from the act and expression of wonder with which a new connection between parts of the known could be shown.

*Thauma* and admiration, shock and discovery, fascination and learning have not failed to serve as the way the speaker can create a situational climate for a persuasive speech. That is, a rhetorical act, which – prior to rational argumentation – utilizes and displays the meeting of the verbal and the visual.
4. Visual and Verbal

We might be able to disconnect image from language. We do this every night in our dreams. However, without language, we cannot do anything with that image except experience it. Imagery lives in the moment and ties us to that moment. To be tugged out of that moment, to be known as anything other than life as it is lived, we need language. Similarly, the process of naming, the meaningfulness of language, is predicated on the existence of imagery. Language that is disconnected from imagery loses its meaning (Fleckenstein 2004: 15).

The verbal and the visual thus are bound in meaningful expression, in rhetorical zooming on the situational and cultural at the same time. They are in kinship: inseparable and inevitable to invigorate the communicative situation. Nevertheless, there is a significant difference between language pairing or framing, recreating or governing the pictorial.

For the classical and renaissance-humanist period, textual vividness and verbal persuasion was embedded into the concerted dynamics of phantasia (imagination) and memory. Francis Bacon conceived of rhetoric as dependent on imagery and reassured that images are more memorable than words. For him, rhetoric’s responsibility was to second the judgments of the reasoning faculty by working on the imagination. If rhetoric is capable of seconding good and true judgment, then it cannot all be misrepresentative. A part of rhetoric’s power, and indeed purpose, says Bacon, is to make the remote goods and natures that pure reason perceives appear to the auditor less distant, and thus it tries to overcome the more short sighted affections. Rhetoric, when supporting reason, knocks at the doors of the imagination […] (Derrin 2013: 9).

Bacon defined rhetoric as “subservient to the imagination as Logic is to the understanding; and the Duty and Office of Rhetoric, if it be deeply looked into, is no other than to apply and recommend the dictates of reason to imagination in order to excite the appetite and will” (The Advancement of Learning Book IV, XVIII. 2.).

From the elements of elocution imitation and description are the best to demonstrate how humanist rhetorical practice translated the visual into the verbal. Imitation was the method with which visions would be encapsulated and imagination could be triggered within the schemata of description. Rhetorical descriptions intertwined the visual and the verbal just as it is elaborated by Henry Peacham’s vivid paragraph (1593/1954):

Descriptio is a generall name of many and sundry kindes of descriptions, and a description is when the Orator by a diligent gatherin together of circumstances, and by a fit and naturall application of them, doth expresse and set forth a thing so plainly and lively, that it seemeth rather painted in tables, then declared with words, and the mind of the hearer
therby so drawen to an earnest and stedfast contemplation of the thing described, that he rather thinketh he seeth it then heareth it.

Growing interest in textual description inspired by Pseudo Longinus’ *On the Sublime* (around 100 AD) marked French and English bellestric rhetoric of the 18th century. Authors of the age favoured description as an important mode to imitate and capture the visible. Étienne Bonnot, Abbe de Condillac as a pedagogue, philosopher and rhetorician in his *L'art d'écrire* (1775, Of the Art of Writing, see the compilation of his Philosophical Writings 1982, 1987)

explained the differences between the visual and verbal in this way: The visual world is holistic and is seen instantaneously as a picture. Verbal language is linear, occurring sequentially in units over time. Language decomposes holistic reality, allowing writers to convey what is really seen out there in the world into the mind, where we can once again recompose it to represent the holistic world. It also analyzes that reality by breaking it into bits. For Condillac and others in French belles lettres, the most expressive text is one that tries to re-create this all at once first – this powerful tableau effect of prelinguistic, visual thought. [...] Thus, the keys to the later process of translation from visual imagery to written text were memory and imagination, closely linked (Hobbs 2002a: 38–39, see also Hobbs 2002b: 111).

For the late humanist of the 18th century, Gianbattista Vico – who named Bacon as his main influence – speaking, language, history and social systems all started with the immediate and emotional experiencing of the world, that is, wonder which involved vision (and the senses). Human experience was apprehended by the power of imagination. Ingenium, ingenuity (Vico 1982: 69–70), the basic process to see and connect experiences – the capacity to invent, perceive relevant similarities, to make parts fit into the whole – was taught in the study of rhetoric. Thus language from its inception was metaphorical and imagistic and rhetoric as a mode of speech, primordial (Vico 1711–1741/1996; Grassi 1994).

In the later era of modernity, however, language seemingly trapped the visual: imagery could gain legitimacy only through language-based frames. Principles of language were and are to be applied to visual operations that are, by their nature, different from the verbal. This is one of the reasons why the visual in rhetoric has been defined as an expressive feature instead of a generative force. Overarching studies of tropes and figures (neo-rhetoric, Dubois et al.: *Rhétorique générale*, 1970/1981, see also Genette 1982) have limited and categorized the visual into style-formats and excluded it from ways of serious persuasion. The sharp distinction between the emotional and the rational eliminated the archaic storming of the visual and verbal and cut off sensual appeals from the branch of argumentative ones. Persuasive speech has been conceived of in terms of attitude, source, message, receiver and context factors, elaboration (O’Keefe 2002). Imagery as a...
persuasive force was almost exclusively paired with the operations of metaphor and the notions of ‘visionary speech’ has been reserved for cases to which the terminology of persuasion could not be applied.

5. Visionary and Persuasive

What one may miss from contemporary rhetorical theory she will easily find in leadership studies where studies that succeed to identify applicable tools and ways to the formation of great, charismatic leaders are of true significance. For the sake of the present discussion charisma of the leader (Weber 1947; Simonton 1988) can be considered as a complex of abilities (and a joint perception) that captivates and moves receivers to act in accordance with a vision the speaker holds.

House and Shamir (1993) examined eight theories of charismatic, visionary, and transformational leadership in order to clarify an overarching theory of charisma. Only one of 11 behavioural dimensions was represented in all eight theories: visionary behaviour, that is, the articulation of “an ideological goal […], that emphasizes fundamental values such as beauty, order, honesty, dignity, and human rights” (House–Shamir 1993: 97; Emrich et al. 2001: 527). In terms of visual and visionary rhetoric this articulation is what turns out to be decisive. Visionary rhetoric is a discourse aimed to challenge the future and generate change persuasively. With its frame (expectations, norms, knowledge)-breaking and frame-realigning methods, visionary speeches paint the world and the future with words with lush, imagery-laden language. Persuasive as they are, they require elaboration; that elaboration occurs in terms of mental simulation of the situation being described by the content (Fauconnier 1994; Coulson–Oakley 2006).

Vision content research has investigated the effects of imagery-based versus concept-based contents. Assumptions have held that image-based (concrete, emotional) content tends to evoke emotional, while concept-based content tends to evoke cognitive (hot or cold systems, see Metcalfe–Mischel 1999) responses from receivers respectively […]. Researches on the relation between charismatic leadership and imagistic speech have mostly framed their methods on the basis of either Martindale’s Regressive Imagery Dictionary (1975), a content analysis coding scheme designed to measure primordial (associative, concrete) versus conceptual thinking (abstract, logical), or the Paivio, Yuille, Madigan noun pool (1968) or the Toronto Word Pool. All of these databases entail counts, lists and item value ratings that exhibit imagery- versus concept- and the concrete- versus abstract-based words. According to Emrich et al. (2001: 530) “the essential difference between these two types of words resides in the extent to which each arouses a sensory experience in the minds of listeners. Image-based words more easily
evoke sensory experiences, whereas concept-based words appeal more strongly to listeners’ logical interpretations”.

The findings of studies investigating the correlation between successful, charismatic (presidential) leadership and the use of imagery (for example ‘I have a dream’ instead ‘I have an idea’) have consistently demonstrated that there is a significant positive relationship between the skillful use of imagery and leaders’ ability to persuade people to accept and enact their visions, to be perceived and rated charismatic (Maranell 1970; Murray–Blessing 1994; Emrich et al. 2001; Naidoo–Lord 2008). Moreover, case studies (Willner 1984) and qualitative research that tested the effect of metaphor on presidential/leader charisma (Mio–Riggio–Levin–Reese 2005) further justified that speeches by leaders perceived as charismatic have a higher amount of metaphor density as opposed to non-charismatic ones. Consequently, charismatic leaders use metaphors as a rhetorical tool to inspire and motivate followers (Shamir 1995; Mio–Riggio–Levin–Reese 2005). These findings support the research of metaphors and metaphorical messages as persuasive tools. As metaphorical thinking may engage substantial image-based processes (Zaltman–Coulter 1995) metaphors can constitute intense (Hamilton–Stewart 1993) or vivid (Nisbett–Ross 1980) language which can arouse greater effect on the audience and lead to more persuasion (Siltanen 1981). Metaphorical messages are likely to produce greater attitude changes relative to their literal counterparts (Sopory–Dillard 2012).

As Emrich et al. assumed (2001: 529) “leaders who use words that evoke pictures, sounds, smells, tastes, and other sensations tap more directly into followers’ life experiences than do leaders who use words that appeal solely to followers’ intellects. By engaging followers’ senses, not only their minds, leaders make their messages more immediate, real, and appealing to followers”. The usage of image-based rhetoric results in a vivid performance which has the capacity to grasp listeners’ attention, facilitate their comprehension, evoke emotions and incite elaboration and motivate their memory.

Rhetoric that is crafted to be image-based, image-evoking, concrete is easier to process, to relate to and to interpret emotionally (Miller–Marks 1997) and to elaborate than its non-imagery counterpart. Vivid speakers seem and sound more active and dynamic and their audiences feel more inclined to judge them as competent and visionary.

As for stimulating memory processes: imagery produces superior memory for verbal material (Kieras 1978; Paivio 1986).

When a follower hears, comprehends, and is motivated to store in memory a leader’s message, an image-based message will be stored in more “places” and in richer detail than a comparable concept-based message. Therefore, when it is time to act, followers will have
greater success retrieving a leader’s image-based than a concept-based message and will have on hand a richer, more detailed and, hence, potentially more instructive guide for action (Emrich et al. 2001: 533).

In short, research findings confirmed that messages of leaders/speakers are more influential when they are high, rather than low, in imagery; the speaker’s ability to convey images in words plays a key role in visionary behaviour and that effects of imagery in speech positively correlates with persuasive communication and the perceptions of speakers as charismatic.

6. Epilogue in Lieu of Conclusions

The initial shock of experiencing what is unrevealed in the world, co-existence of the verbal and visual in thinking and speaking, the imitation of vision in words, and visionary oratory all belong to the tradition of rhetoric. However, the study of textual products and logical procedures has apparently overcome the consideration of visual processes in rhetorical speeches, leaving the faculty and its pedagogy without two of its most discerning characteristics: visual thinking and the sensualizing of language. Thauma, phantasia, ingenium, enargeia, charisma – these constitute the vocabulary of visionary rhetoric, a mode of speech the usage of which could re-penetrate contemporary rhetorical theory – the lexicon of structure, logic, argumentation, style – in order to see clearer the function and influence of vision and imagery in persuasive communication. Sparkling ideas of theoretical forerunners and the strong body of research evidence support any scholarly ambitions which aim to dive for more visual in the rhetorical. The present chapter meant to be a humble contribution to further quests of the brave ones.

References


Rediscovering the Visual in Rhetorical Tradition


The September 17th, 1951, issue of *Time* magazine featured a peculiar and striking image over a two-page spread – a map of the sprawling Soviet Union. The map reveals a network of red circles, shaded areas, and pink hammer-and-sickle icons dotted all over the topography of a stark gray and white Soviet landscape, each indicating the location of “Gulag” system prison camps. The accompanying text in *Time* tells a story of the map’s provocation of an incident between the U.S. and the Soviet Union at the 1951 San Francisco conference to inaugurate a Japanese peace treaty. Here the “Gulag–Slavery, Inc.” map became a cartographic weapon when Missouri’s Congressman O.K. Armstrong walked up to Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrei Gromyko, and asked him if he wanted to see a map of Russia. “I’d be delighted,” said Gromyko. Unfolding the map, Armstrong helpfully explained: “It happens to contain an accurate portrayal of every slave labor camp in the Soviet Union”. Gromyko blinked at the map, mumbled “No comment,” and handed it to an aide who tossed it into the aisle. Indeed, below the imposing map are before/after-style photos of the “incident” – on the left, we see Republican Rep. Armstrong unfolding the map before a sitting Gromyko; on the right, we see a stone-faced Gromyko staring ahead, as the map sits beside him on the floor of the conference room (News in Pictures 1951: 28–29).

Of course, the Armstrong-Gromyko exchange can be added to a long list of the minor anecdotes in the history of chilly, Cold War diplomatic relations. Yet, a deeper exploration of this map reveals a compelling case about both the strategic and ideological functions of mapping. Before the map became a kind of diplomatic prank in the hands of Congressman Armstrong, it began as a collaboration in a global labor research project between the AFL-CIO and the United Nations Economic and Social Council, authored by a Russian emigrant ghostwriting journalist, underwritten by the CIA, and publicized internationally by The Voice of America radio. The many uses and appropriations of the piece has led to its citation as “one of the most widely circulated pieces of anti-Communist literature” (Young 1958: 601).

In this era, maps were constantly appropriated, debated, revised, and re-appropriated. Cold War maps lived; they were active and malleable documents. Such a seemingly, bi-polar, universal, and fixed conflict as the Cold War required immense work to maintain an image of fixity. Maps, thus, had to continually
reproduce and maintain the essential artifice of the conflict. Bruno Latour has written of the concept of “immutable mobiles,” in which a visual image of scientific data is frequently seen as a fixed and finished product, hence immutable, yet at the same time an image that is constantly moving and reproducible for a multitude of contexts (Latour 1990: 26). A map has an age-old power, then: to appear as an unimpeachable representation of the world, while its easy usability makes for a remarkable flexibility in what it can offer its users (Raffestin 2000: 9). The hardened lines between the U.S. and the Soviet Union (and by extension America’s allies and satellite adversaries in its so-called “spheres of influence” across the globe) may appear immovable and essential on Cold War maps; however, the hardening of these lines only comes from the maps’ ability to draw and be drawn into the active construction of the Cold War.

These active constructions can be traced through a specific, critical approach to analyzing cartography. A map possesses what I would call a “rhetorical life”. In other words, a map has a particular lifespan in which it exists as a communicative practice, as it works through the intersections of public and private spaces, institutional and popular contexts, and artistic and scientific modes of collection, synthesis, and expression. By noting the concept of a rhetorical life, though, I am not concerned with some kind of defined origin point or “end of life” death moment for a map. Such points are always debatable and shifting, depending upon context – and therein lies the point: a map is never a finished product (Hartnett 1998: 287–288). Rather, the notion of a map’s “rhetorical life” merely points to how a map reflects and shapes its multitude of contexts, as it lives and functions as a usable, material document (see also Certeau 1984: 121). Finding the connections, say, between the production techniques of a map, and the ways in which that map is re-used and re-copied allows us to keep the business of cartography properly historicized and dynamic across wide expanses of time (Pickles 1992: 219–220).

Cara Finnegan has written of the “eventfulness” of visual images, specifically photographs, wherein the meaning-making of an image stems from the contexts of its production, the details of its composition, and the movement of that image through the complex contexts of its immediate reproduction, its circulation, and in the variety of responses from audiences (Finnegan 2010: 251). For the lives of Cold War maps, we can similarly trace the residues of a map as it moves through the culture, and how it assumes a diversity of particular roles for its users.

The concept of a rhetorical life emphasizes the engagement of a map with its immediate context, but also with other Cold War artifacts. Denis Wood and John Fels have argued that the map continually advertises itself to be taken authoritatively, and that advertisement takes the form of a paramap. The paramap is a
construction that goes beyond the map itself and includes all of “the verbal and other productions that surround and extend” a map’s presentation (dedications, inscriptions, epigraphs, prefaces, notes, illustrations) (Wood–Fels 2008: 8–9). In addition, the paramap includes all of the elements not just appended to the map, but circulating in the social space around the map (advertisements for the map, reviews, production information); for Wood and Fels, “ultimately it is the interaction between map and paramap that propels the map into action” (Wood–Fels 2008: xvi). What this approach seeks to prove is that a map is never just a map, but a confluence of social forces that constrains a culture’s sense of its relationship to, and in, the world. Maps are central, then, to a concept prevalent amongst geographers and historians, of a “geographic imagination” where cultures obtain and circulate geographic knowledge.¹

The idea of the paramap can extend to how mapping is described and accounted for by its practitioners and circulators. Shawn Parry-Giles has emphasized the need to examine not only the public discourses of the Cold War, but also the need to evaluate and weigh the covert actions and motives of its powerful actors (Parry-Giles 2002: 183–186). How these agents, often behind-the-scenes, actually talk about and conceive of their roles and their messages reveal the very fluidity and the constructed nature of the Cold War, as well as what kinds of collaborations and contestations brought certain ideologies forward while relegating others to the background. Map producers and users wrote and spoke often about the role of space and how geopolitics positioned the United States in particular ways, and thus that “cartographic talk” is as important as the maps they accompanied. While the finished displays of Cold War maps often rested upon an aura of “truth” and objective detachment so common to scientific work of the era, the producers and users of maps showed a remarkable understanding of how maps could be molded to create very specific visions and advance complex arguments (Harley 2001: 37; Pickles 1992: 219).

This kind of movement of a map through Cold War culture, as well as the ways in which cartography is contested and debated by its users, is borne out through examples like “Gulag–Slavery, Inc.” Across an enlarged Russian Caucasus was a rash of red dots indicting what Soviet officials were denying in international media. This AFL map is certainly important for how its visual codes and symbols politicize the space of the Soviet Union as a landscape of secrecy and oppression;

¹ Derek Gregory has provided a full theoretical treatment of this “geographic imagination” concept (Gregory 1994). Another rich historical application of these notions can be found in Schulten 2001.
yet, adding to the map’s display on the page is its provenance and its remarkable life as an active, evidentiary weapon. The Gulag map was a collaboration between popular journalists, the State Department, and an AFL looking to strengthen its anti-communist credentials. And the map arrived in a political culture rife with Holocaust memory and visuality as well as with the charged discourse of “slavery” against ideological foes. Lawmakers quickly adopted the map as an icon for hardline anti-communism, American teachers used the map to teach current affairs in classrooms, overseas labor unions circulated the map to their “brothers” to protest working conditions, and official Soviet reaction to the map (in charged diplomatic exchanges and even in seizures of it on the streets of Eastern Europe) brought out the hostility against Western propaganda.

Other examples from the period offer intertextual support to the “life” of the Gulag map. Also in 1951, the American Geographical Society, through sponsorships from Army and Navy research grants as well as major pharmaceutical companies, embarked ambitiously on a project to map current knowledge of diseases and health epidemics such as polio, malaria, yellow fever, even starvation. The resulting *Atlas of Disease* produced an influential series of innovative, detailed maps between 1950 and 1955 that showed a world filled with parasitical invaders. Particularly during a tumultuous period of decolonization, the *Atlas of Disease* visualized the so-called “three worlds” that theorists and practitioners of development and modernization were using to “bring up” the “diseased” sub-equatorial nations. But, again, more than mere visualization, the lives of the *Atlas of Disease* maps showed the active movement of cartography into Cold War spaces: used by corporations such as Pfizer to develop international markets where its drugs could yield the best profits, brought into the Army to study the viral encephalitis that U.S. troops in Korea were suffering from, re-drawn in Congress to support funding and expansion of the Mutual Security Act, and used to study where “advisers” could safely tread in Vietnam.

Despite their different aims, the Gulag map and the *Atlas of Disease* maps are united in the ways they fuse institutional and popular discourses together, and in the ways that their eventful rhetorical lives made them usable, material documents. Both also intersect with the immensity of Cold War state power in the United States as they reify the importance of spatial perception in defining American interests vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and the so-called rest of the world.

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2 These materials are collected in the Jacques May Papers Collection and the American Geographical Society Medical Geography Archives at the American Geographical Society Library (AGSL), University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.
The Gulag map served to edify the stark lines of the East/West dichotomies of the early post-World War II era, while the *Atlas of Disease* foreshadows the ways in which new North/South dichotomies would come to constrain the decolonizing Cold War landscape and America’s increasingly intervening hand. Such rhetorical lives even show the kind of important conversations that maps, in a sense, shared with other maps. At one point, for example, the producers of the *Atlas of Disease* consulted with the leaders of the American Federation of Labor and their Gulag map data to pinpoint where the Soviet government was holding its prisoners, in order to plan their own map of human starvation. Even small connections like these create a tangible sense of a wide cartographic scope that encompassed the Cold War and the compelling ways that American officials and other prominent institutions were dependent on particular cartographic perceptions of the world.

Cases like these affirm that cartography, and by extension, the production of Cold War space, was above all, a *practice*. The “production of space” is often a term that is invoked vaguely—an idea easier to theorize about in the abstract than it is to see in everyday interaction. And yet, as geographer Jouni Hakli notes, “cartography offers a productive momentum to political practices”; in other words, the relevance of maps is based on the “immutability in the relationships that maps establish between cartographic representation and the world of practice within which they emerge” (Hakli 2009: 28).

Maps like the Gulag project, for instance, reveal what geographer Trevor Barnes and others have called the “mangle” of collaborations and competitions between the foreign policy institutions of the executive branch of the U.S. government, the defense apparatuses of the armed forces, private and independent organizations such as the AFL, the popular journalism at outlets such as *Time*, and even supranational powers like the United Nations (Barnes 2008: 7). Common amongst these groups was the impulse to work out the spatial parameters of what exactly the Cold War was, and how it should be, or should have been, fought. And while the rhetorical presidencies of central figures such as Truman and Eisenhower remain vital to Cold War study, as does the critique of its famed architects like George Kennan and Walt Rostow, one of the best ways to trace Cold War space is to follow its mid-level bureaucrats, practitioners, and policymakers who were actively writing world space and circulating geographic visions (this approach is modeled in Farish 2010).

3 Specifically, this information is archivally drawn from: Letter From A. Larkin to Jacques May, 22 June 1953, Folder 1: Plates 8 and 9, Correspondence 1952–54, Box 3, Series 1: Professional Records, 1943–1960, Jacques May Papers, AGSL.
To take Bruno LaTour too far, though, is to see maps as actually immutable; rather, the perception of maps as immutable is what powers cartography. Maps are fundamentally insecure.

Rob Kitchin and Martin Dodge express that a map is:

[...] brought into the world and made to do work through practices such as recognizing, interpreting, translating, communicating, and so on. It does not re-present the world or make the world (by shaping how we think about the world); it is a co-constitutive production between inscription, individual and world; a production that is constantly in motion (Kitchin–Dodge 2007: 335).

Maps, then are “always mapping,” attempting to appear representative, and this process is what makes maps so dynamic in Cold War culture (Kitchin–Dodge 2007: 337).

Thus, from the origins of particular Cold War maps and their techniques of production and data management into their appropriated usages and diverse interpretations by sometimes competing and sometimes collaborating Cold War institutions and audiences – the story of how the U.S. mapped itself and the world in the second half of the twentieth century is a vital story about the synthesis, the framing, and above all, the practice and the movement of America’s international power. For geographers Denis Wood and John Fels, to map is to claim that “this is there” – and America required images of strength and commitment in maps to legitimize its self-interest as commensurate with the interests of the rest of the world, and for those images to have productive (and inevitably contentious) lifespans across a wide array of contexts (Wood–Fels 2008: xvi).

References


1. Opening Remarks. Aims of the Research

“The history of childhood” refers to a discipline, including Renaissance views on children, children’s lives, and child-rearing practices, as well as their environments and surroundings changing over time (from past to present). Paintings and other visual documents from this time could help us interpret childhood and the world of children from their perspective. This article will introduce the aims of a study and doctoral thesis, and review the possible iconographical, semiotic, visual anthropologic and visual sociological picture analysis methods of pedagogical research. The goal of the thesis is to describe how the conceptions of childhood changed in a specific period during the 15th and 16th centuries. Why did we choose 1455–1517? It is important to understand how the inventions of printing and the Reformation affected the way of thinking about child-rearing practices. The doctoral thesis was published by Eötvös Publishing House in 2015, and will hopefully help other researchers to understand the problems parents faced in part of the Renaissance era.

The goals of the research are the following:

1. To introduce possible visual analysis methods for qualitative research methodology.
2. To introduce new sources for history of childhood and education – such as old-prints (incunabuli), woodenblock-prints and illuminated manuscripts.
3. To understand conceptions of childhood within a special era, specifically Late Renaissance narratives about childhood.

Why did we consider part of the Late Renaissance (1455–1517) as a possible era of such research? We wished to understand how the inventions of printing and the Reformation affected the way of thinking about child-rearing practices. The importance of these decades in art history is also considered very high: painters such as Mantegna or Dürer used a special viewpoint, analysed the human body, observed anatomy, applied the Golden Section, used new colors and techniques. In the Christian canon, the theories changed from Christ as a human to Christ as
a child. There is a gap in the secondary sources of history of childhood regarding the following theoretical works: Shahar (2000), Pollock (1983), Heywood (2001), Cunningham (2005) and Szabolcs (1995). Some of the secondary sources end the Renaissance era in 1500. We will examine some decades earlier than 1500 as a starting point of “modern” history.

2. Theoretical Framework

This is an interdisciplinary study, containing communication and visual studies, history of art and iconography, history of education, with history of childhood and sociology. There are however some more possibilities, for example psychology, demography, ethnography, and anthropology.

2.1 Theoretical Issues on the History of Childhood

According to Colin Heywood, there is a definition of childhood – it is an abstraction, referring to a particular stage of life, which changes over time and varies between social and ethnic groups within any society. Historians wish to recreate the day-to-day experiences of children in the past. This is the social history of children (Heywood 2001). At the end of 1970 most historians agreed that the history of childhood was a history of progress, and that the conditions of children had improved over time. The first work of this paradigm – Centuries of Childhood – was from the French philosopher, Philippe Ariès. He represents this progress by comparing and contrasting the present to the past centuries. The other theoretical work about the history of childhood is Lloyd DeMause's work, called: The History of Childhood (DeMause 1974). The central tenet of this book is the psychogenetic interpretation of history; the subtitle of this work – The Evolution of Parent-Child Relationships as a Factor in History – represents this concept as well. DeMause periodised parent-child relations in six modes (Szabolcs 1995; Pukánszky 2001).

The British historian Edward Shorter published his thesis Good Mothering is the Invention of the Modern, which shows us, for example, the practice of not sending children off to a wet-nurse, which had been common in the past. Ariès, DeMause and Shorter had one thing is common – they believed that there had been over time major changes in the attitudes and treatment of childhood. A new paradigm by Linda Pollock was published in Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500–1900 (Pollock 1983). Pollock made a systematic study of diaries and autobiographies in Britain and North America concerning child-rearing between 1500 and 1900. She pointed out in this research that lower class child-rearing practices did not differ fundamentally from upper-class practices (Cunningham 2005: 9).
Shahar disproved the previously popular thesis that medieval infant mortality rates caused the parent’s lack of love for their children, assumed to be less loving than modern parents. There were some different child-rearing practices, however; some elements are part of our views nowadays too. According to his research – which was published in his second book, *Children in the Middle Ages* – the child’s world was deeply integrated to adult’s lives (Shahar 2000).

We must not compare present childhood conceptions to the past ones using the modern perspective. We have to accept the mentality of the time, as we must, for example, with medical practices of the specific era. Sociologists James and Prout (James–Prout 1997) published their theory about childhood as a social construction. The new paradigm is potentially fruitful for historians. If we analyse paintings with iconographic methods, we can see children as social actors. Paintings could help us to assess the interpretations of childhood and the world of children. Hendrick pronounced the child as a social actor (Hendrick 2000) so I will use this term in my analysis. We should never compare children to adults, yet they are social actors too.

To conclude this theoretical schema, we can say that the narrative of childhood can be seen in many different ways, such as our specific conception of childhood. We will not, however, state an unequivocal global conception of childhood (Szabolcs 2004).

### 2.2 Paintings and Photos as Sources of Interpreting Childhood

It is possible that paintings could influence child-rearing practices and theories of children and childhood. If paintings are considered a type of media, and media had similar roles in people’s lives as today, then paintings could have such effects on people’s way of thinking. In order to observe this idea, we analysed over a hundred Italian, French and Dutch paintings, illuminated manuscripts and old-prints from fifteenth to sixteenth century.

Flemish artworks were satirical representations of peasant lifestyle and everyday life. Dutch colors are vivid, and the technique is meticulous. Flemish painters observed every detail precisely. Italian painters, on the other hand, used their works to demonstrate their own education, knowledge of theological discourse and philosophy; they were proud of their virtuosity in technical issues, such as Andrea Mantegna’s innovations on perspective. Mantegna became a master of realistic figure depiction too (Turner 2000: 281).

The inventors of oil paintings were Flemish brothers: Hubert and Jan van Eyck. At both parts of the Low Countries you can see an intimate atmosphere in the pictures. We must note the reinvention of the female portrait tradition in the Mona
Lisa by Leonardo, which is the visual representation of the living soul, and which has entered every viewer since (Sperling 2003: 51). The art of Michelangelo and Raffael perform as the examples of intellectually complex puzzles for scholars.

A lively exchange between north (Flemish masters) and south (Italian masters) got under way. Rogier van der Weyden visited Rome in 1450; Antonello da Messina united Italian and Flemish traditions, since he studied in the Netherlands and later worked for the court in Naples. Late Gothic forms in paintings such as elongated figures, sculptural modelling and vibrant lively lines were dominant in both areas, e.g. Benozzo Gozzoli and Sandro Boticelli in Italy, Hugo van der Goes in the Netherlands. The display of Hugo van der Goes’s Portiniari Altarpiece in Florence in 1483 was a milestone (Turner 2000) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Portiniari Altar by Hugo van der Goes, Uffizi, Florence, oil on wood, (c. 1475), 253 × 586 cm

3. **Introduction of the Research Methods and the Sources**

“Images are helpful for what they tell us about educational situations, breaking the prevailing silence regarding the specific character of educational and child rearing processes, they also seek to convey an educative message in themselves” (Depaepe 2000: 15). Kress and Leuween declared in their book *Reading Images* (Kress–Leuween 2006) that social relations can be encoded in images. It is often said that the producer and the viewer differ in a fundamental aspect: the producer is active, while the viewer is passive. The articulation and understanding of social meanings in images derives from “face-to-face” interaction; the spatial positions allocated to different kinds of social actors in the interaction (Kress–Leuween 2006: 116). Pictures have the capacity to convey information that cannot be coded
in any other way (Nyíri 2009). Sources can be any kind of document within the presence of a human being: written words, photos, artefacts and oral testimonies. I analyze paintings, manuscripts, incunabulis (old-prints) and wooden-block prints, using qualitative analysis methods such as semiotics, iconography, visual anthropology and visual sociology.

Iconography is originally a sub-discipline of art history, which concerns itself with the subject matter or meaning of works of art (Panofsky 1972: 3). Iconography as a research method derives from this branch of art history and other visual arts (Géczi 2010). Erwin Panofsky, who published his theory about image analysis and influenced iconographical studies for decades, declares the stages of the iconographical analysis for the history of art. This iconographical analysis is based on three phases of the reception of an image. The acts of interpretation are the pre-iconographical description, the iconographical analyses, and the iconographical synthesis (deeper analyses). Iconographical analysis is dealing with images, instead of motifs (Panofsky 1972: 3–33). In order to understand the meaning of the painting for another discipline, such as history of childhood, we need to find another analysing process of images.

Although this research is focusing on paintings, old-prints and woodenblock prints, it is very important to mention Mietzner’s and Pilarczyk’s thesis about categorization and classification. Their theory is based on photo analysis; however, it is a handhold for the paintings too. Mietzner and Pilarczyk have analysed more than 10,000 educational photos so far. They understood the deeper meanings of images which represented educational interactions or child-rearing processes in wider contexts (Mietzner–Pilarczyk 2005). There is a visual analysing method invented by a French researcher called Bouteaud (1989), and this method focuses on the technical information of each picture. A serial visual anthropologic method invented by Collier (2010) could be fruitful for researchers, who need a comparison method for pictures with similar topics. This paper is an introduction of a possible analysis method based on the methods mentioned above.

The topics of the selection of the pictures is based on Heywoods’ paradigm about the themes of the Renaissance conceptions of childhood: child-birth, the life of new-born babies, mortality (Heywood 2001). It is followed by one more topic which was absent from Heywood’s paradigm: the games or toys of children.
4. Sample Picture from the Research

Figure 2: Andrea Mantegna, Madonna with Sleeping Child, 1465–70, Tempera on canvas, 43 × 32 cm, Staatliche Museen, Berlin

Classification (Figure 2)

1. Date: circa 1465–70.
2. Place: Italy, Mantua
3. Authorship: Andrea Mantegna
4. Use: It was an altarpiece.

Mary looks extremely young in this painting. Their clothes could be similar to the gowns they wore in this decade. Jesus’ tight swaddling-clothes were typical of this time period. Jesus’ body looks babyish; however, his face looks much older (late adulthood). The goal of the painting was to show the virginity of Mary. Mary expresses fear and protection with the gesture of both hands. We can see

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1 We would now like to mention the most important museums and libraries where the research took place: The Bibliotheca Communale dell’ Archiginnasio, Bologna; The Biblioteque Denis-Diderot, Lyon; The Semmelweis Museum of Medical History, Budapest; The Library of Congress, Washington DC; The Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest; Albertina, Wien.
love, tenderness and anxiety in her eyes. Since she cradles the sleeping baby, she is protecting him. Her brooding gaze suggests a presentiment of some kind. She will hold her son for the last time as Pieta, later. The tenderness of Madonna might catch our glimpse. We could wonder about the relation of mother and child. Whether the childhood mortality rate was high or not, mothers loved their children as much as they do nowadays. Child-rearing practices were based on love and harmony.

5. Results of the Research

Using qualitative analysis methods such as semiotics, iconography, visual anthropology and visual sociology, children can be seen as wondering, nosey, playful human beings in the Renaissance Era, between 1455–1517 in Europe. Using microhistorical perspectives we can understand several more situations, and aspects of everyday life and mentality.

The conclusions and tendencies are the following:

The love of the mother towards their children contains the attitude of fear. The value of the life of the children is above the value of the mother’s life. They baptised their newborns as early as possible. Children’s games were as important then as they are today, or even more important. Breast-feeding is more important and more common regarding the pictures, than we expected.

The most interesting topic is the swaddling-tight, which began disappearing from paintings in the 1480s. It would be interesting to examine these traditions with a wider basis of visual sources focusing on the Northern or Southern part of Europe.

Regarding the analyzed pictures, the children received more attention than their mothers. For example, while we have no evidence of the bathing traditions of the mothers, we could find a wide range of pictures of bathing children. The representation of Death could be grotesque, fatal or ludicrous, because of the powerlessness regarding the high ratio of mortality.

To look into the Renaissance paintings, manuscripts, old-prints and wooden-block prints – using my iconographic method, we could see conceptions of the childhood of the Renaissance era. However, children were much more vulnerable than today, they learned to live dealing with mortality. They baptised their newborns as early as possible. Children’s games were as important as today or even more important. Using microhistorical perspectives we explored several situations and aspects of everyday life and mentality.
References


