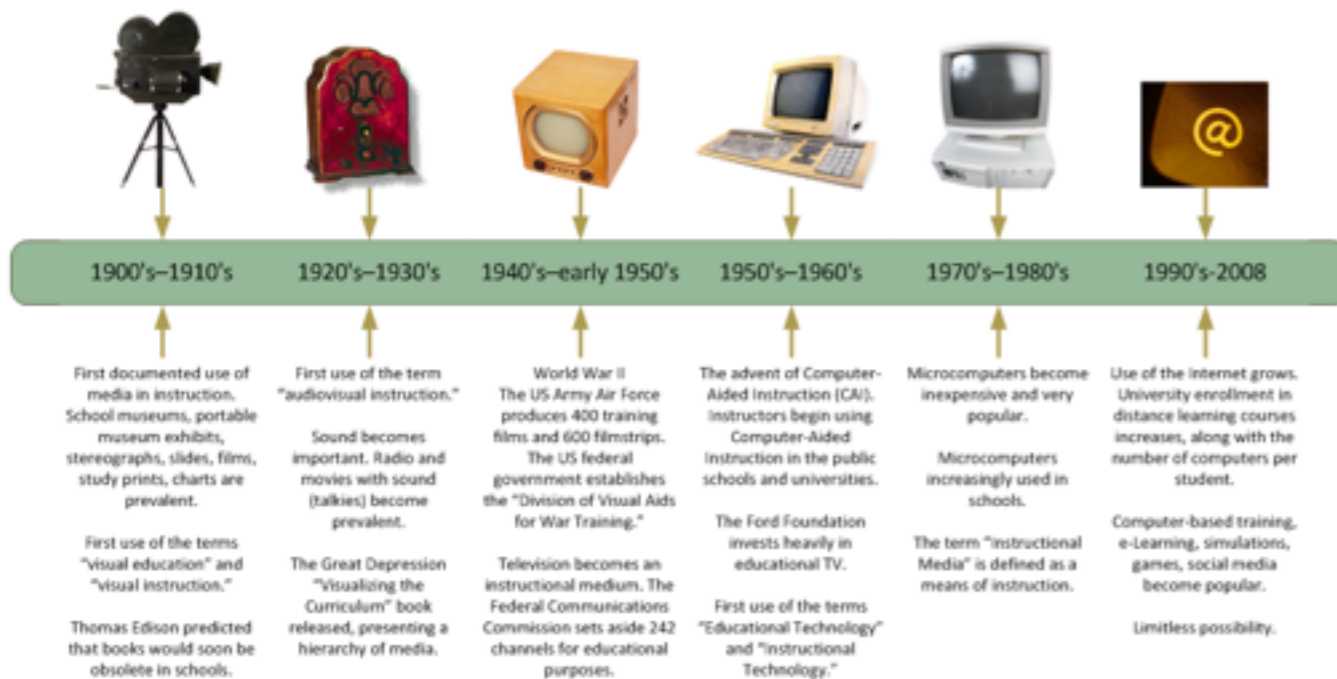
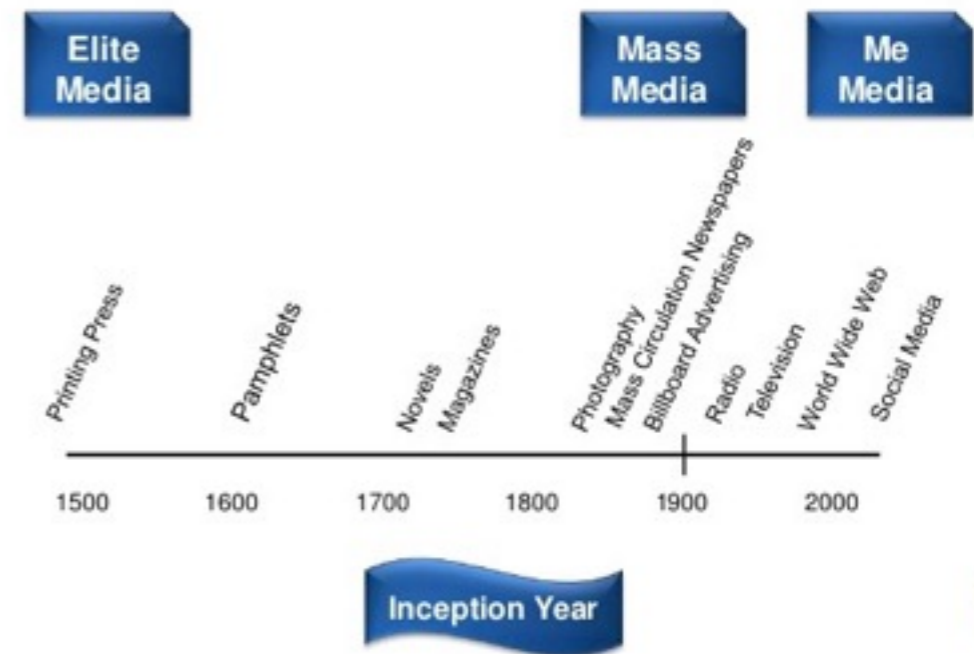


CSD 211

FROM RUNES TO BYTES I.



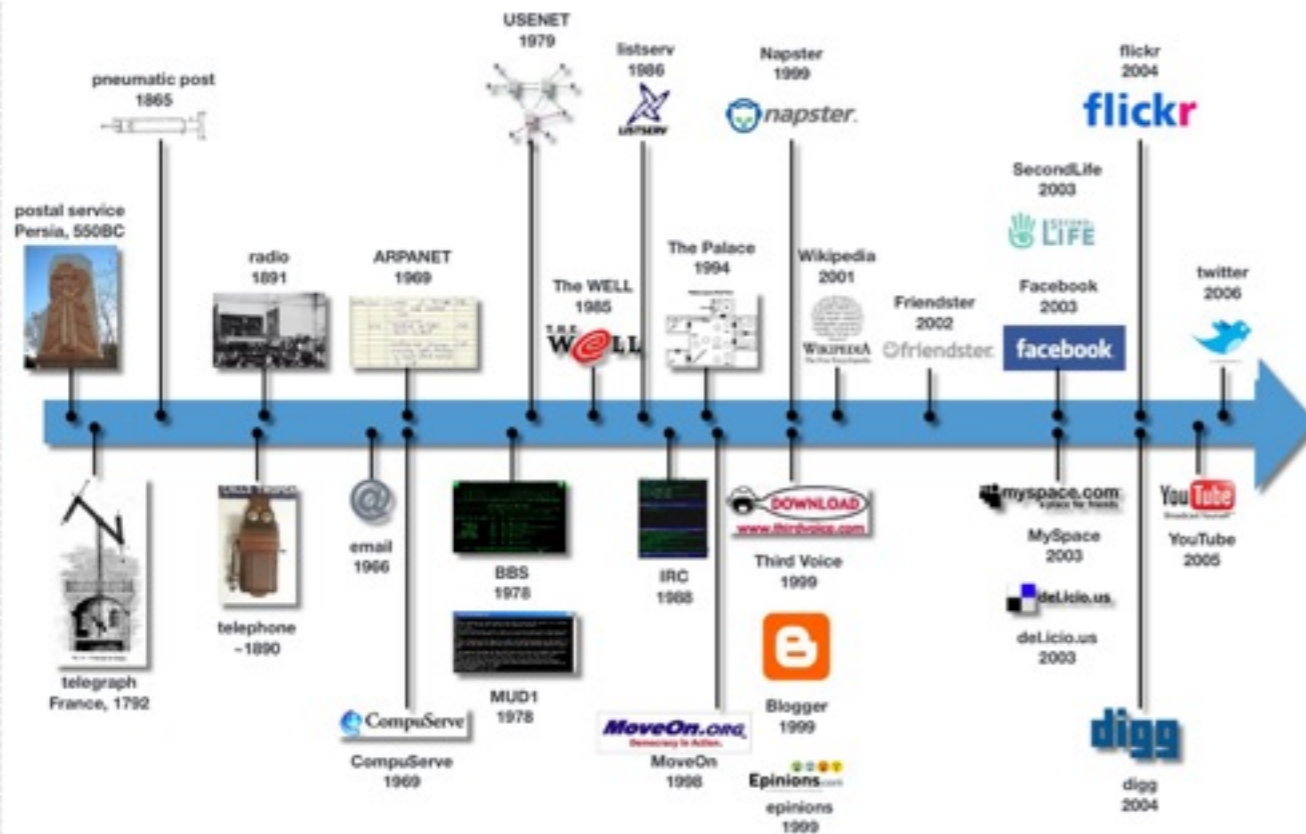
Media History Made Simple



15

A (somewhat incomplete) Timeline of Social Media

not to scale





WHAT THE
INTERNET
IS DOING TO
OUR BRAINS

THE Nicholas Carr
AUTHOR OF *THE BIG SWITCH*

SHALLOWS

The heatmap on the INSE website shows the highest engagement in the 'Vision & Values' section, particularly in the introductory paragraph. Other areas of moderate engagement include the 'About INSE' sidebar and the 'Hot Stuff' section. The 'Mission & Vision' section is the most prominent area of high activity.

The heatmap on the MARSYSTEM website shows high engagement in the 'Mission' and 'About Us' sections. The 'Mission' section is the most active, with significant heat in the introductory text and the list of services. The 'About Us' section also shows strong engagement, particularly in the 'Our Story' and 'Our Team' areas.

The heatmap on the Google search results page for 'Grounding Day' shows high engagement in the search bar and the first few search results. The search bar is the most active area, followed by the first search result, 'Grounding Day: Shadow Day'. The second search result, 'Grounding Day - The Official Site of the Philadelphia Grounding Club', also shows significant engagement.



Das Orakel zu Delphi.

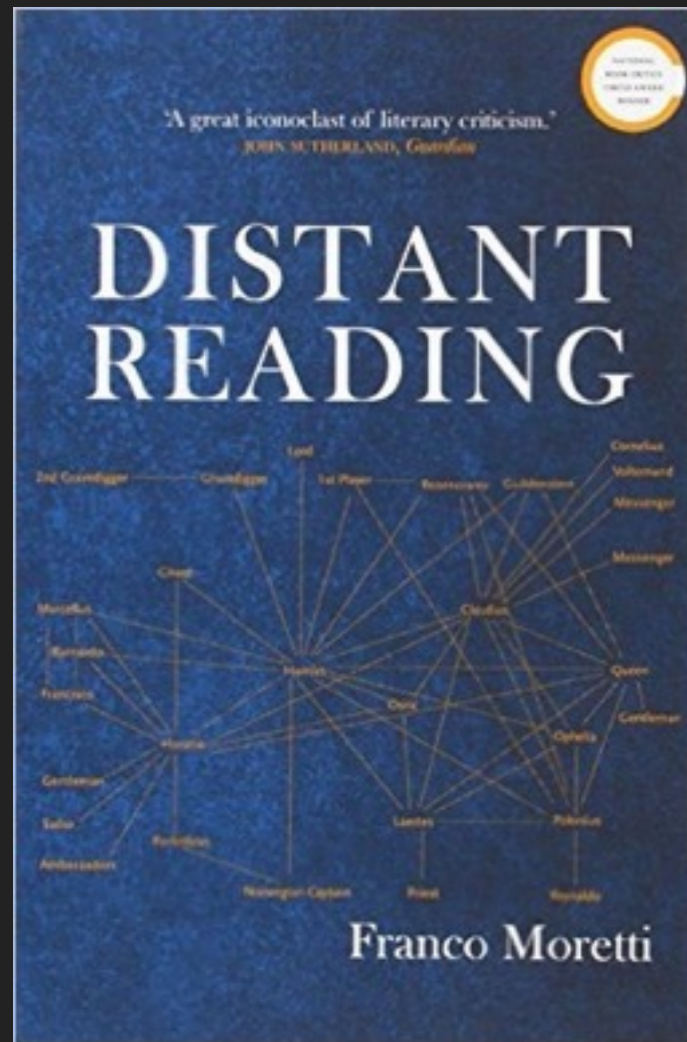


FIGURE 1. *The Hamlet network*

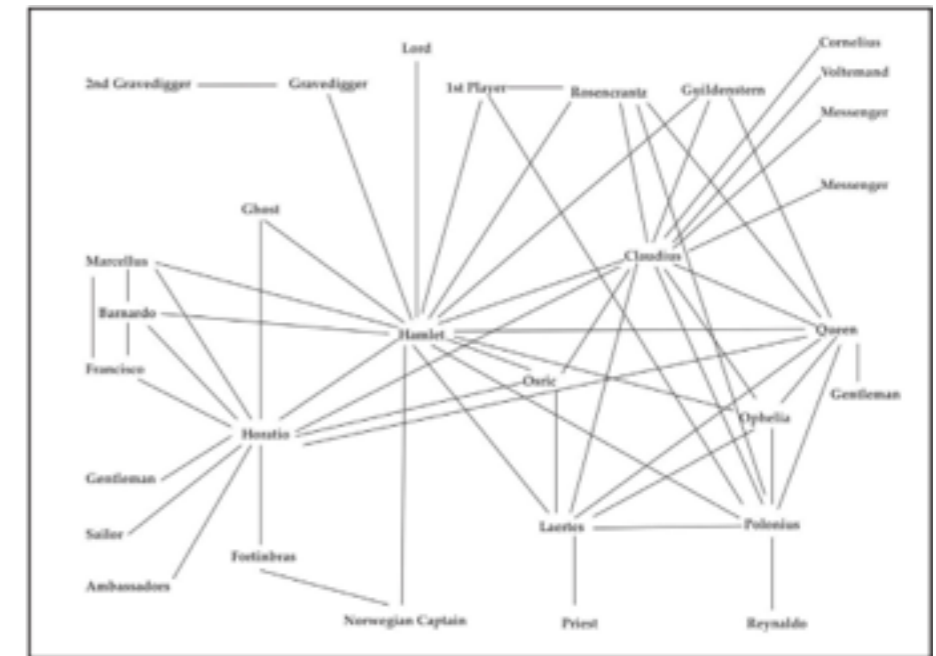
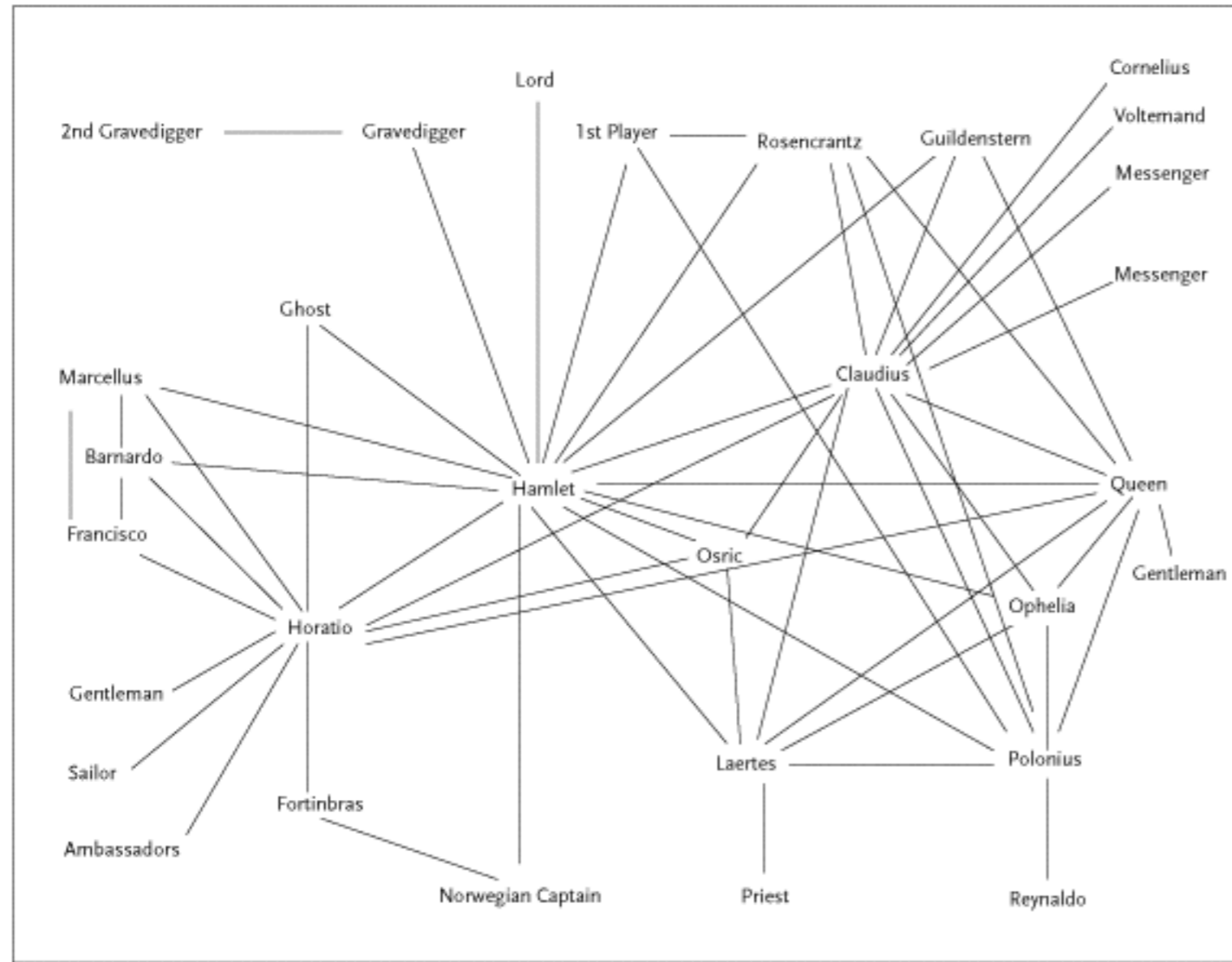


FIGURE 23. *The Story of the Stone, chapter 7*



FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 1: PROLOGUE

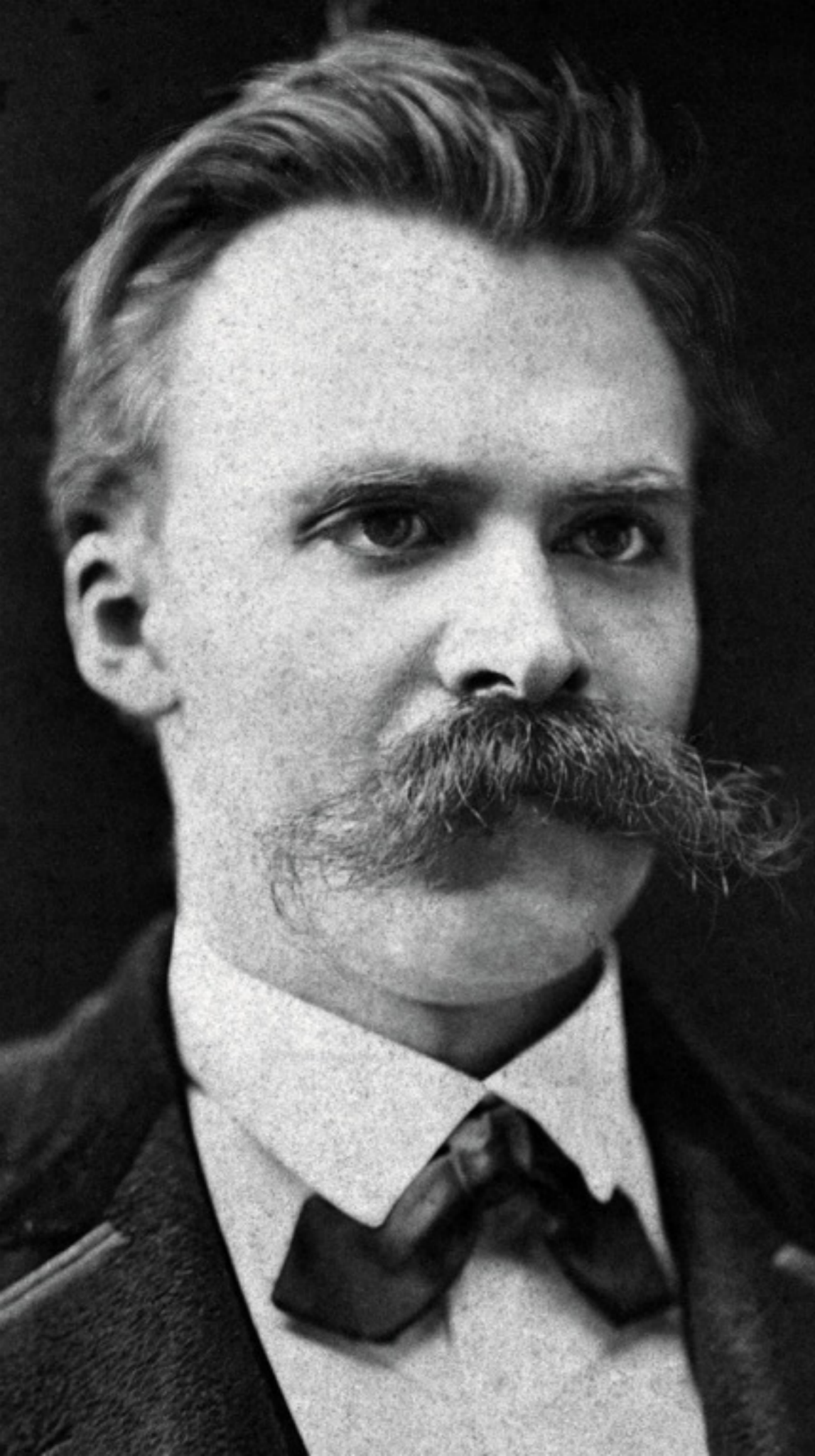
SCHREIBKUGEL IST EIN DING GLEICH MIR VON

EISEN

UND DOCH LEICHT ZU VERDREHN ZUMAL AUF REISEN.

GEDULD UND TAKT MUSS REICHLICH MAN BESITZEN

UND FEINE FINGERCHEN, UNS ZU BENÜTZEN.



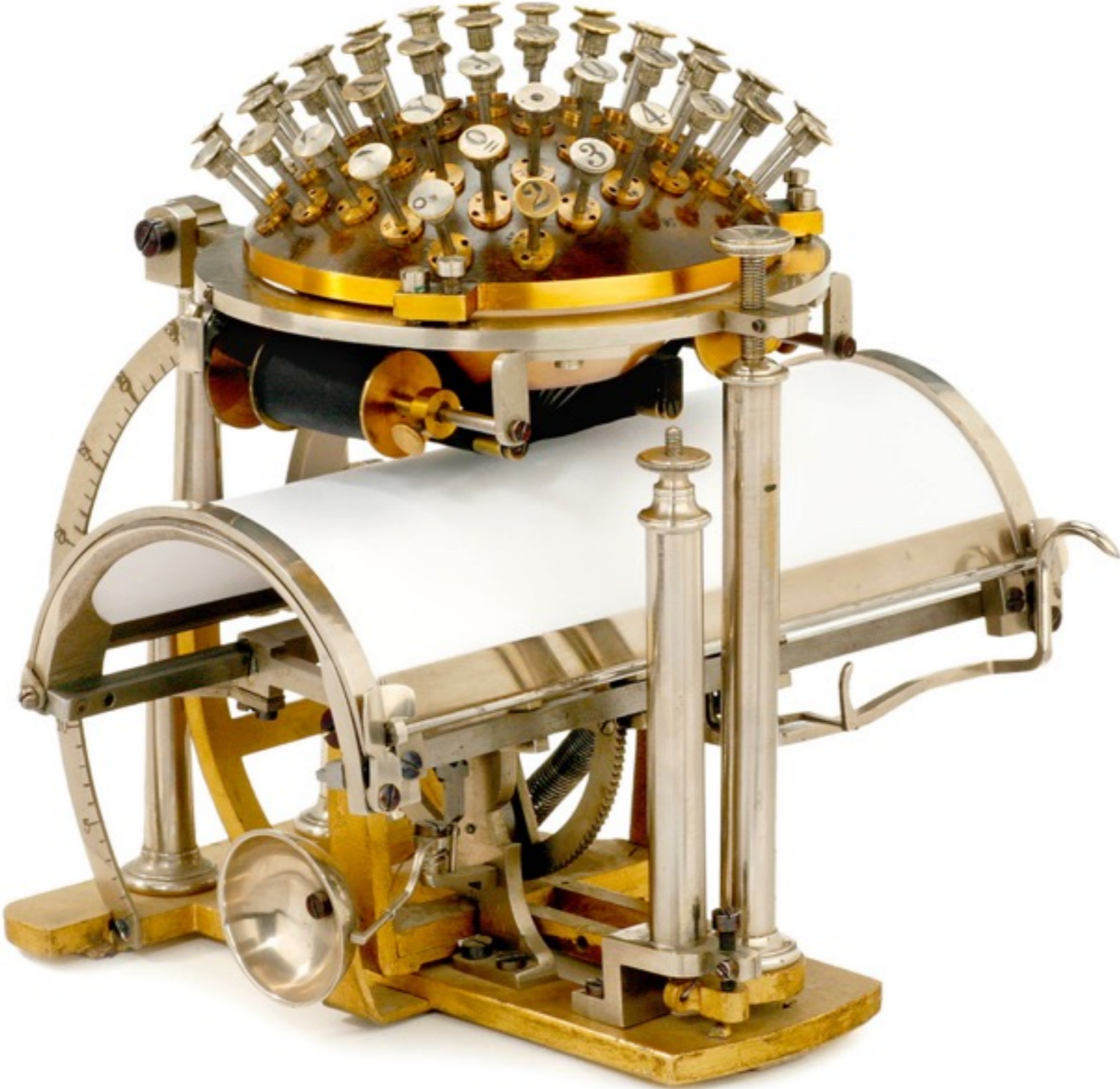
THE WRITING BALL IS A
THING LIKE ME: MADE OF
IRON

YET EASILY TWISTED ON
JOURNEYS.

PATIENCE AND TACT ARE
REQUIRED IN ABUNDANCE,
AS WELL AS FINE FINGERS
TO USE IT.

**FRIEDRICH
NIETZSCHE**

FROM RUNES TO BYTES WEEK 1



TEXT

**Gregory Bateson, "What Is An Instinct?" In:
Bateson, Gregory, Steps to an Ecology of
Mind. Collected Essays in Anthropology,
Psychiatry, Evolution, And Epistemology.
London: Jason Aronson Inc 1987, 48–69.**

VIDEOS

**Gregory Bateson, "What Is An Instinct?" In:
Bateson, Gregory, Steps to an Ecology of
Mind. Collected Essays in Anthropology,
Psychiatry, Evolution, And Epistemology.
London: Jason Aronson Inc 1987, 48–69.**



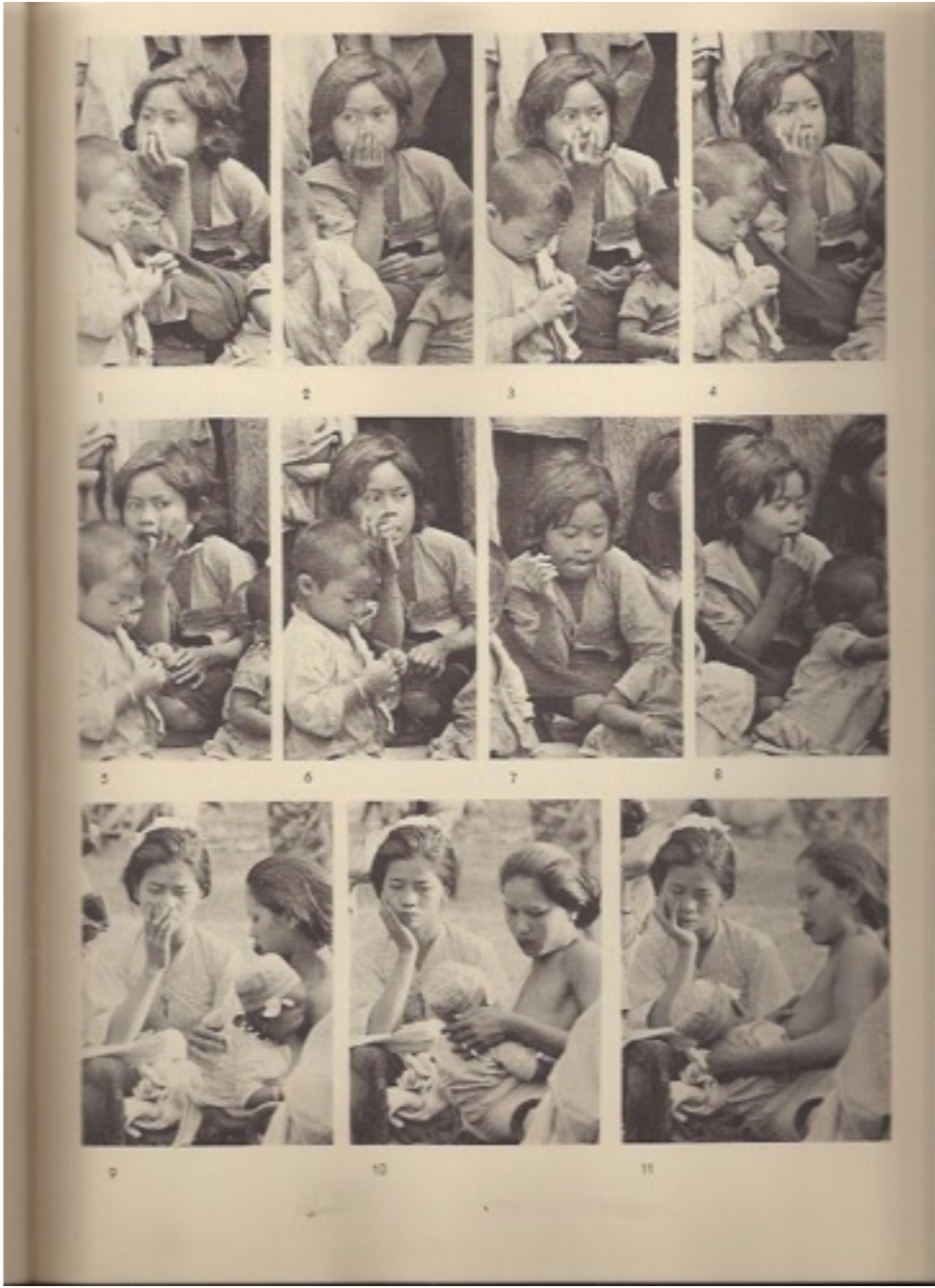
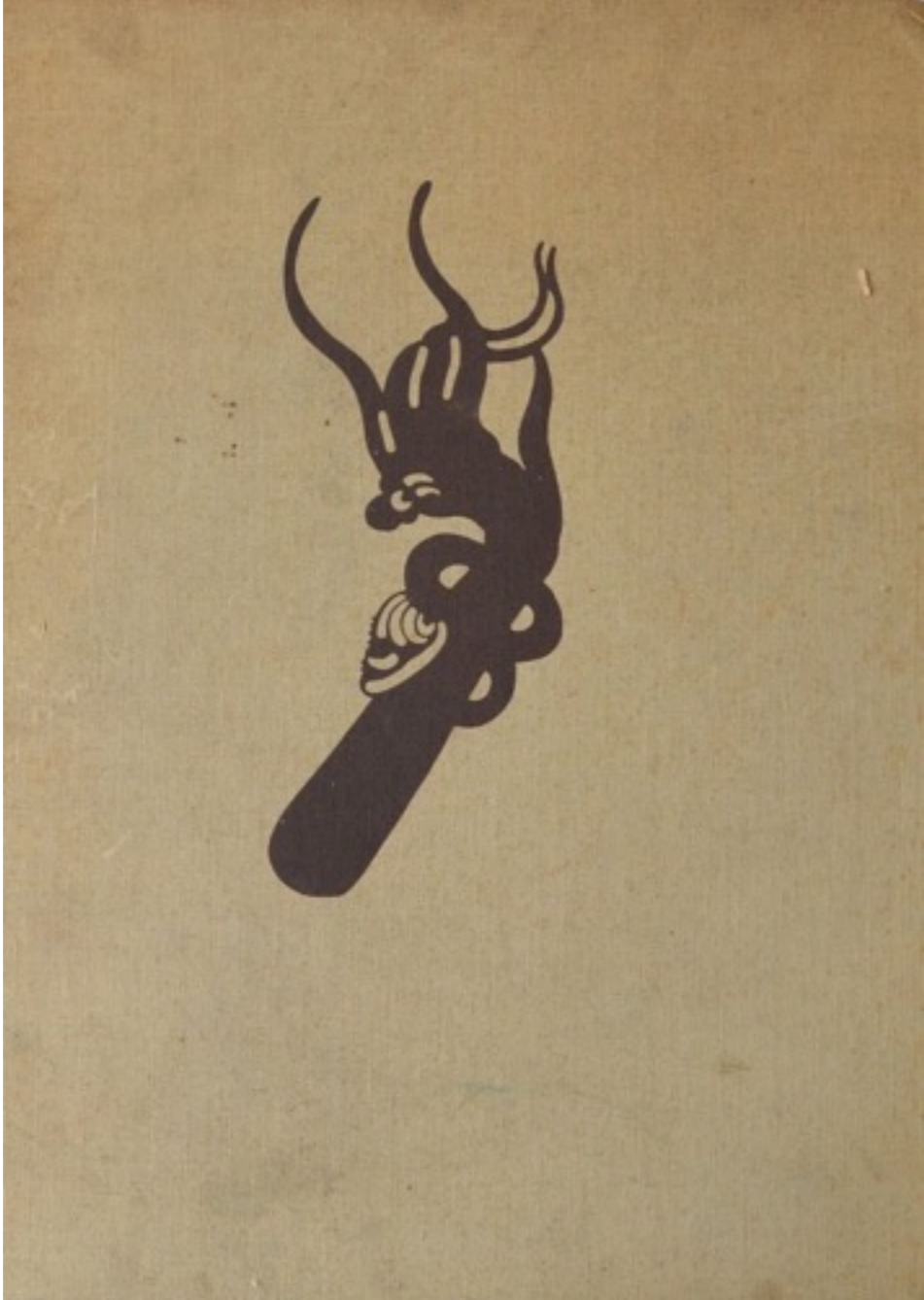
GREGORY BATESON

**WHAT IS AN
INSTINCT?**





BALINESE CHARACTER. A PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS (1942)



GREGORY BATESON

- ▶ **Vicious circle:** the behaviour of person X affects person Y, and the reaction of person Y to person X's behaviour will then affect person X's behaviour, which in turn will affect person Y, and so on.
- ▶ „Women watched for the spectacular performances of the men, and there can be no reasonable doubt that the presence of an audience is a very important factor in shaping the men's behavior. In fact, it is probable that the men are more exhibitionistic because the women admire their performances. Conversely, there can be no doubt that the spectacular behavior is a stimulus which summons the audience together, promoting in the women the appropriate behavior.“

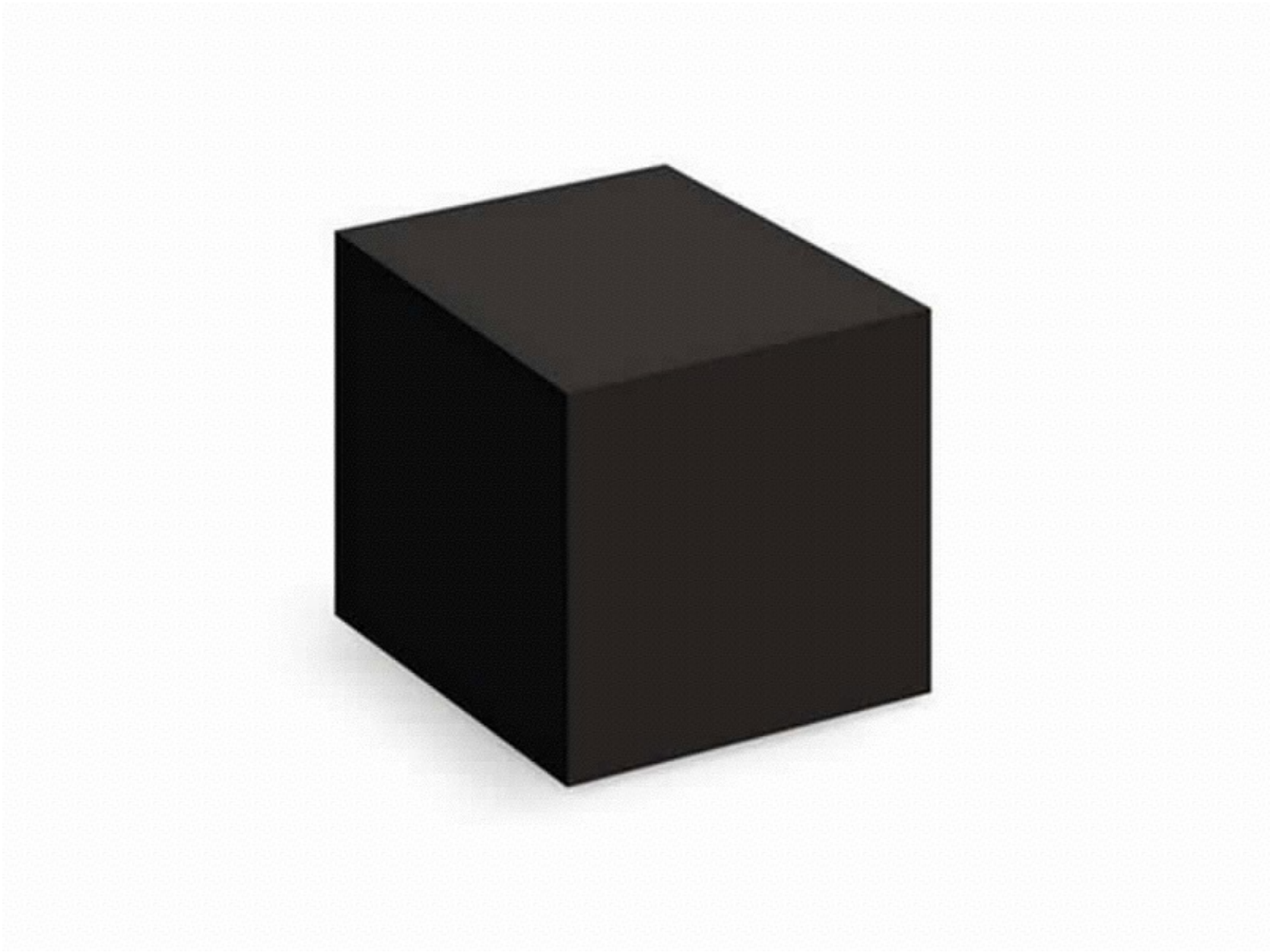
GREGORY BATESON

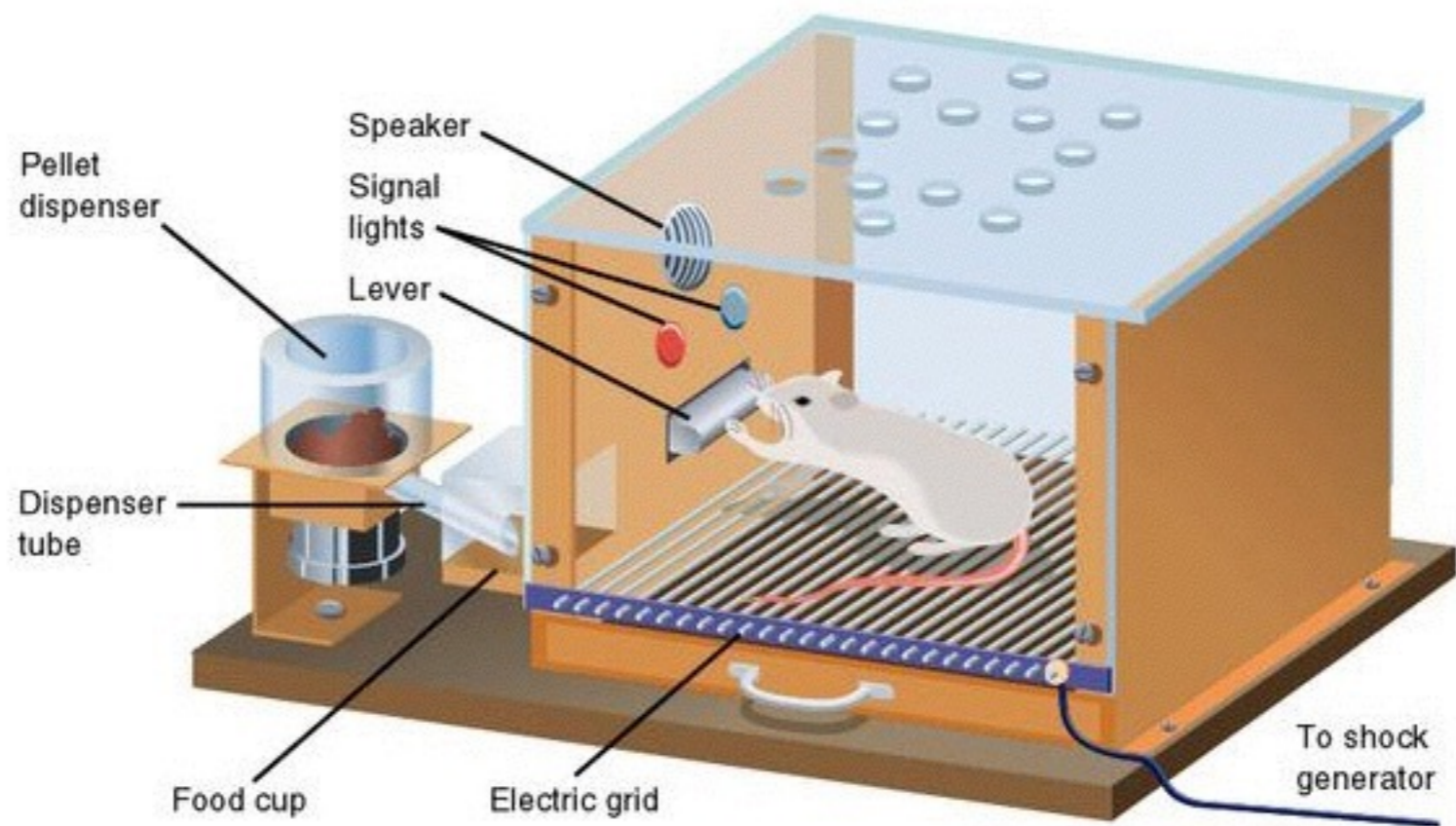
- ▶ **Double bind:** "a situation in which no matter what a person does, he (or she) can't win."
- ▶ Persons who become psychotically unwell find themselves in a communicational matrix in which two or more conflicting messages are received: No matter what you do, you are bound to loose. The concept implies that a ,metacommunication' is not possible. The question is then, how would you win?





A Zen master says to his pupils: "If you say the stick is real I will beat you. If you say the stick is not real, I will beat you. If you say nothing, I will beat you."





FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 2

TEXT

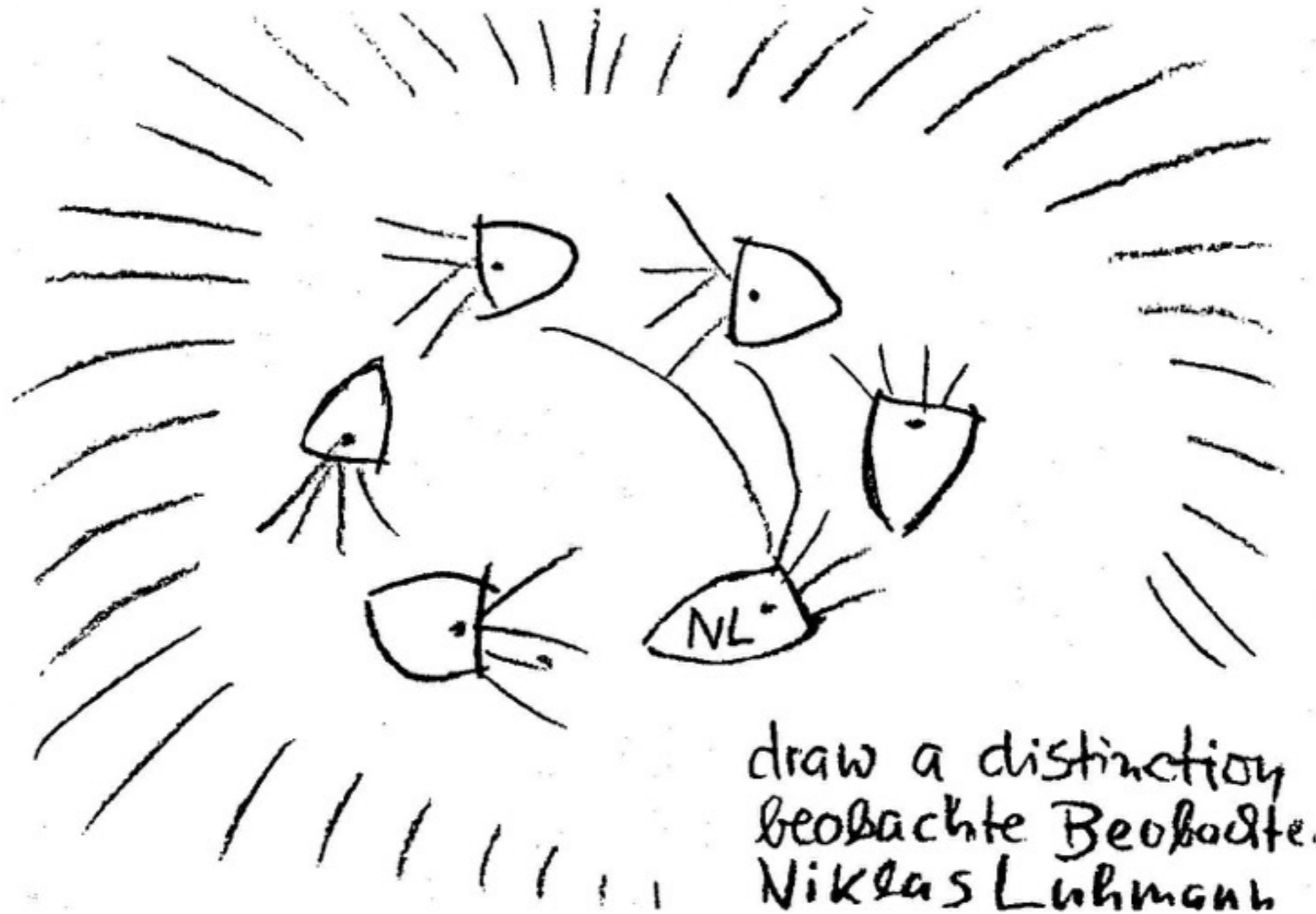
**Niklas Luhmann, Introduction
to Systems Theory,
Cambridge: Polity Press 2013,
101-119.**



NIKLAS LUHMANN

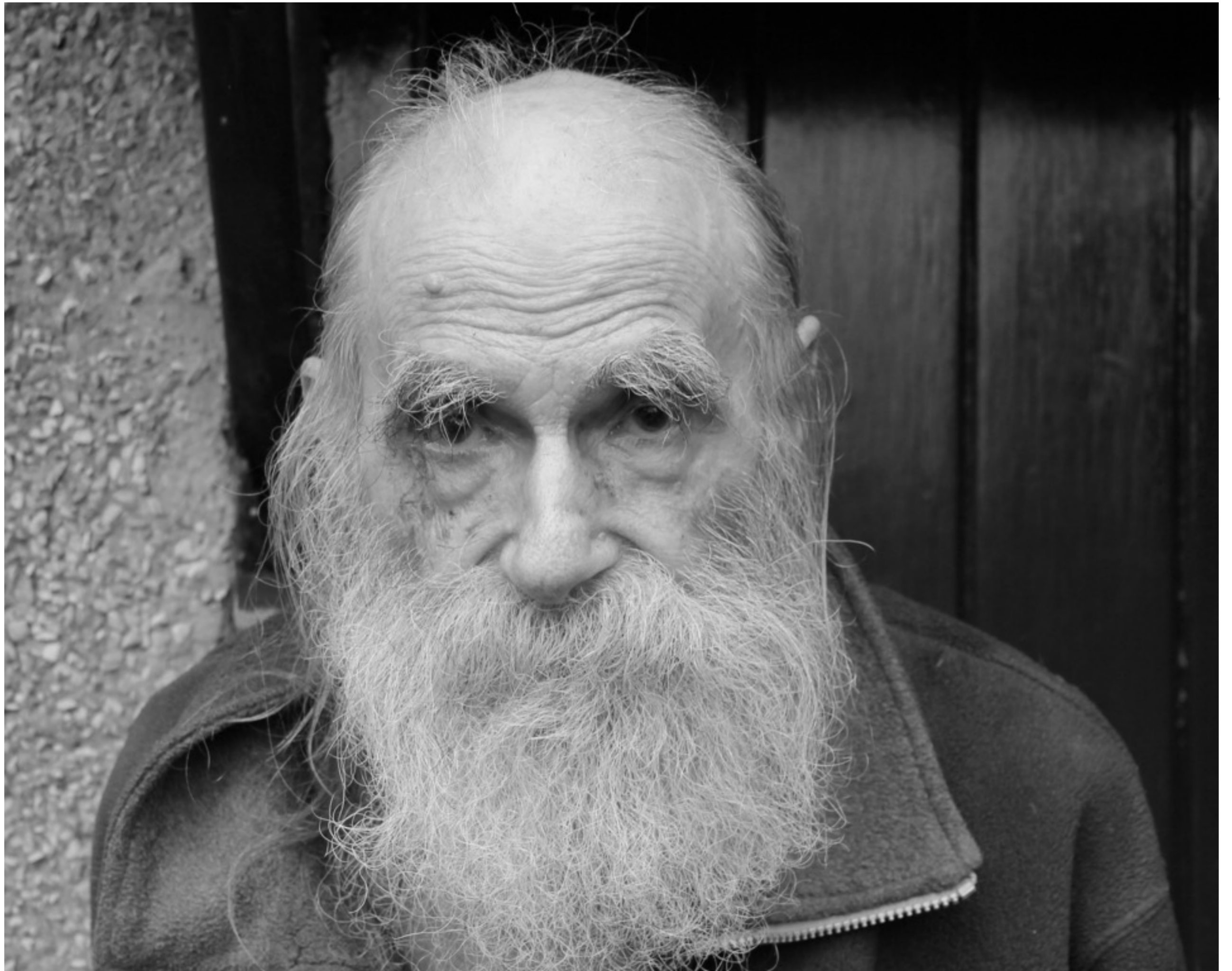
**THEORY OF
OBSERVATION**

DRAW A DISTINCTION: OBSERVE THE OBSERVERS

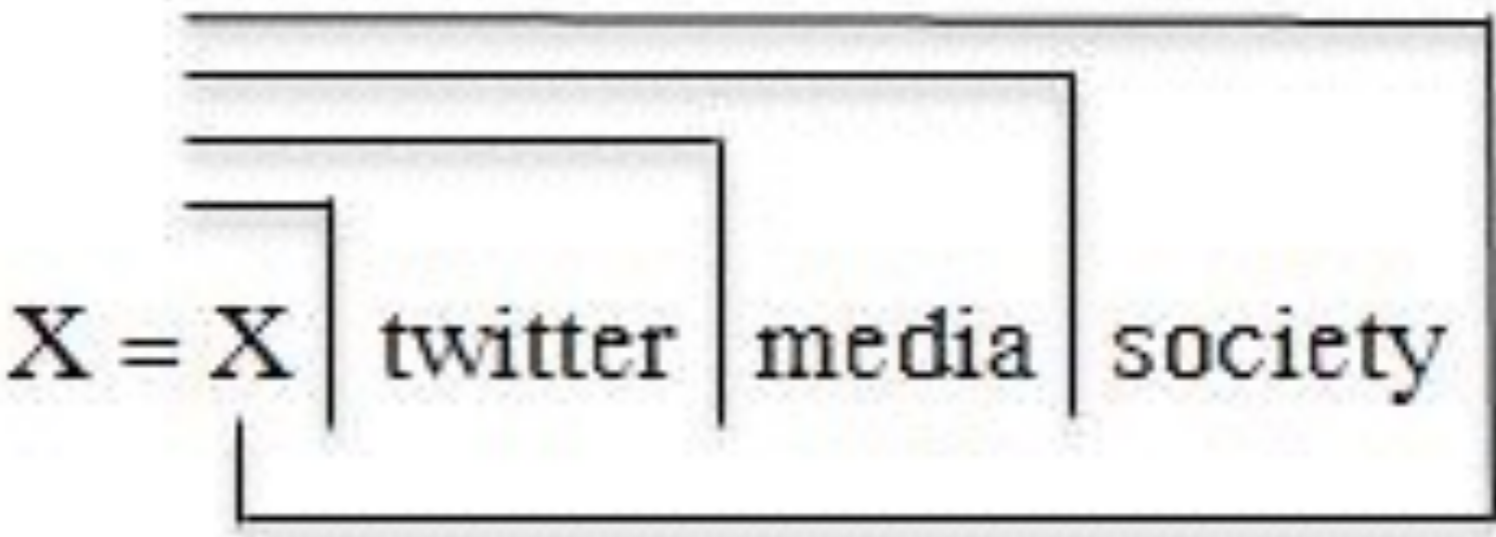
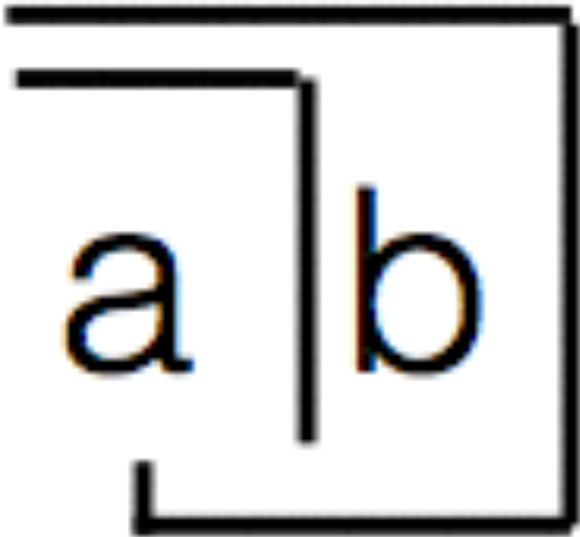


DRAW A DISTINCTION!





DRAW A DISTINCTION!



NIKLAS LUHMANN: THEORY OF OBSERVATION

- ▶ observation/observer
- ▶ observation: operation; observer: concatenating observations (system)
- ▶ The observer does not exist above reality
- ▶ The observer is not a subject
- ▶ operation/observation
- ▶ The operation that monitors the system takes place in the system

MEDIUM/FORM

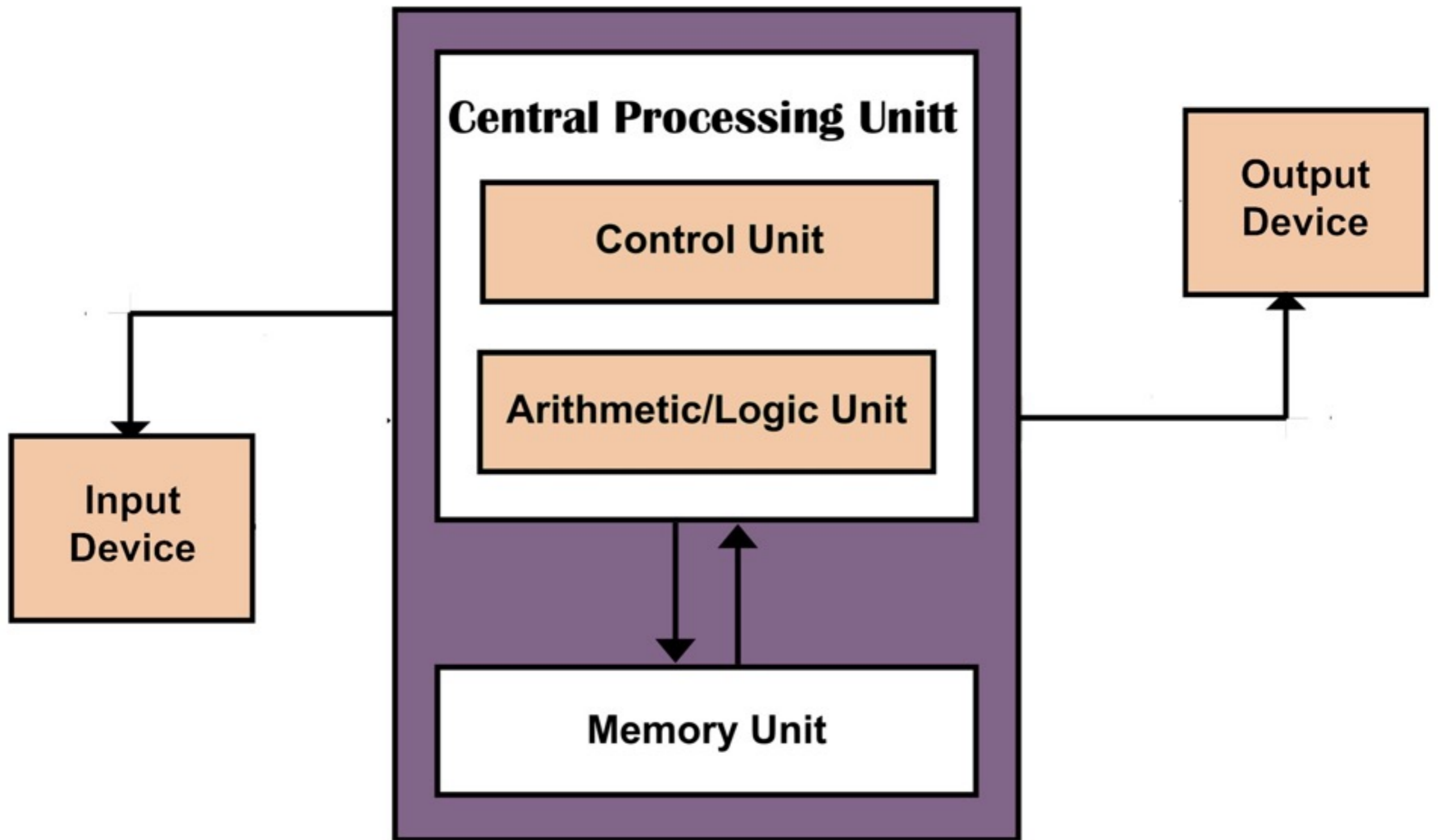
- ▶ A medium is a loose coupling of heterogeneous elements.
- ▶ If an outer determination (energy) occurs, those elements can be strictly coupled to a form.



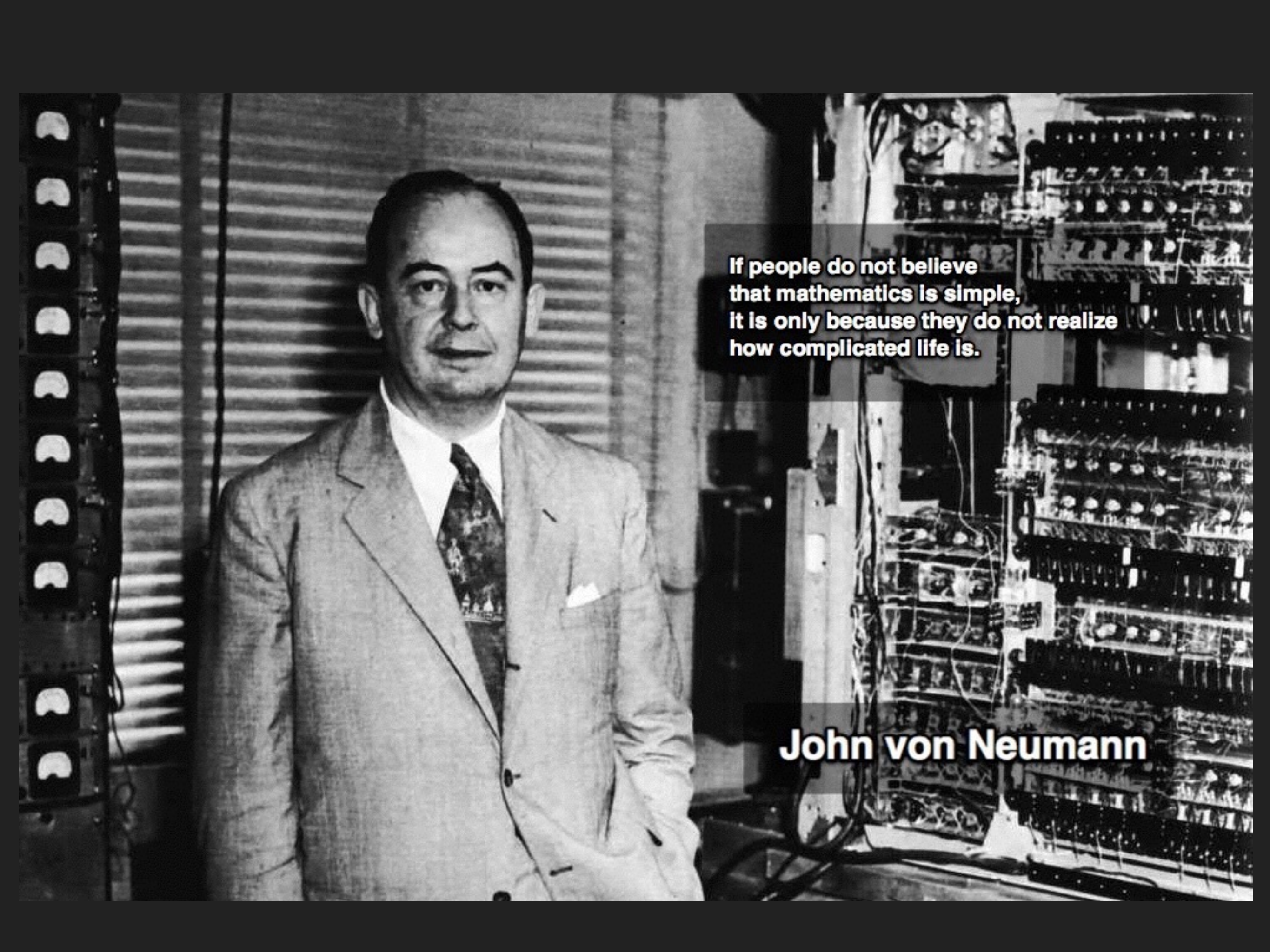


JOHN VON NEUMANN

**VON-NEUMANN-
ARCHITECTURE**



Von Neumann Architecture

A black and white photograph of John von Neumann standing in a room filled with early computer hardware. He is wearing a light-colored suit jacket, a white shirt, and a patterned tie. To his right, there are several racks of electronic equipment, including what appears to be the ENIAC computer, with numerous vacuum tubes and complex wiring. The background shows a window with horizontal blinds. The overall scene is a historical representation of computer science.

**If people do not believe
that mathematics is simple,
it is only because they do not realize
how complicated life is.**

John von Neumann

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

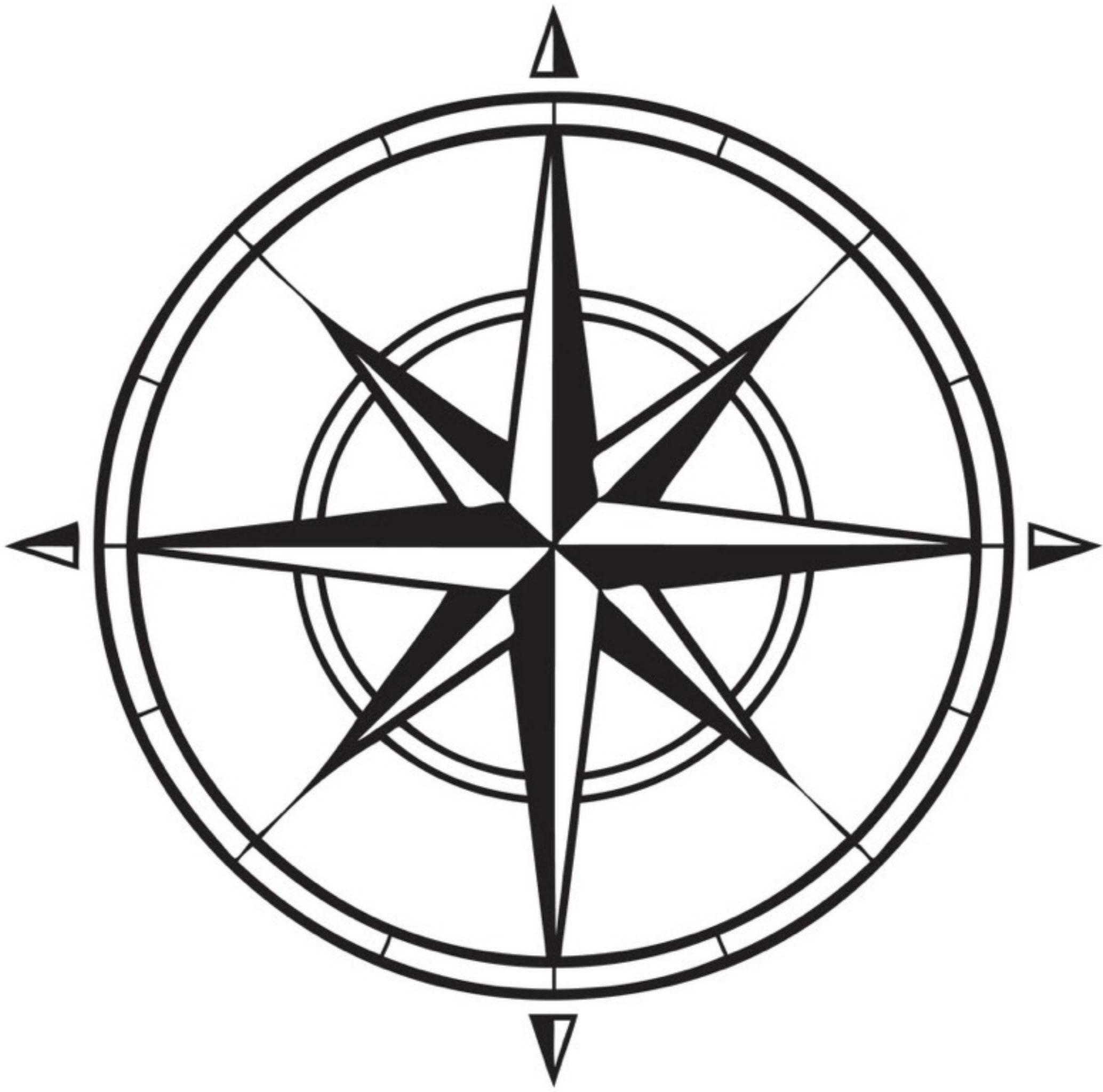
WEEK 3

TEXTS

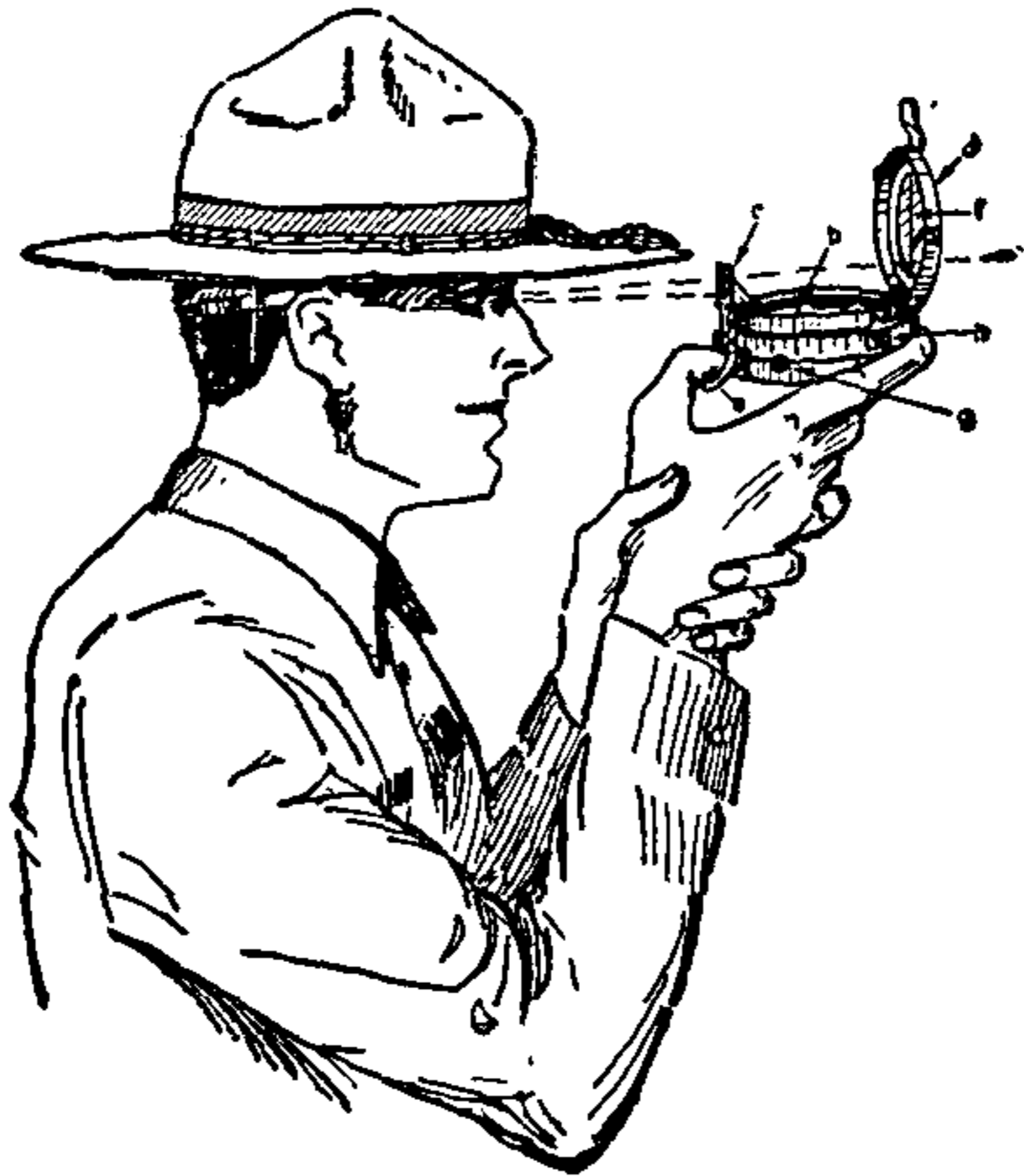
Hugo von Hofmannsthal, The Lord Chandos Letter and Other Writings. Selected and translated from the German by Joel Rotenberg. Introduction by John Banville. New York: NYRB Classics 2012.

Friedrich Schlegel, Philosophical Fragments. Translated by Peter Firchow. Foreword by Rodolphe Gasche. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1991, 1-8; 19-21.





—



AUTHOR



THE APPEARANCE OF THE YOUNG HOFMANNSTHAL IS AND REMAINS NOTABLE AS ONE OF THE GREATEST MIRACLES OF ACCOMPLISHED EARLY IN LIFE; IN WORLD LITERATURE, EXCEPT FOR KEATS AND RIMBAUD, I KNOW NO OTHER YOUTHFUL EXAMPLE OF SIMILAR IMPECCABILITY IN THE MASTERING OF LANGUAGE, NO SUCH BREADTH OF SPIRITUAL BUOYANCY, NOTHING MORE PERMEATED WITH POETIC SUBSTANCE EVEN IN THE MOST CASUAL LINES, THAN IN THIS MAGNIFICENT GENIUS, WHO ALREADY IN HIS SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH YEAR HAS INSCRIBED HIMSELF IN THE ETERNAL ANNALS OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE WITH UNEXTINGUISHABLE VERSES AND PROSE WHICH TODAY HAS STILL NOT BEEN SURPASSED.

Stefan Zweig

AUTHOR: HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL

- ▶ Austrian novelist, librettist, poet, dramatist, essayist
- ▶ Born 1874, son of an upper-class Austrian mother and an Austrian-Italian bank manager, Hugo August Peter Hofmann, Edler von Hofmannsthal.
- ▶ Published several poems at the age of 17 in Stefan George's journal „Blätter für die Kunst“. Studied law and philology, decided to devote himself to writing upon graduating in 1901.
- ▶ Wrote libretti for several operas of Richard Strauss („Elektra“, „Der Rosenkavalier“, Ariadne auf Naxos“), as well as speeches and articles supporting the First World War, emphasizing the cultural tradition of Austria-Hungary.
- ▶ Founded the Salzburg Festival, along with Max Reinhardt.
- ▶ His later plays revealed a growing interest in religious, particularly Roman-Catholic, themes. He died in 1929. He was buried wearing the habit of a Franciscan tertiary, as he had requested.
- ▶ Parallels: He was 28 years old when „A Letter“ was published. He had been publishing many poems at a young age already („Was it I who ... ?“). He was a lord (nobleman), too.



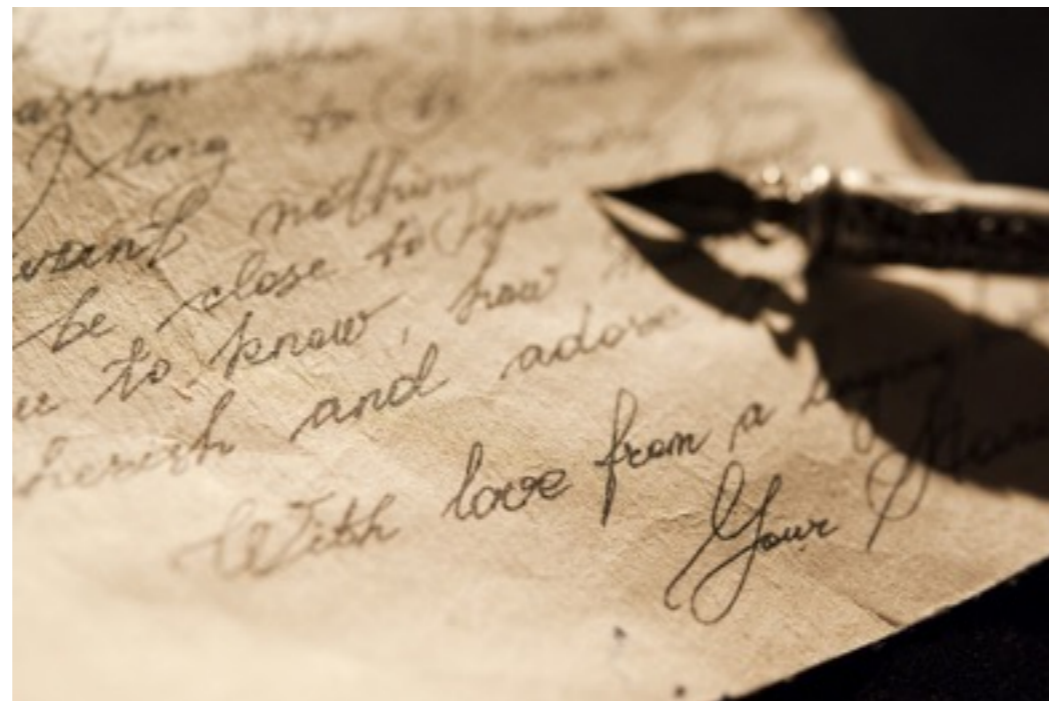
READER



TEXT

TEXT: „EIN BRIEF“ („A LETTER“)

- ▶ Form: A fictive letter, purportedly written in 1603 by Lord Chandos to Francis Bacon.
- ▶ Content: Lord Chandos says that he has stopped writing because he has „lost completely the ability to think or to speak of anything coherently“; that he has given up on the possibility of language as an adequate description of the world.



FOR ME, EVERYTHING
DISINTEGRATED INTO
PARTS, THOSE PARTS
AGAIN INTO PARTS;
NO LONGER WOULD
ANYTHING LET
ITSELF BE
ENCOMPASSED BY
ONE IDEA.

**HUGO VON
HOFMANNSTHAL**





'TIS ALL IN PIECES,
ALL COHERENCE GONE

JOHN DONNE

JOHN DONNE, THE ANATOMY OF THE WORLD (1611)

„And now the springs and summers which we see

Like sons of women after fifty be.

And new philosophy calls all in doubt,

The element of fire is quite put out,

The sun is lost, and th'earth, and no man's wit

Can well direct him where to look for it.

And freely men confess that this world's spent,

When in the planets and the firmament

They seek so many new; they see that this

Is crumbled out again to his atomies.

'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone,

All just supply, and all relation;

Prince, subject, father, son, are things forgot,

For every man alone thinks he hath got

To be a phoenix, and that then can be

None of that kind, of which he is, but he.”



ADRESSEE:

FRANCIS BACON

FRANCIS BACON

- ▶ *Valerius Terminus* (1603)
- ▶ „For the mind of man is far from the nature of a clear and equal glass, wherein the beams of things should reflect according to their true incidence; nay, it is rather like an enchanted glass, full of superstition and imposture, if it be not delivered and reduced.“



FRANCIS BACON

- ▶ „For as all works do show forth the power and skill of the workman, *and not his image*, so it is of the works of God, which do show the omnipotency and wisdom of the Maker, *but not His image*. And therefore therein the heathen opinion differeth from the sacred truth: for they supposed the world to be the image of God, and man to be an extract or compendious image of the world; but the Scriptures never vouchsafe to attribute to the world that honour, as to be the image of God, but only **THE WORK OF HIS HANDS**; neither do they speak of any other image of God but man.“



FRANCIS BACON

- ▶ „Of the inherent and profound errors and superstitions in the nature of the mind, and of the four sorts of Idols or false appearances that offer themselves to the understanding in the inquisition of knowledge; that is to say, the Idols of the Tribe, the Idols of the Palace, the Idols of the Cave, and the Idols of the Theatre. That these four, added to the incapacity of the mind and the vanity and malignity of the affections, leave nothing but impotency and confusion. A recital of the particular kinds of these four Idols, with some chosen examples of the opinions they have begot, such of them as have supplanted the state of knowledge most.“



三十二道通國 此乃其人...
以世世...
道：...
而...
...
...
...
...
...

I wanted to decipher the fables,
the mythical tales bequeathed to
us by the Ancients, in which
painters and sculptors found an
endless and thoughtless pleasure
decipher them as the hieroglyphs
of a secret, inexhaustible wisdom
whose breath I sometimes
seemed to feel as though from
behind a veil.

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL



FRANCIS BACON

- ▶ „These notes of cogitations are of two sorts: the one when the note hath some similitude or congruity with the notion; the other ad placitum, having force only by contract or acceptation. Of the former sort are hieroglyphics and gestures. For as to hieroglyphics (things of ancient use and embraced chiefly by the Egyptians, one of the most ancient nations), they are but as continued impresses and emblems. And as for gestures, they are as transitory hieroglyphics, and are to hieroglyphics as words spoken are to words written, in that they abide not; but they have evermore, as well as the other, an affinity with the things signified.“





SENDER:

LORD CHANDOS



SHAKESPEARE, CHANDOS PORTRAIT

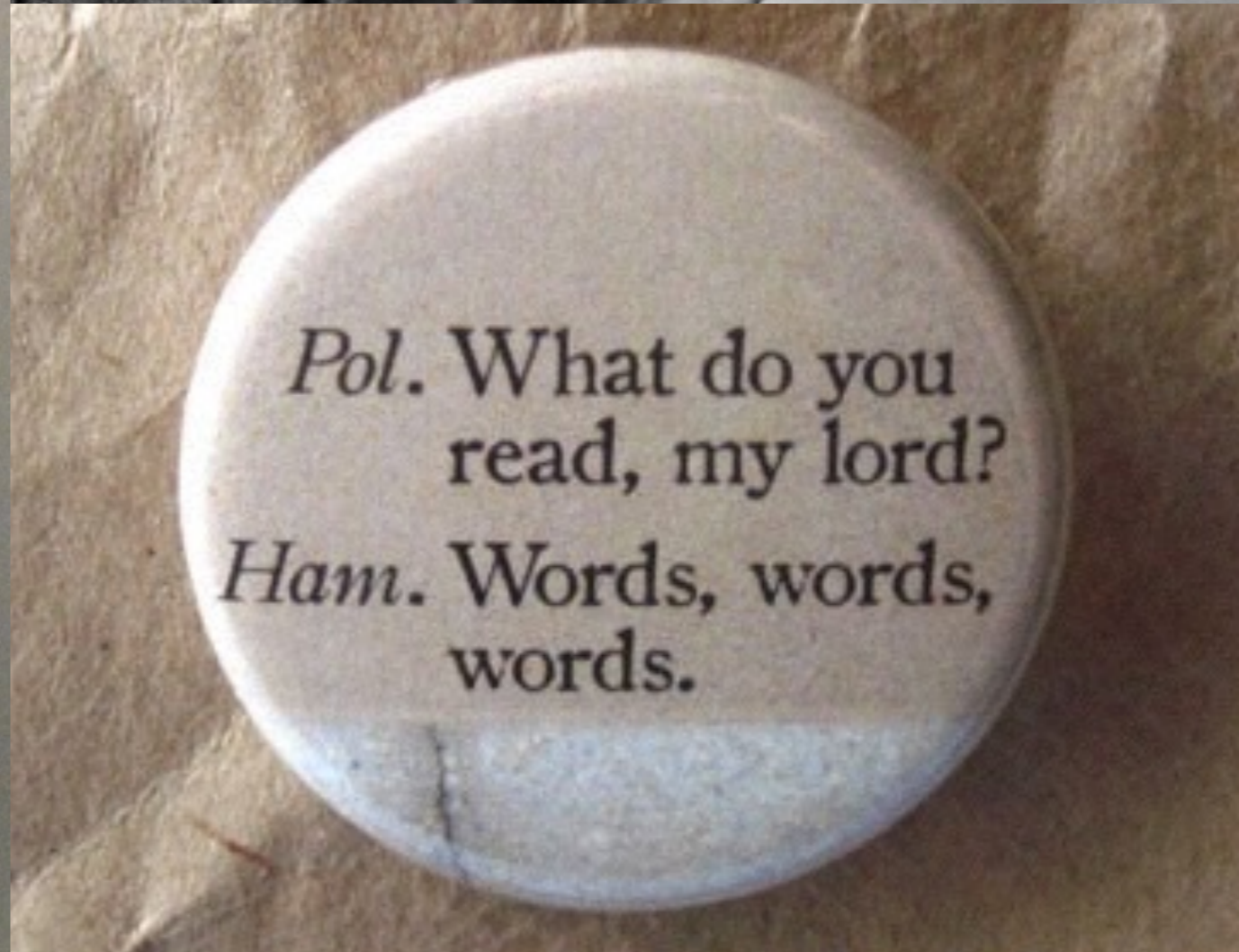
- ▶ The „Chandos“ portrait is the most famous of the portraits that may depict William Shakespeare.
- ▶ It was painted between 1600 and 1611.
- ▶ It is named after the Duke of Chandos, who formerly owned it.
- ▶ Noone knows who painted it. No-one knows whether it really depicts Shakespeare.



„For me everything disintegrated into parts, those parts again into parts; no longer would anything let itself be encompassed by one idea. Single words floated round me; they congealed into eyes which stared at me and into which I was forced to stare back - whirlpools which gave me vertigo and, reeling incessantly, led into the void.“

**words,
WORDS,
WORDS.**

-Hamlet



Pol. What do you
read, my lord?
Ham. Words, words,
words.

THESE IDEAS, I UNDERSTOOD THEM WELL: I SAW THEIR WONDERFUL INTERPLAY RISE BEFORE ME LIKE MAGNIFICENT FOUNTAINS UPON WHICH PLAYED GOLDEN BALLS. I COULD HOVER AROUND THEM AND WATCH HOW THEY PLAYED, ONE WITH THE OTHER; BUT THEY WERE CONCERNED ONLY WITH EACH OTHER, AND THE MOST PROFOUND, MOST PERSONAL QUALITY OF MY THINKING REMAINED EXCLUDED FROM THIS MAGIC CIRCLE.

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL





LANGUAGE IS A SERIES OF DIFFERENCES OF SOUND COMBINED WITH A SERIES OF DIFFERENCES OF IDEAS.

WORDS ARE SUBJECT TO A RELATION THAT IS INDEPENDENT OF THE FIRST AND BASED ON THEIR LINKAGE.

**FERDINAND DE
SAUSAURE**

WHAT HAD IT TO DO WITH PITY, OR WITH ANY COMPREHENSIBLE CONCATENATION OF HUMAN THOUGHT WHEN, ON ANOTHER EVENING, ON FINDING BENEATH A NUT-TREE A HALF-FILLED PITCHER WHICH A GARDENER BOY HAD LEFT THERE, AND THE PITCHER AND THE WATER IN IT, DARKENED BY THE SHADOW OF THE TREE, AND A BEETLE SWIMMING ON THE SURFACE FROM SHORE TO SHORE WHEN THIS COMBINATION OF TRIFLES SENT THROUGH ME SUCH A SHUDDER AT THE PRESENCE OF THE INFINITE, A SHUDDER RUNNING FROM THE ROOTS OF MY HAIR TO THE MARROW OF MY HEELS?

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL



CONTEXT





Adolph Menzel
Berlin 1875

**Friedrich Schlegel, Philosophical
Fragments. Translated by Peter Firchow.
Foreword by Rodolphe Gasche.
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota
Press 1991, 1-8; 19-21.**



THE EVIL OF IRONY

**FRIEDRICH
SCHLEGEL**

ratione salva manente, nemo enim convenientiore allegabit
 q̄ ut magnitudinē orbium multitudine temporis metiatur, ordo spha-
 rarum sequitur in hunc modū: a summo capientes incipimus.
 prima et

1 Stellarum fixarum sphaera immobilis
 Summa omnium est stellarum
 fixarum sphaera separata
 et omnia continens
 Ideoque immobilis
 nempe un-
 versus locus
 ad quem
 motus
 us
 et
 p̄o

2 Saturnus xxx anno revoluitur

3 Iovis xij annorum revolutio

4 Martis bima revolutio

5 Telluris cum Luna an. re.

6 Veneris nonimphus

7 Mercurii xxx dies

sol

7
 ho
 re
 torum
 omnium
 siderum
 considerabitur

Nam quod
 aliquo modo illa
 etiam mutari existimat

aliqui:
 in deductione motus terrestris assignabimus causam. Sequitur
 errantium primus Saturnus: qui xxx anno suū complet circuitū
 ita post hunc Iovis duodecim annis revolutio mobilis. Demum
 Mars velle qui biennio circuit. Quartum in ordine aërea revolu-
 tio locum optinet: in quo terra cum orbe Lunari tamq̄ epicyclo
 contineri diximus. Quinto loco Venus nono mense rediatur





ROMANTICISM: SCHLEGEL, HÖLDERLIN & NOVALIS





**HISTORY IS A
CONSCIOUS,
SELF-MEDIATING
PROCESS.**

G. W. F. Hegel

IT IS EQUALLY
FATAL FOR THE
SPIRIT TO HAVE A
SYSTEM AND TO
HAVE NONE.

FRIEDRICH
SCHLEGEL





**THE TRUE IS THE
WHOLE.**

G. W. F. Hegel

**APHORISMS ARE
THE TRUE FORM
OF THE
UNIVERSAL
PHILOSOPHY.**

**FRIEDRICH
SCHLEGEL**



THESIS, ANTITHESIS, SYNTHESIS: SCHLEGEL & HEGEL

- ▶ Schlegel adopts the transcendental perspective Fichtes which consists of two movements or directions: the positive process of (aesthetic) creation which has no limits, and the negative, reflective process, which is limitative.
- ▶ Irony as a poetic practice is the synthesis of both - of enthusiasm and skepticism, as a constant floatation or oscillation between those two poles.
- ▶ Irony results in a certain distance - to the topic, and to the own statements. It is critical towards itself.

THESIS, ANTITHESIS, SYNTHESIS: SCHLEGEL & HEGEL

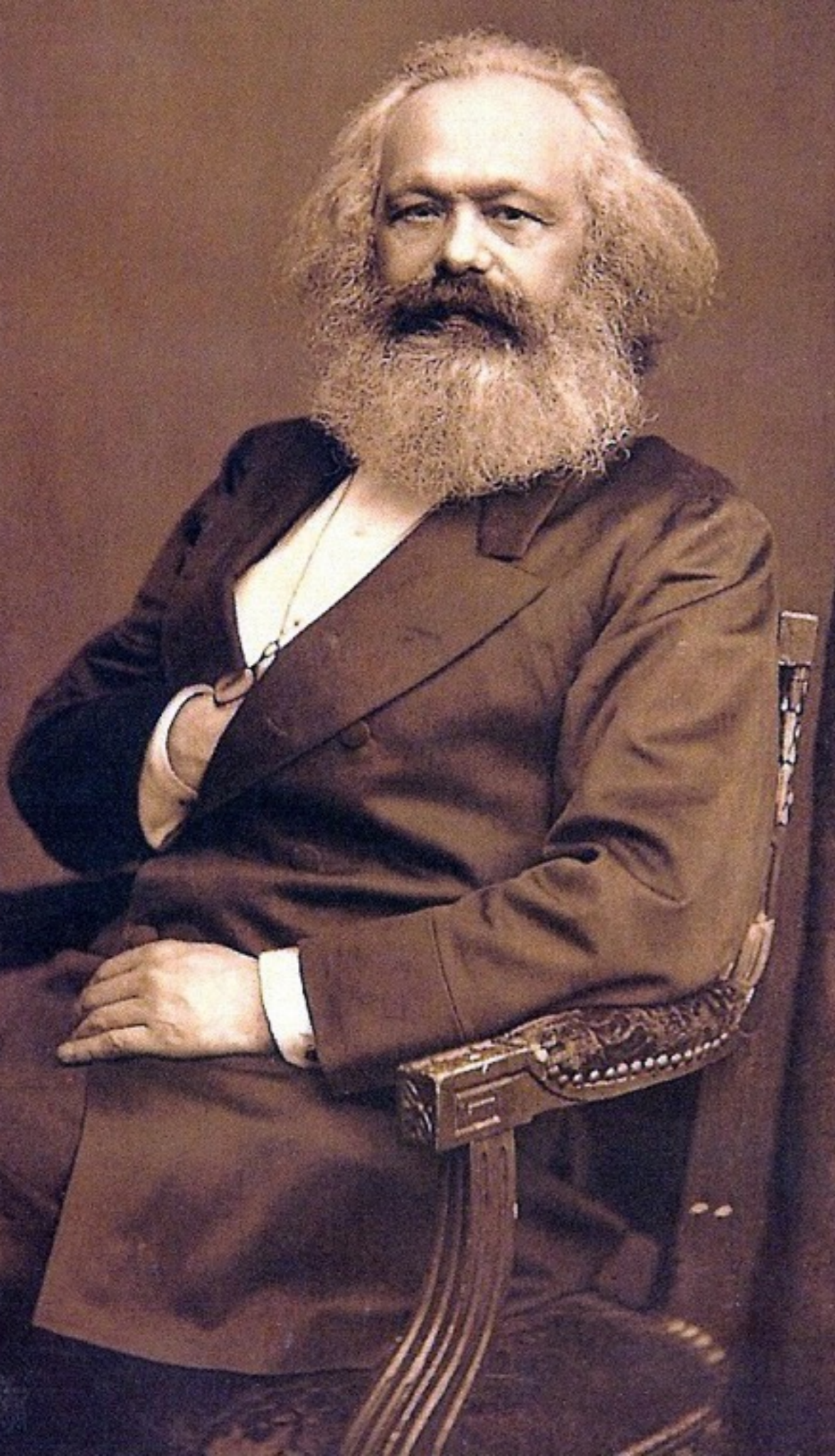
- ▶ Irony as poetic reflection: ‚poetry of poetry‘ - it has to imply itself, to both present product and production.
- ▶ Irony as philosophy: Socrates - no fixed knowledge, but reflection through dialogue.
- ▶ Perfect irony stops to be irony; it becomes serious. It can be comical, as it is able to question itself - and it is this ability to constant self-critique that allows it to reach a higher level.
- ▶ *„Ironie ist das Erstaunen des denkenden Geistes über sich selbst, was sich oft in ein leises Lächeln auflöst.“*

THESIS, ANTITHESIS, SYNTHESIS: SCHLEGEL & HEGEL

- ▶ Irony as vanity: Although Hegel celebrated the „tremendous power of the negative“, he developed a harsh critique of irony as ‚negative mood‘ (Stimmung).
- ▶ Hegel depicts irony as the ultimate artistic expression of „a highly cultivated age“ (the modern era) which embodies a paradigmatic example of dangerous negativity: it reduces even the noble, the moral, and the great to naught.
- ▶ Romantic irony - the most inartistic of all principles“ - has produced nothing in poetry except torment and longing, and nothing in art theory except capricious judgments and facile enthusiasm.

THESIS, ANTITHESIS, SYNTHESIS: SCHLEGEL & HEGEL

- ▶ Irony (as well as satire) portrays a universe in which „inner and outer remain in fixed disharmony“. It is conflict without reconciliation.
- ▶ Irony as an expression of hyper-subjectivism is a dysfunctional way of expressing negativity.
- ▶ Socratic irony obeys a ‚properly‘ dialectic movement that sinks thought into the ‚substantial‘, whereas Romantic Irony stands above all content without actually engaging with it. Its mere intent is to uphold the ego’s narcissistic freedom.



THE HISTORY OF ALL HITHERTO
EXISTING SOCIETY IS THE
HISTORY OF CLASS STRUGGLE

KARL MARX

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 4

MODERNITY

Anthony Giddens, Christopher Pierson, Conversations with Anthony Giddens. Making Sense of Modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press 1998, 94–117.

Manuel Castells, End of Millennium. Second Edition. With a New Preface. Oxford: Wiley–Blackwell 2019, 371–396.



ALL SOCIAL SYSTEMS
MUST BE
UNDERSTOOD AS
STRETCHING OVER
TIME AND SPACE.

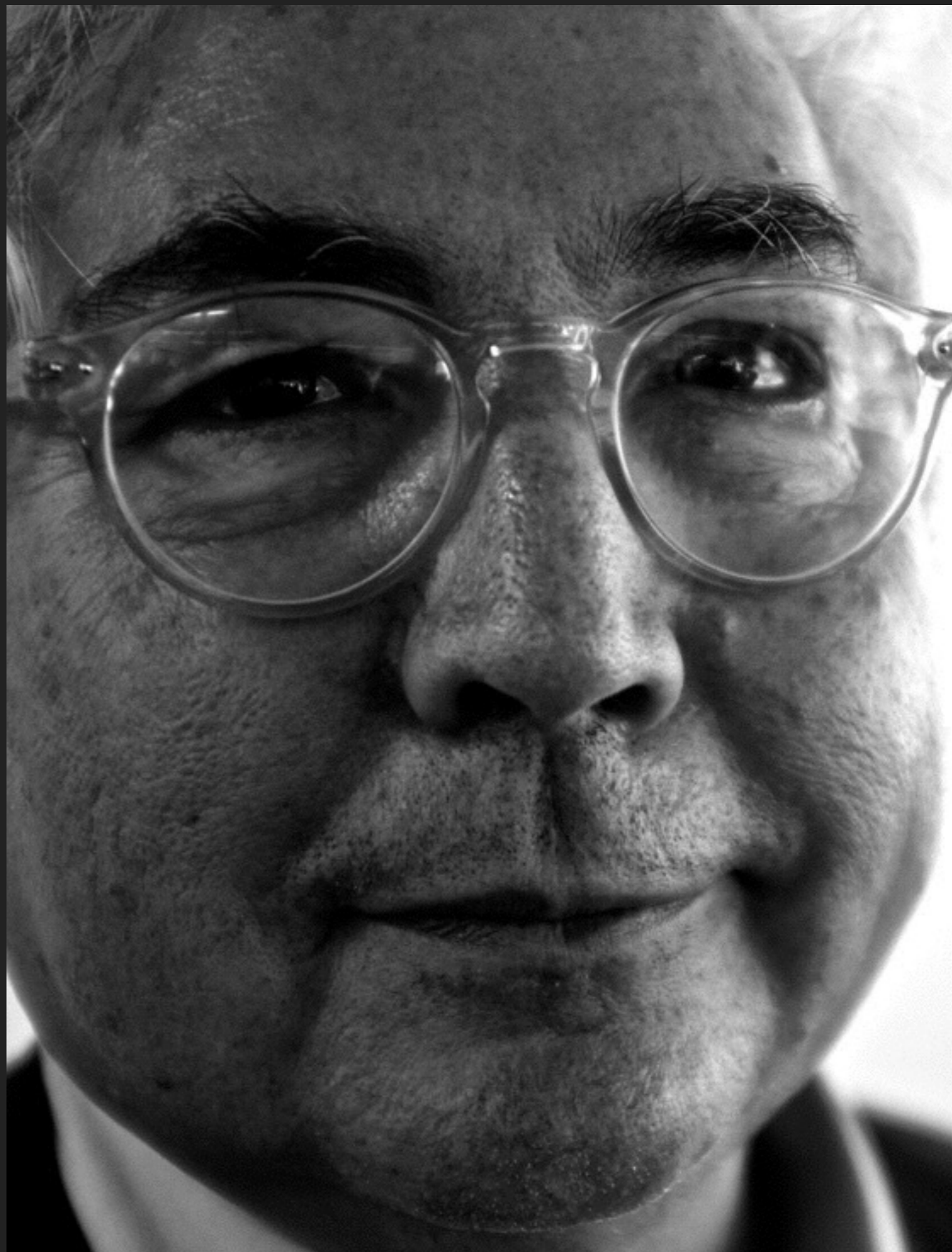
**ANTHONY
GIDDENS**

MODERNITY IS A SHORTHAND TERM FOR MODERN SOCIETY OR INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION. PORTRAYED IN MORE DETAIL, IT IS ASSOCIATED WITH (1) A CERTAIN SET OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE WORLD, THE IDEA OF THE WORLD AS OPEN TO TRANSFORMATION BY HUMAN INTERVENTION; (2) A COMPLEX OF ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS, ESPECIALLY INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION AND A MARKET ECONOMY; (3) A CERTAIN RANGE OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING THE NATION-STATE AND MASS DEMOCRACY.

Anthony Giddens

**A NEW WORLD IS
TAKING PLACE AT
THIS TURN OF THE
MILLENNIUM.**

**MANUEL
CASTELLS**



MANUEL CASTELLS: THE NETWORK SOCIETY

- ▶ A new world is taking place at this turn of the millennium.
- ▶ It originated in the historical coincidence of three processes: (1) the information technology revolution, (2) the economic crisis of capitalism, (3) the blooming of social movements.
- ▶ The interaction between these processes brought into being (1) a new dominant social structure, the network society; (2) a new economy, informational capitalism; (3) a new culture, the culture of real virtuality.

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 5

ENLIGHTENMENT, MODERNITY

Giambattista Vico, *New Science*. Translated from the third edition (1744) by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 1948, 1-24; 59-72; 301-314.

Robert Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis. Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 1988, 23-40.

Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*. Translated by Robert M. Wallace. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 1999, 377-400.

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 6

MEDIA HISTORY

Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New. Media, History, and the Data of Culture.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2006, 1–24.

Wolfgang Behringer, "Communications Revolutions: A Historiographical Concept". In: *German History*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 333–374.



MEDIA AS HISTORICAL
SUBJECTS

LISA GITELMAN

GITELMAN: MEDIA HISTORY AS MEDIA THEORY

- ▶ Which kind of historical subjects are media?
- ▶ Gitelman wants to describe – „and yes, even narrate“ – the ways that media and particularly new media are experienced and studied as historical subjects. She uses the examples of recorded sound (“new” between 1878 and 1910) and the World Wide Web.
- ▶ All media were once new, Looking into the novelty years, transitional states, and identity crises of different media stands to tell us much, both about the course of media history and about the broad conditions by which media and communication are and have been shaped.
- ▶ Gitelman wants to turn “The Case of Phonographs” against “The Question of the Web,” and thereby challenge you to imagine what a meaningful history of today’s new media might eventually look like.

GITELMAN: GRAMOPHONE AND WWW

- ▶ Why these two cases?
- ▶ „Both describe—even, yes, narrate—moments when the future narratability of contemporary events was called into question by widely shared apprehensions of technological and social change as well as by varied engagements—tacit as well as knowing— with what I refer to as “the data of culture”: records and documents, the archivable bits or irreducible pieces of modern culture that seem archivable under prevailing and evolving knowledge structures, and that thus suggest, demand, or defy preservation.“

GITELMAN: MEDIA HISTORY AS MEDIA THEORY

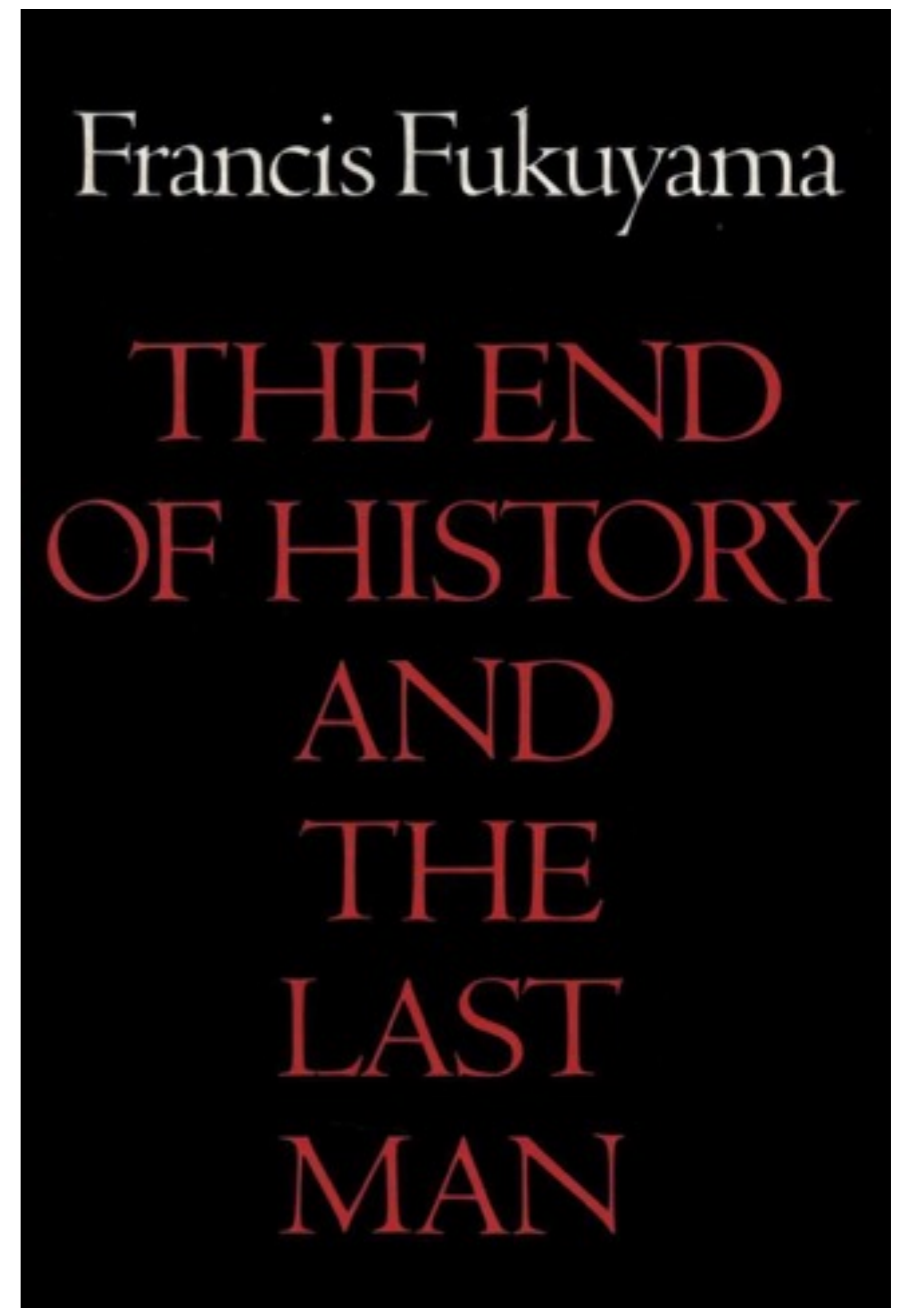
- ▶ A book about: a) the ways scholars and critics do media history, b) the ways that people experience meaning, how they perceive the world and communicate with each other, and how they distinguish the past and identify culture.
- ▶ „Is the history of media first and foremost the history of technological methods and devices? Or is the history of media better understood as the story of modern ideas of communication? Or is it about modes and habits of perception? Or about political choices and structures? Should we be looking for a sequence of separate “ages” with ruptures, revolutions, or paradigm shifts in between, or should we be seeing more of an evolution? A progress?”
- ▶ The selectivity of history: „History comes freighted with a host of assumptions about what is important and what isn’t – about who is significant and who isn’t – as well as about the meanings of media, qualities of human communication, and causal mechanisms that account for historical change.”

GITELMAN: MEDIA VS. MEDIUM

- ▶ The tendency to naturalize or essentialize media: to cede to them a history that is more powerfully theirs than ours.
- ▶ „Naturalizing, essentializing, or ceding agency to media is something that happens at a lexical level every time anyone says *the media* in English, as if media were a unified natural entity, like the wind.“
- ▶ „Media are frequently identified as or with technologies, and one of the burdens of modernity seems to be the tendency to essentialize or grant agency to technology.“
- ▶ Are today's news and entertainment outlets a unified institution?

GITELMAN: PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

- ▶ Expectation: digital media are all converging toward some harmonious combination or global “synergy,” if not also toward some perfect reconciliation of “man” and machine.
- ▶ This overdetermined sense of reaching the end of media history is probably what accounts for the oddly perennial newness of today’s new media. It lingers behind the notion that modernism is now “complete” and familiar temporal sensibilities are at an end. And it accounts as well for the many popular histories and documentaries with titles like *The History of the Future*, *A Brief History of the Future*, and *Inventing the Future*.



GITELMAN: LET HER CLARIFY

- ▶ „Let me clarify: all historical subjects are certainly not alike. The histories of science and art, for instance, differ considerably in the construction of their respective subjects. The art historical object from long ago—a vase, painting, or sculpture—is still art today, however much tastes may have changed. But the scientific object from long ago—curing by leeches, the ether, a geocentric solar system, and so on—isn't science at all. It is myth or fiction.”

GITELMAN: MEDIA ARE INVISIBLE

- ▶ „Today, people converse through the phone without giving it a moment’s thought. The technology and all of its supporting protocols (that you answer “Hello?” and that you pay the company, but also standards like touch-tones and twelve-volt lines) have become self-evident as the result of social processes, including the habits associated with other, related media. Self-evidence or transparency may seem less important to video games, radio programs, or pulp fiction than to telephones, yet as critics have long noted, the success of all media depends at some level on inattention or “blindness” to the media technologies themselves (and all of their supporting protocols) in favor of attention to the phenomena, “the content,” that they represent for users’ edification or enjoyment. When one uses antique media like stereoscopes, when one encounters unfamiliar protocols, like using a pay telephone abroad, or *when media break down* ... forgotten questions about whether and how media do the job can bubble to the surface.”



FILM, GRAMOPHONE,
TYPEWRITER

**FRIEDRICH
MITTLER**

GRAMMOPHON

FILM

TYPEWRITER

GITELMAN: MEDIA ARE INVISIBLE

- ▶ „However extraordinarily rich his sense of media and the “discourse networks” they help to support, it is as if Kittler doesn’t need to persuade his readers of details about why or how phonographs were invented because he already knows what phonographs are, and therefore he knows what (and particularly how) they mean. Again, that is to make a medium both evidence and cause of its own history.“
- ▶ Gitelman would prefer not to: think of media themselves as social and economic forces or follow the idea of an intrinsic technological logic.
- ▶ „Media are more properly the results of social and economic forces, so that any technological logic they possess is only apparently intrinsic. That said, I have also resisted taking a reductively antideterministic position. At certain levels, media are very influential, and their material properties do (literally and figuratively) matter, determining some of the local conditions of communication amid the broader circulations that at once express and constitute social relations.“



THE TAXIS-GALAXIS

**WOLFGANG
BEHRINGER**

BEHRINGER: COMMUNICATIONS REVOLUTION – STRUCTURE

- ▶ 1. An exploration of the potential of the concept of the Communications Revolution as formulated by Albion and John.
- ▶ 2. An application of the notion to European history, where similar processes took place much earlier.
- ▶ 3. A suggestion that these fundamental changes in the sphere of the media should all be viewed together and subsumed under the general category of the Communications Revolution.
- ▶ 4. A proposition of a new chronology, setting the more belated process of modernization in America in an appropriate global context.
- ▶ 5. A discussion of the macro-historical question whether the Communications Revolution was as significant as other fundamental upheavals that have occurred in the past, such as the Scientific Revolution and the Industrial Revolution—in other words, whether the Communications Revolution described here was of world-historical significance and whether it was, like the other revolutions, unique in its own way”.

BEHRINGER: A THEORY OF CULTURAL STAGES

- ▶ What is the relation is between the concept of the Communications Revolution presented in this article and Innis's media theory?
- ▶ Innis – and, after him, McLuhan and others – argued that every new stage of human civilization was dominated by a particular medium of communication and that changes of media led to major social and political upheavals. They offer a theory of cultural stages.
- ▶ Daniel Bell argues that in a 'post-industrial society' the 'present Communications Revolution' is the product, not of any one specific new technology, but of 'a set of concepts represented by the term information theory'.
- ▶ „Bell's concept of communication remains as confused as that of McLuhan (for whom, after all, even money and light were media of communication). And, like Innis, Bell fails to state clearly the relationship between the concept of communication and that of the medium. For these writers, each individual medium merits its own Communications Revolution.“
- ▶ „The extent to which media revolutions have brought about changes in society has to be examined on a case-by-case basis.“ (See: „Specificity is key.“)

BEHRINGER: ACCELERATION

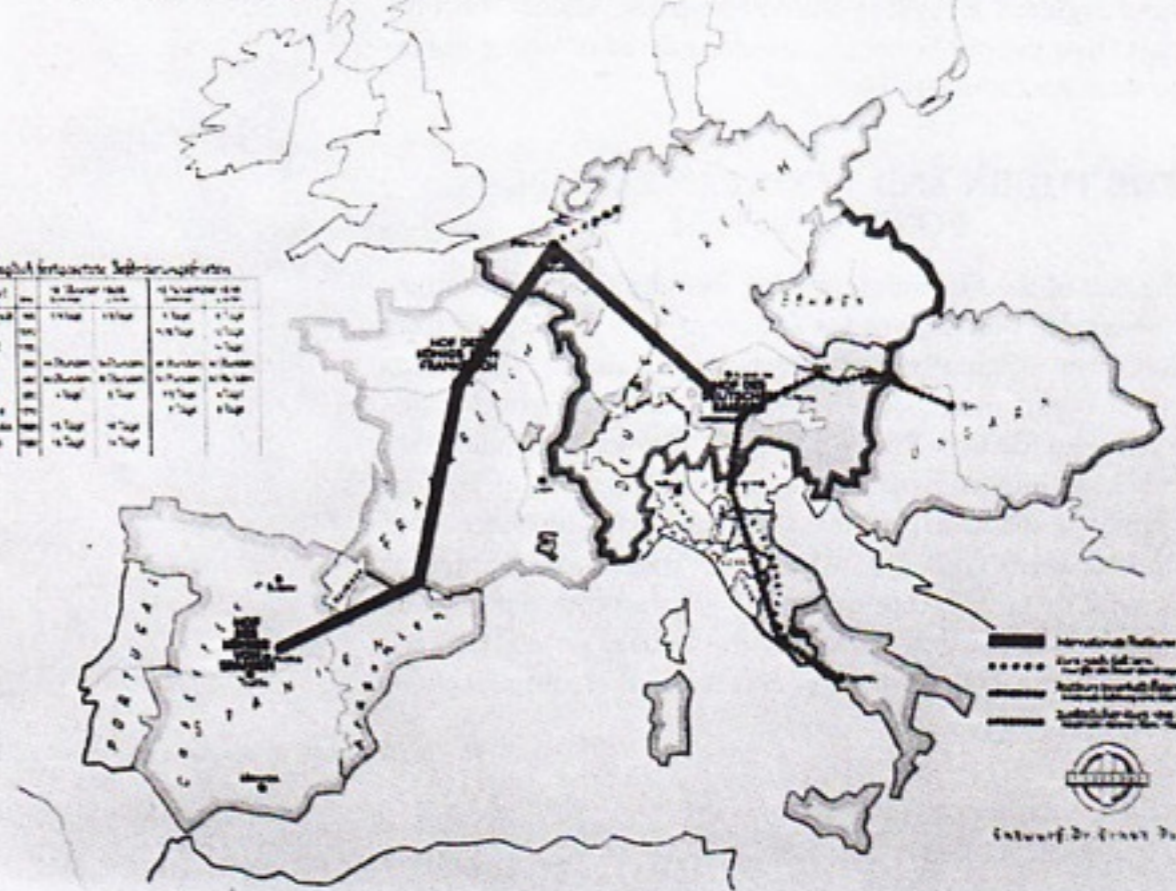
- ▶ „The new medium for discussion enabled new ideas and theories to be developed and either rejected or confirmed, and all at a pace that had been completely unthinkable before the start of the Communications Revolution. At the beginning of the sixteenth century scholars like Copernicus were still responding to the ideas of thinkers who had been writing two thousand years earlier, and after their own ideas had been published further decades elapsed before other writers were able to make use of them. By the time of Kepler and Galileo the process of reception and discussion had accelerated, to the extent that the two men were able to correspond directly with one another. From the 1660s onwards, however, more or less all of Europe's scholars were able to take part immediately in debates on new theories or projects.“



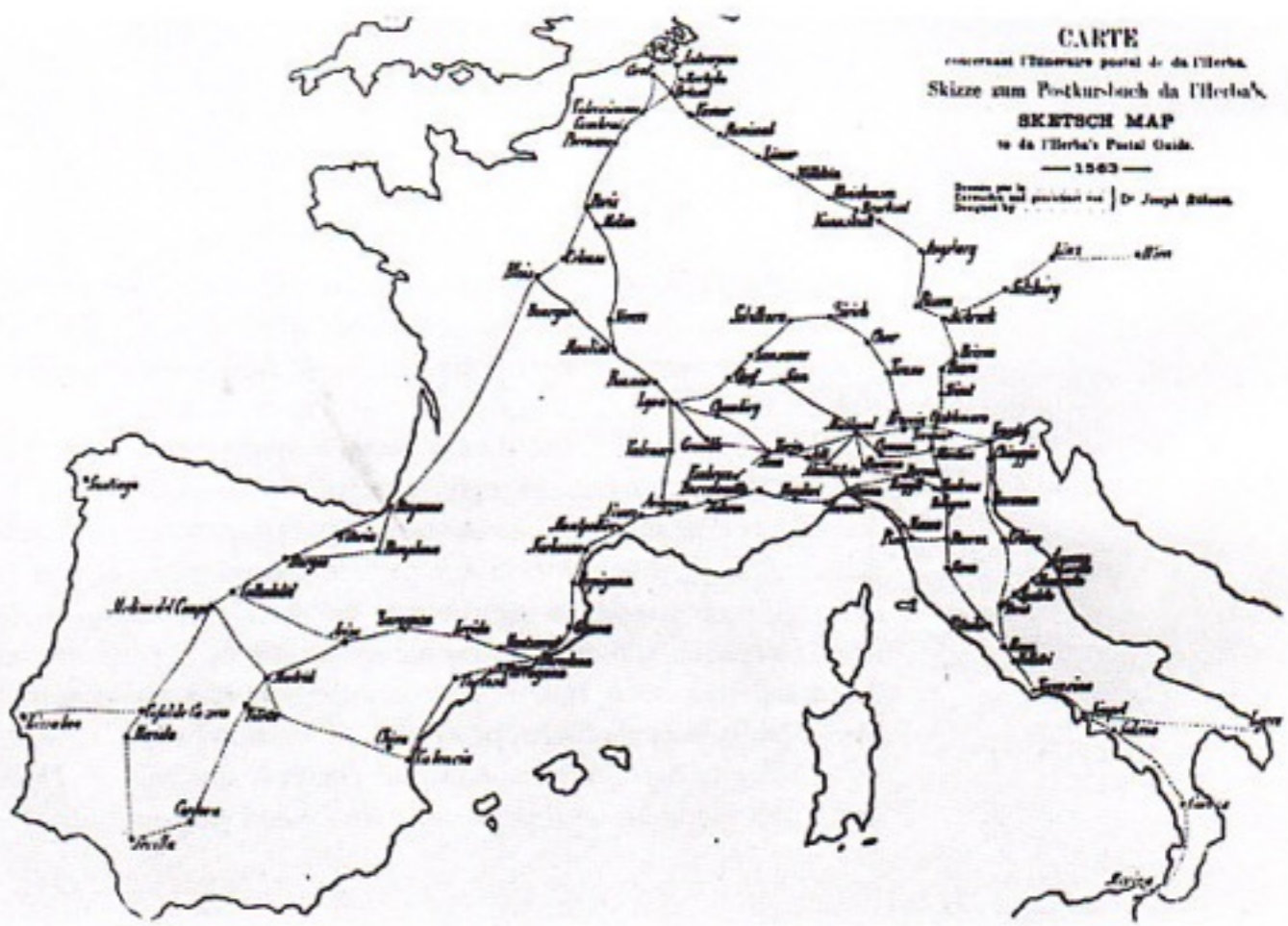
POSTVERTRÄGE DER TAXIS 1505.1516
ERSTE INTERNATIONALE POSTVERBINDUNGEN

Vergleich internationale Postverbindungen

Frankfurt	10	10	10	10
Wien	10	10	10	10
Paris	10	10	10	10
Rom	10	10	10	10
Lyon	10	10	10	10
Berlin	10	10	10	10
Moskau	10	10	10	10
London	10	10	10	10
Madrid	10	10	10	10

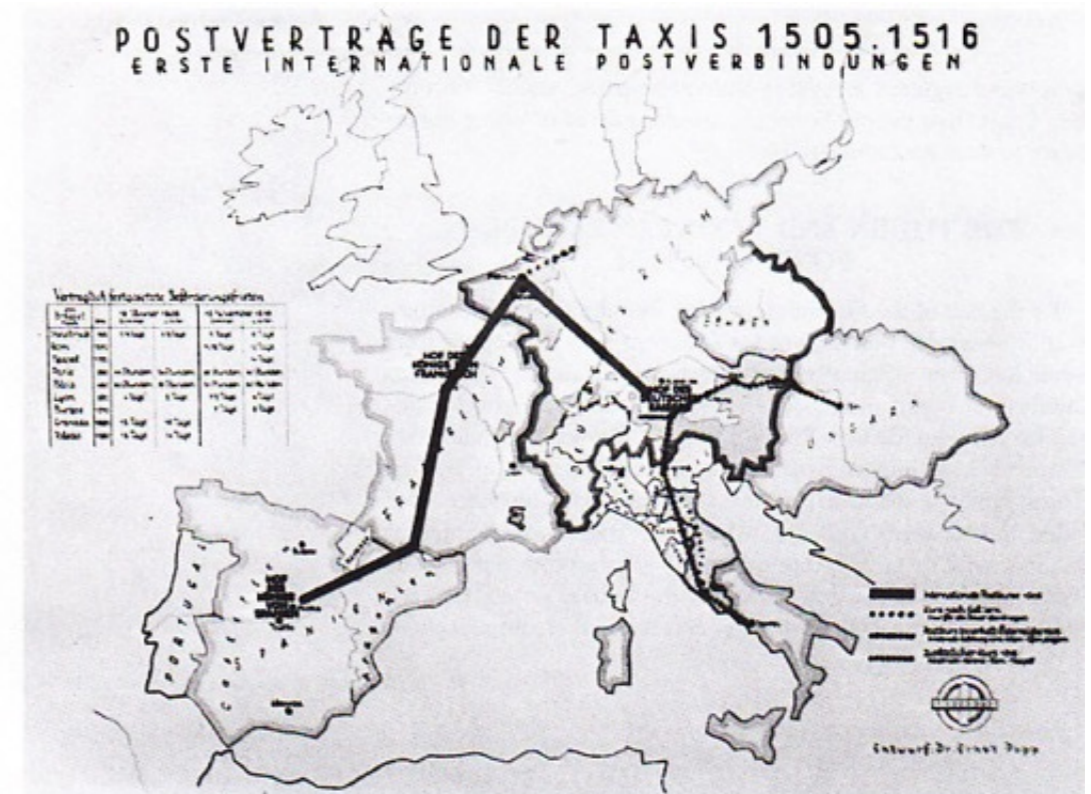


Postal rates of the Taxis Post c. 1500

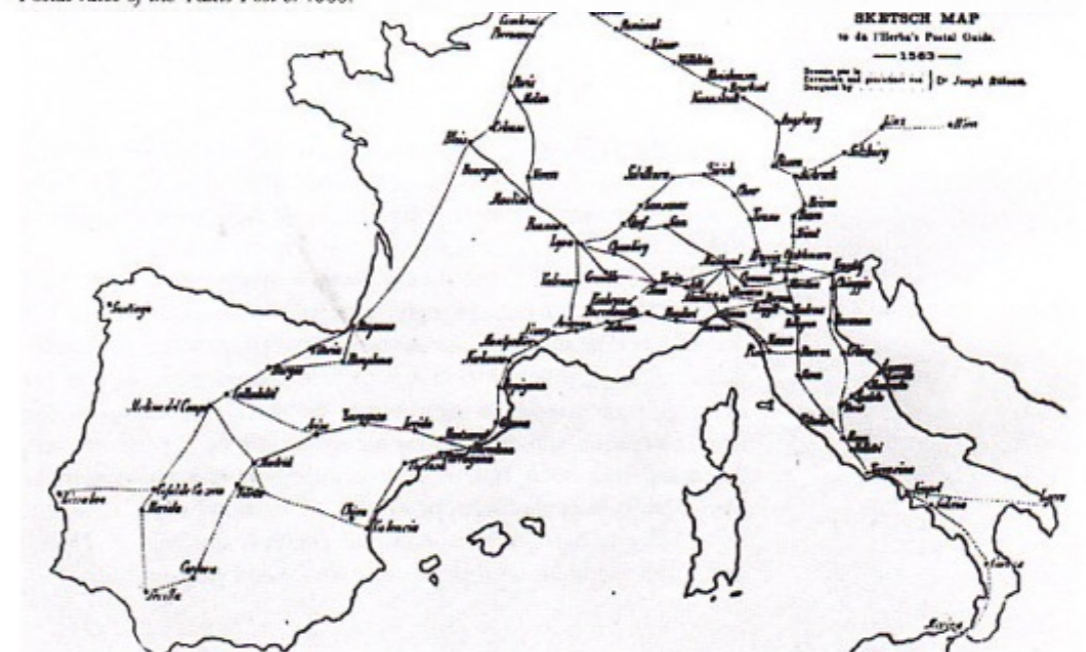


BEHRINGER: THE TAXIS-GALAXIS

- ▶ „The boom in the production of practical travel aids that began in the 1550s is evidence of a rapid increase in mobility and of a new perception of social reality.“
- ▶ Handwritten itineraries in the middle ages had been available - like the messenger system itself - only to specific groups of people and specific sectors of society such as merchants and monks.
- ▶ As the travel system opened up, so the amount of information published about travel opportunities increased. The new travel aids were put on the market by printers, who were evidently responding to a new demand created by a change in travel behaviour.
- ▶ Information had to be easy to handle, legible, printed in black and white and transportable: in other words, suitable for use on the journey.
- ▶ At the start of the 1560s, there was a fusion of the older form of road-list with precise specifications of the new postal infrastructure, yielding a new genre.



Postal rates of the Taxis Post c. 1500.

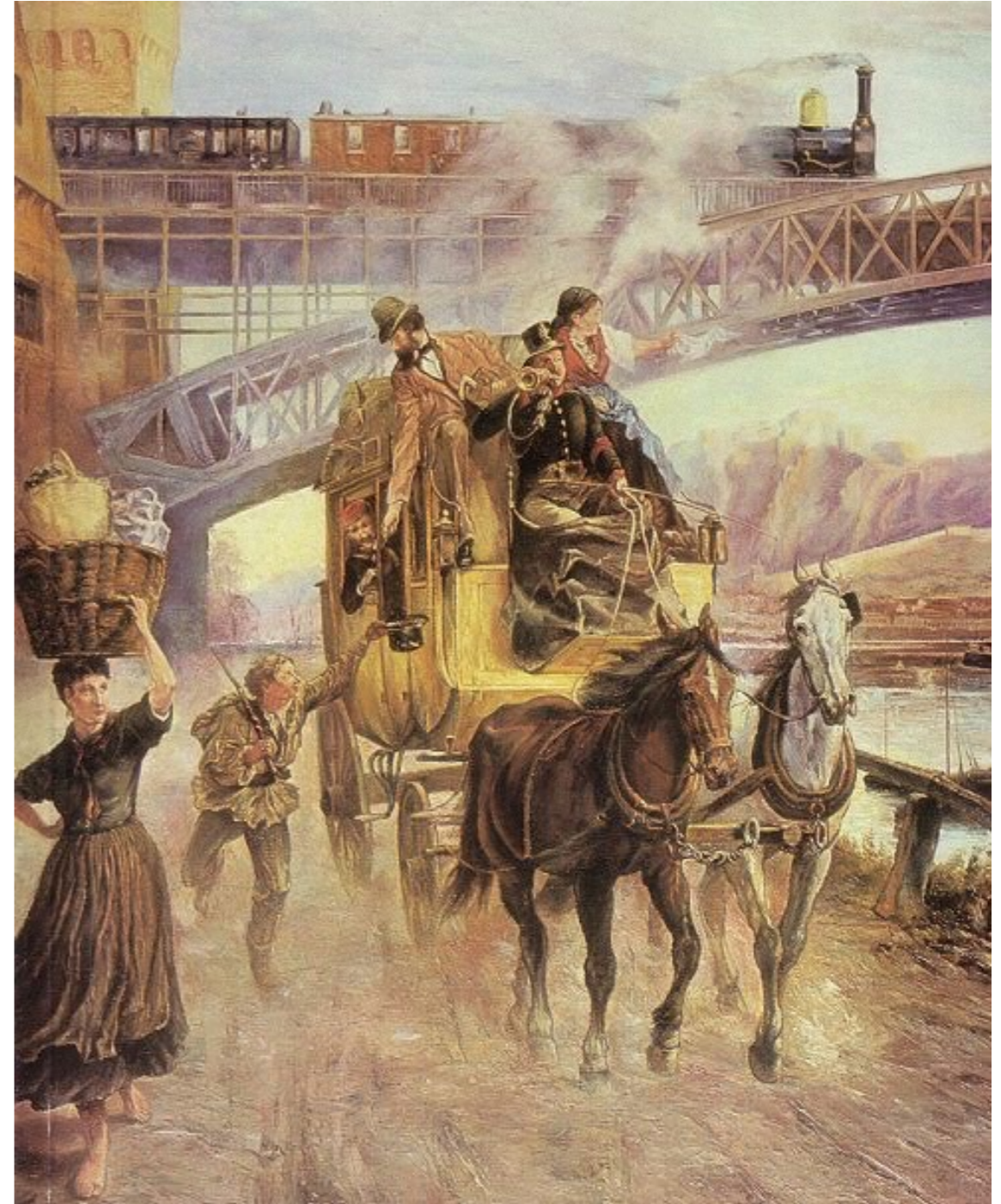


BEHRINGER: POSTAL SYSTEM VS. WWW

- ▶ „Although recent media theorists have viewed the establishment of the World Wide Web as the real turning-point in the history of communications ... there are many grounds for placing the date far earlier.“
- ▶ The increase began not with the 'Gutenberg galaxy', but with the 'Taxis galaxy' of c. 1500.
- ▶ The 'take-off' period of this system of communications was in the seventeenth century: it occurred (perhaps not coincidentally) in synchrony with another major transforming event, the 'Scientific evolution'.
- ▶ The development of the postal system led to a shortening of the travel time between Hamburg and Augsburg from about 30 days in 1500 to 11 days in 1615 and 5 days by 1800 for postal couriers.

BEHRINGER: ACCELERATION CONSEQUENCES

- ▶ The time-difference between places at different degrees of longitude came to be of significance.
- ▶ The co-ordination of timetables made necessary the introduction of a 'standard time'.
- ▶ The standardization of time is usually cited as a prime example of the effect of railway building. Yet it was as early as 1825 that a 'standard clock' was installed at the main Prussian post office in Berlin, in order to standardize the time between Königsberg and Cleves.
- ▶ All mail coaches and postal couriers were now required to carry portable route clocks, which took the central post office's standard time into the furthest-flung corners of the Empire.



BEHRINGER: PERSPECTIVE VS. PRINTING PRESS

- ▶ Why did the perception of space changed during the Renaissance?
- ▶ The paradigm shift cannot be explained in terms of the inventions and discoveries of Gutenberg, Columbus and Copernicus.
- ▶ The origins of the change in the perception of space do not lie in the discovery that the universe was infinite, but earlier, in art. The change was signalled by the discovery of perspective, which led both to a revolution in the representation of space and to the production of accurate-scale cartographic records and the development of a new science of terrestrial space, namely geography.



BEHRINGER: A SPACE OF FLOWS

- ▶ Even a recent author such as Giesecke refers to 'information and communications systems', when what he has in mind is printing, thereby perpetuating a conceptual confusion that has been endemic in the social sciences (thanks not least to McLuhan's chaotic terminology).
- ▶ „The correct point to emphasize is that the book is a medium for the storage and copying of information.“
- ▶ The distribution of the medium of the book and the communication of its contents occurred through other media.
- ▶ If we want to think about the impact of printing, we need to take into consideration the media of transmission of information. For any period before the invention of telegraphy, this means looking at transport media, since every form of transmission of information entailed physical movement through space.
- ▶ „In fact, even when the transmission of news is instantaneous, the spatial dimension of communication remains important, as the flow of news requires its own space within which the actors operate: it requires what the American sociologist Manuel Castells has called a 'space of flows'.“

BEHRINGER: A SPACE OF FLOWS

- ▶ The postal system was the 'space of flows' of its period.
- ▶ A 'space of flows' consists of 1) a 'technological infrastructure of information systems, telecommunications, and transportation lines'; 2) 'nodes and hubs' at which exchanges of all kinds can take place and whose functional logic is dependent on their position within the network; 3) the 'habitats of the social actors who operate the network'.
- ▶ This description of the internet applies equally well to the postal system of the early modern era. The system of portioning out space was not an 'invention' akin to the invention of a tool or piece of machinery. Unlike roads or railway lines, it was not the kind of entity that left physical remains in the landscape for archaeologists to rediscover. Like the air-transport network or the internet, the postal system had concrete existence only in its portals: as with the connections between airports or computers, the only connection between post houses was a virtual one, not a material structure.

BEHRINGER: COMMUNICATIONS REVOLUTION

- ▶ Media revolutions based on the new infrastructure – such as the invention of the periodical press and the periodical journal, and the introduction of regular personal transport and systematic road-building – each constituted new spurts of development within *the secular process of rationalization that became the hallmark of western, or modern, history*.
- ▶ Unless we pay heed to the early modern Communications Revolution we will not properly understand other fundamental structural changes of the era, such as the Scientific Revolution or the Industrial Revolution, or even the political revolutions.
- ▶ Indeed, the Communications Revolution left a greater mark on the early modern era than did any other structural change. It transformed people's perceptions of space and time so radically that we find it difficult actually to comprehend the view of reality that prevailed in the pre-modern world.
- ▶ The Communications Revolution did more than any other change to replace a world of the miraculous with a world of the measurable.

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 7

COMMUNICATION THEORY

Vilém Flusser, „Line and Surface“ In: Flusser, Vilém, Writings. Edited by Andreas Ströhl, translated by Erik Eisel. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2002, 3-7;

- "On The Theory of Communication". In: Flusser, Vilém, Writings. Edited by Andreas Ströhl, translated by Erik Eisel. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2002, 8-20.



VILÉM FLUSSER

FLUSSER: LINE VS. SURFACE

- ▶ „Surfaces are becoming ever more important in our surroundings.“
- ▶ Flusser designates mass-produced and circulated images as "surfaces" in order to contrast them with written "lines."
- ▶ Compelling our attention to move from point to point across the page, writing predisposes "line thought," of which history, as "a project toward something" is a manifestation.
- ▶ „Surface thought“ differs. Images do not arrange information in linear sequence but disperse it across two dimensions so that the time of viewing does not determine an order.
- ▶ And when images unfurl linearly, as in a film or a television program?

FLUSSER: EXPERIENCING MISS BARDOT'S BREASTS

- ▶ „It becomes obvious that 'history' as embodied in reading written texts means something quite different from what it means in reading films.”
- ▶ But: „This radical change in the meaning of the word history has not yet become obvious, for a simple reason: we have not yet learned how to read films and TV programs.”
- ▶ We do not know how to read them because we continue to think of surfaces in the way writing taught us to, as representations of objects.
- ▶ Flusser prefers not to: he points out that the familiar description of photographic images as referencing the sorts of objects with which one might have a physical encounter has little to do „with most of the things that determine us at present – either the things that occur in explanations or the things that occur in images. The genetic information or the Vietnam War, or alpha particles, or Miss Bardot's breasts are all examples. We may have no immediate experience of any of these things, but we are nonetheless determined by them. Where we can have no immediate experience, it is the media themselves that are the things for us.”

FLUSSER: CAVE PAINTINGS VS. OIL PAINTINGS

- ▶ Technical images differ dramatically from cave paintings.
- ▶ Cave paintings are no adequate representations, they should be considered as projections or programs, forms that model subsequent engagements with the world.
- ▶ The end of the twentieth-century might have gone a bit differently had "surface" supplanted "discourse" as the privileged figure for mass mediation.

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 8

COMMUNICATION THEORY

James Carey, "A Cultural Approach to Communication". *Communication as Culture. Essays on Media and Society*. Boston: Unwin Hyman 1989, 13–36.

Craig, Robert T., "Communication Theory as a Field". In: *Communication Theory*, Nine: Two, May 1999, 119–161;

- "Reflection on 'Communication Theory as a Field'". In: *Revue internationale, Communication sociale et publique* 2009, N. 2, 7–12.

Warren Weaver, "Recent Contributions to the Mathematical Theory of Communication". In: Shannon, Claude E. / Weaver, Warren, *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Urbana: The University of Illinois Press 1964, 1–28.



COMMUNICATION AS
CULTURE

JAMES CAREY

**OF ALL THINGS,
COMMUNICATION IS THE
MOST WONDERFUL.**

John Dewey

CAREY: COMMUNICATION AS CULTURE

- ▶ Society exists in communication (= transmission).
- ▶ Two different views of communication: a) transmission view, b) ritual view.
- ▶ Innis: Transportation & communication (rivers, roads). The telegraph 'broke' the identity of transportation and communication.

CAREY: EXTENDING GOD'S KINGDOM

- ▶ The the roots of the transmission view lie in religious attitudes
- ▶ Transportation: the establishment and extension of God's kingdom on earth.
- ▶ Immigration to America: a vast movement in space to escape the boundaries of Europe, to extend the kingdom of god, to „carve a New Jerusalem out of the woods in Massachusetts“.

CAREY: COMMUNICATION AS CULTURE

- ▶ The telegraph: We are on the boarder of spiritual harvest because thought now travels by steam and magnetic wires.
- ▶ The Almighty constructed the railroad for missionary purposes. The new technology: „spreading the Christian message farther and faster, eclipsing time and transcending space, bringing closer and making more probable the day of salvation... „
- ▶ Then the religious metaphors fell away. Why? Because of the forces of science and secularization. The technology of communication itself moved to the center of thought.
- ▶ John c. Calhoun saw the subjugation of electricity to the mechanical necessities of man as the last era in human civilization (Miller 1965: 307).

CAREY: THE RITUAL VIEW

- ▶ The ritual view: sharing, participation.
- ▶ Commonness, communion, community ... directed towards "the maintenance of society in time".
- ▶ Distinction: the maintenance of society in time/the extension of messages in space
- ▶ Distinction: representation of shared beliefs/act of imparting information.
- ▶ Communication as ritual: a ceremony that draws persons together. How? By projecting community ideals and their embodiment in material form - dances, plays, architecture, strings of speech, news stories.
- ▶ The ritual view also has religious origins. It provides not information but confirmation
- ▶ Distinction: information/confirmation

CAREY: US AND THEM

- ▶ Reading a newspaper is like attending a mass; it is a situation in which nothing new is learned, but a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed ...
- ▶ The monetary crisis: American patriots (vs Japan & Germany); Women's movement: supporter or opponent.
- ▶ News as a historic reality – invented by the middle class 18th century in favor of the unique, original, novel.
- ▶ Distinction: information/drama
- ▶ The transmission view of communication was exhausted. „It had become academic, a repetition of past achievement, a demonstration of the indubitable. I felt it was necessary to reopen the analysis - "to go elsewhere" into biology, theology, anthropology and literature to get a fresh perspective.
- ▶ Definition: "Communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed."



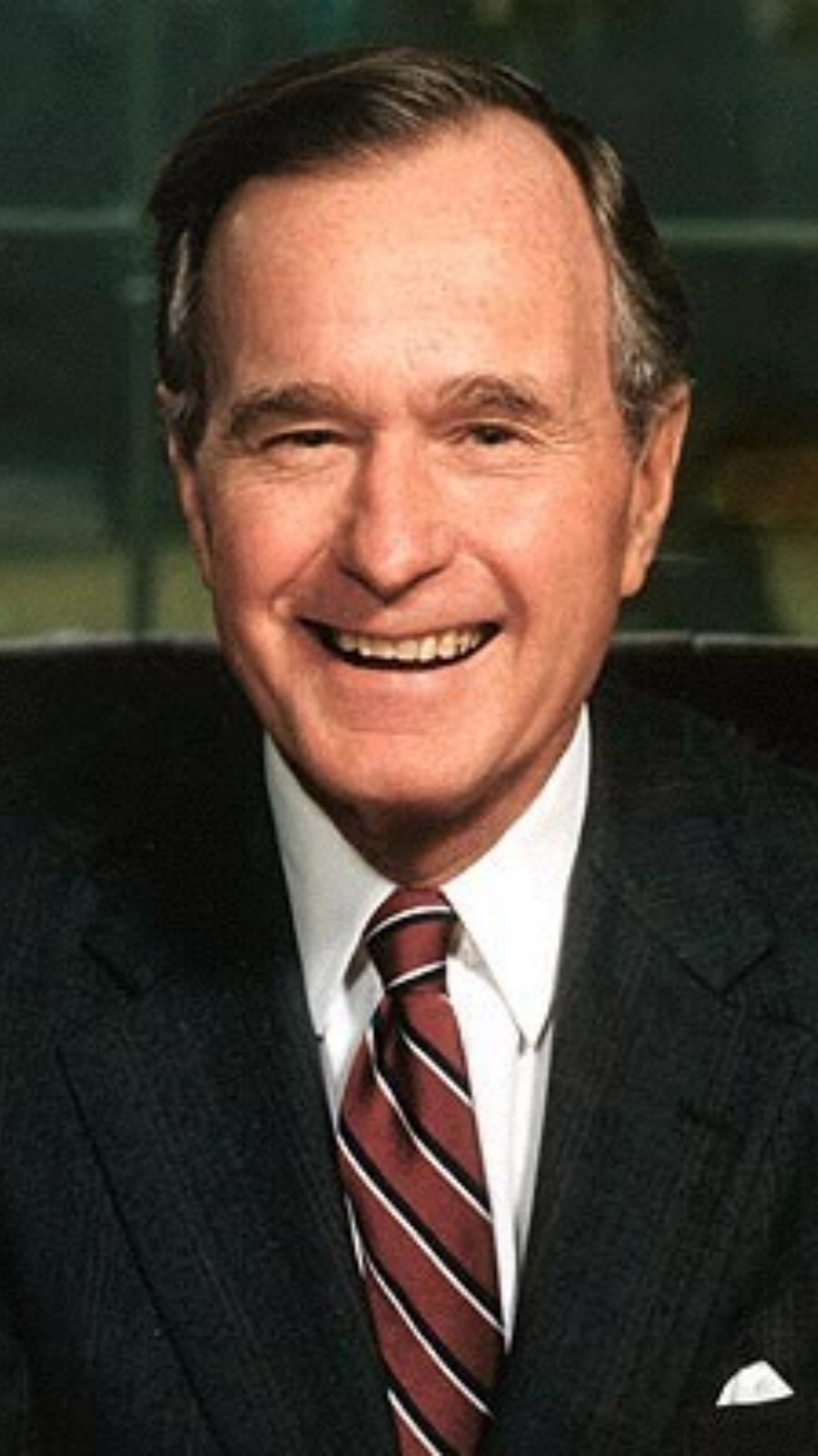
DISCIPLINARY IDENTITY OF
COMMUNICATION THEORY

ROBERT T. CRAIG



DISCIPLINARY IDENTITY OF
COMMUNICATION THEORY

ROBERT T. CRAIG



DISCIPLINARY IDENTITY OF
COMMUNICATION THEORY

ROBERT T. CRAIG

CRAIG: TOWARDS A NORMATIVE THEORY OF COMMUNICATION

- ▶ „Grounded Practical Theory: The case of Intellectual Discussion“ (1995): an attempt to create a methodological model - using discourse analysis - which will guide the development and assessment of normative theories.
- ▶ Distinction: what is/what ought to be
- ▶ Luhmann: cognitive/normative
- ▶ Thesis: The neglect of normative theories limits the practical usefulness of communication studies.
- ▶ Goal: to develop normative theories that guide practice.

CRAIG: UNIFIED IN DIALOG

- ▶ From 1991 to 1993 Craig was the founding editor of the International Communication Association.
- ▶ He received the ‚Best Article Award‘ for „Communication Theory as a Field“ from the International Communication Association. Of which he was the founding editor from 1991 to 1993.
- ▶ The article is an attempt to establish disciplinary identity in the field of communication.
- ▶ Key distinctions: field, tension, dialogue, identity, unification.

CRAIG: UNIFIED IN DIALOG

- ▶ **"Communication theory as an identifiable field of study does not yet exist."**
- ▶ The field of communication theory has become fragmented into separate domains which simply ignore each other.
- ▶ This inability to engage in dialog with one another causes theorists to view communication from isolated viewpoints, and denies them the richness that is available when engaging different perspectives.
- ▶ Communication theorists are all engaging in the study of practical communication. By doing so different traditions are able to have a common ground from which a dialog can form, albeit each taking a different perspective of communication. Through this process of forming a dialog between theorists with different viewpoints on communication "communication theory can fully engage with the ongoing practical discourse (or metadiscourse) about communication in society."

CRAIG: UNIFIED IN DIALOG

- ▶ Communication theorists can become unified in dialogue by charting the "dialogical dialectical tension", or the similarities and differences in their understanding of communication and demonstrating how those elements create tension within the field.
- ▶ The similarities and differences can be mapped into seven suggested traditions of communication theory. Each of these traditions understand communication, as well as how each traditions understanding, creates tension with the other traditions.

CRAIG: UNIFIED IN DIALOG

- ▶ "Dialogical-Dialectical coherence": a "common awareness of certain complementarities and tensions among different types of communication theory."
- ▶ The different theories cannot develop in total isolation from one another, therefore this dialogical-dialectical coherence will provide a set of background assumptions from which different theories can engage each other in productive argumentation.
- ▶ We need a metatheory or "second level" theory which deals with "first level" theories about communication.
- ▶ This second level metamodel of communication theory would help to understand the differences between first level communication traditions. With this thesis in place, Craig proposes seven suggested traditions of communication that have emerged and each of which have their own way of understanding communication.

CRAIG: 7 TRADITIONS

- ▶ **Rhetorical:** views communication as the practical art of discourse.
- ▶ **Semiotic:** views communication as the mediation by signs.
- ▶ **Phenomenological:** communication is the experience of dialogue with others.
- ▶ **Cybernetic:** communication is the flow of information.
- ▶ **Socio-psychological:** communication is the interaction of individuals.
- ▶ **Socio-cultural:** communication is the production and reproduction of the social order.
- ▶ **Critical:** communication is the process in which all assumptions can be challenged.

CRAIG: 7 TRADITIONS, 2 TABLES

- ▶ The proposed seven traditions of communication theory are placed on two separate tables.
- ▶ The tables are supposed to show how each traditions different interpretation of communication defines the tradition's vocabulary, communication problems, and commonplaces, and next to show what argumentation between the traditions would look like. Craig then outlines the specifics of each tradition.

CRAIG: CONCLUSIO

- ▶ Craig concludes with an open invitation to explore how the differences in these theories might shed light on key issues, show where new traditions could be created, and engaging communication theory with communication problems through metadiscourse.
- ▶ Craig further proposes several future traditions that could possibly be fit into the metamodel: a feminist tradition where communication is theorized as "connectedness to others", an aesthetic tradition theorizing communication as "embodied performance", an economic tradition theorizing communication as "exchange", and a spiritual tradition theorizing communication on a "nonmaterial or mystical plane of existence."

CRAIG: CRITIQUE

- ▶ David Meyers: "A Pox on All Compromises: A reply to Craig (1999)."
- ▶ 1. You misrepresent the metamodel.
- ▶ 2. The lack of any critical truth within your construction is problematic for the field of communication theory.
- ▶ The metamodel is misrepresented by unjustly arguing that there is a separation between first and second level constitutive models while hiding the paradox within this statement. It privileges the constitutive model rather than another theoretical conception.
- ▶ You fail to draw any way to discern truth within the theories. A metamodel needs to provide some mechanism that will "reduce misrepresentation and mistake" in evaluating theory. Myers frames Craig's idea's of collective discourse without an evaluative criteria of what is good theory and bad theory as "a Mad Hatter's tea party" which will allow all to participate in this party of discourse" but will not be able to "inform any of the participants when it is time to leave".

CRAIG: YOU GOT IT ALL WRONG

- ▶ David, your criticisms are not founded in actual inconsistencies within my argument.
- ▶ No? Well, I think they are.
- ▶ No, they're not. They are founded in the difference between your and my respective notions of truth and the proper role of empirical truth as a criterion for adjudicating among theories.
- ▶ But the separation between first level theories and second level metatheory is paradoxical and therefore an inaccurate or misguided distinction.
- ▶ Ok, I admit there is a paradox inherent, but slippage between logical levels is an inherent feature (or bug) of communication, and we should not forget that theory is, among other things, communication.
- ▶ Wow. Well, that's clever.
- ▶ Let me cite Gregory Bateson to point out that while the theory of logical types forbids the mixing of different "levels" to avoid paradox, "practical communication necessarily does exactly that". Communication is fraught with paradox, and while a logicians ideal would try and resolve these paradoxes, in actual practice we don't, because there is no way to do so.
- ▶ Theory is not practice!
- ▶ Resolving the paradox is not possible, stupid. Not I am wrong, you are wrong. You have been unable to prove any inconsistency or misrepresentation when it came to using the constitutive model for my metamodel. I wasn't trying to subvert every other theory to a constitutional model, I used the constitutive model not for some theory of truth or logical necessity, ok? I was opening up a space from which competing theories of communication can interact.
- ▶ Well, this is interaction, isn't it?
- ▶ I would like to maintain a theoretical cosmopolitanism.
- ▶ Well, good luck with that.
- ▶ Secondly, you missed the point of my metamodel. You claim it should evaluate the truth of theories? Your own case study fails to back up this point. It just denies a universally established truth in the field of communication theory.

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 9

COMMUNICATION THEORY, ORIGINS OF LANGUAGE

Jürgen Habermas, On the Pragmatics of Social Interaction. Preliminary Studies in the Theory of Communicative Action. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2001, 45–66.

Michael Tomasello, Origins of Human Communication. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2008, 319–341.

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 10

MYTH, RITUAL, ORALITY

Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols. Explorations in Cosmology.* London: Routledge 2004, 72–91.

Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. Volume Two: Mythical Thought.* Translated by Ralph Manheim, introductory note by Charles W. Hendel. New Haven: Yale University Press 1955, 1–16; 27–70; 233–262.

Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1960.



SYMBOLS BASED ON
THE HUMAN BODY

MARY DOUGLAS

NATURAL SYMBOLS

- ▶ The idea: to be able to classify different societies in terms of their use of symbols. These symbols derived from the functions of the body.
- ▶ „The human body is common to us all. Only our social condition varies. The symbols based on the human body are used to express different social experiences. We should therefore start with a principle for classifying the latter.“

HEIN/HEIN: THE KITTEN CAROUSEL EXPERIMENT

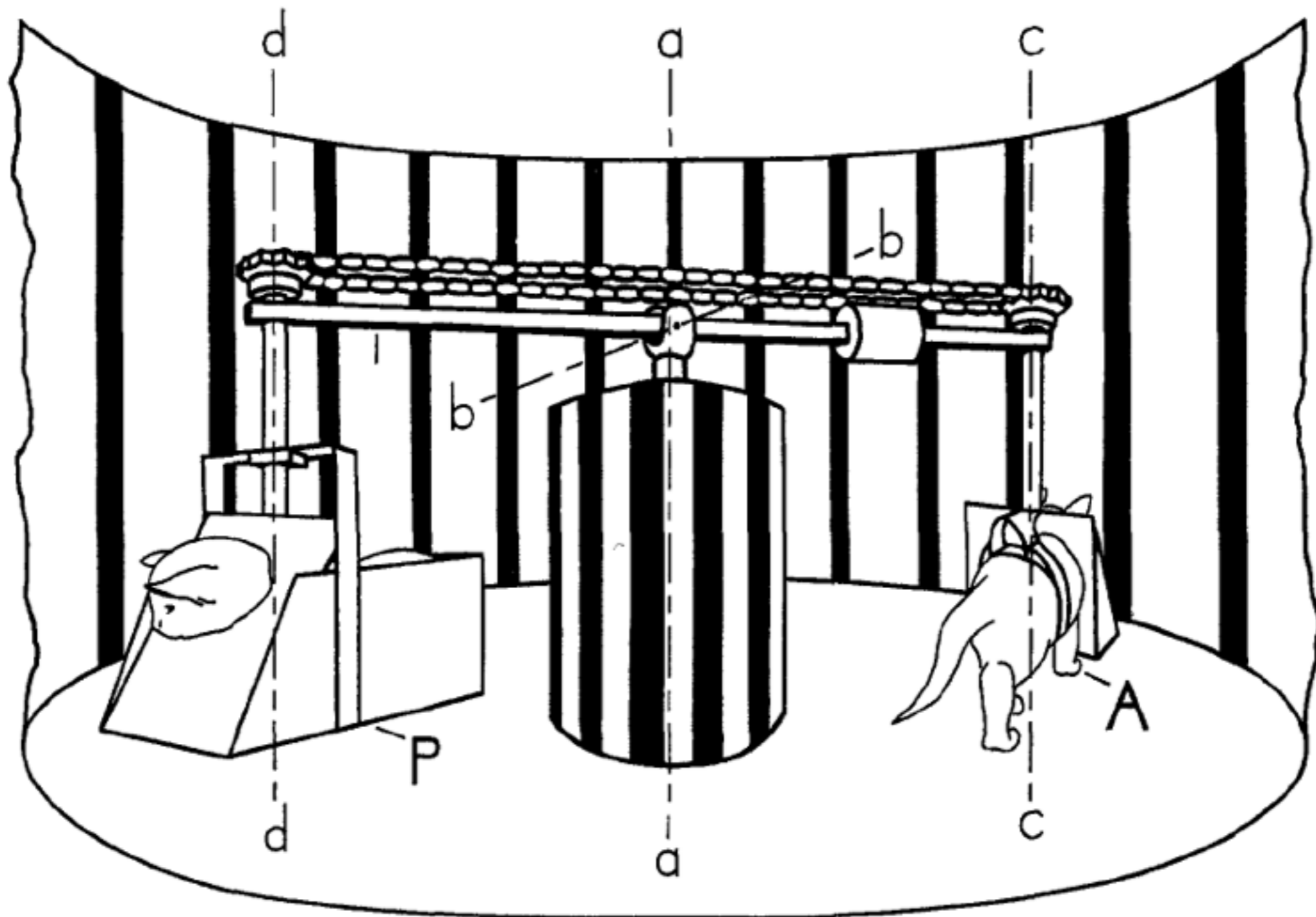


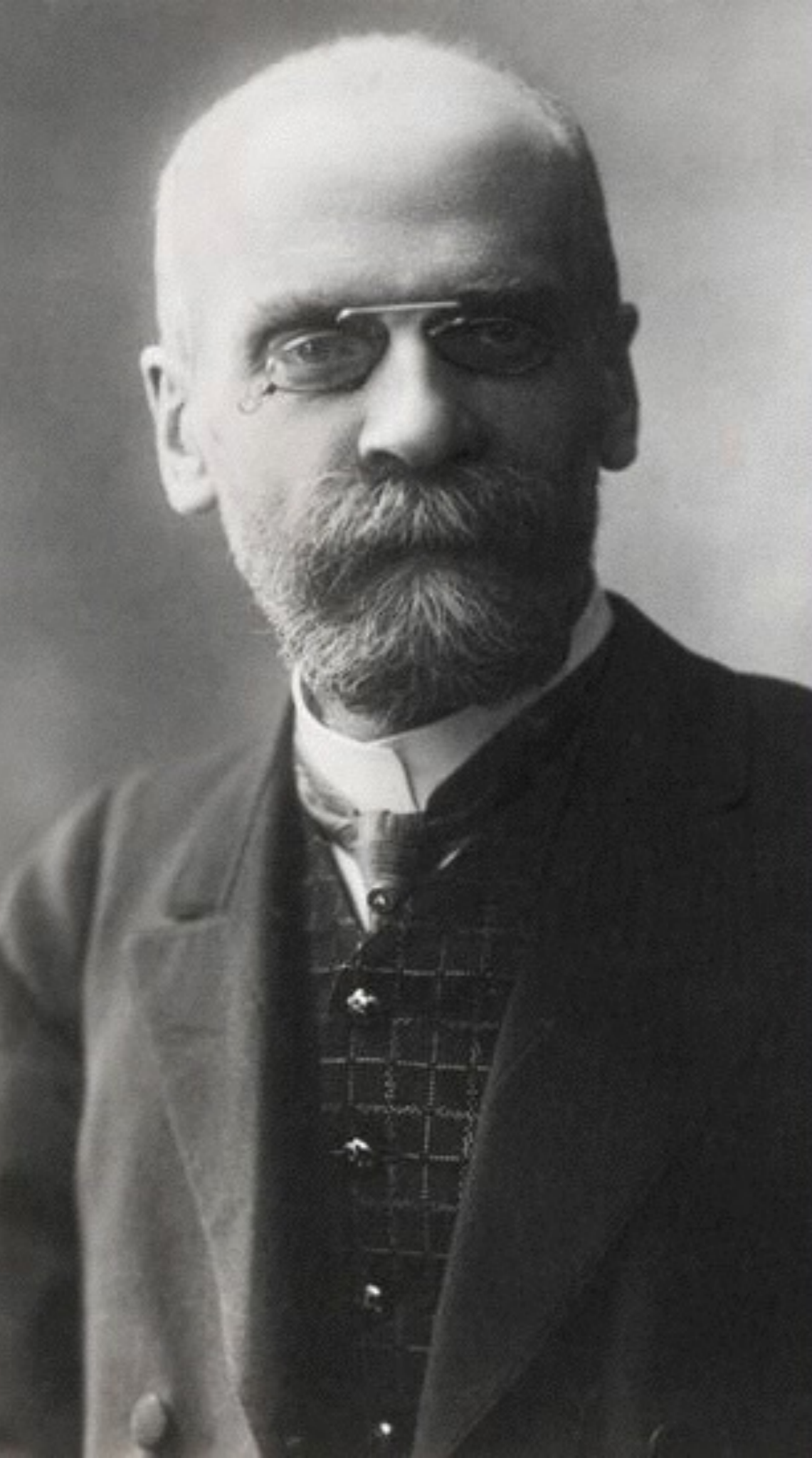
FIG. 1. Apparatus for equating motion and consequent visual feedback for an actively moving (A) and a passively moved (P) S.

CONTEXT: THE FLOWER POWER ERA

- ▶ “Natural Symbols was an immediate follow-up on *Purity and Danger* and, as a product of the 1960s, the sense of urgency, the desire to join an intensely exciting worldwide conversation, shows ... rereading it now I discover the mine of ideas that I have been quarrying for practically everything that I have written since. So I am grateful to Routledge for deciding to reprint it and glad to have the chance to write a new introduction. I should add however that the diagrams I used seem very complicated now: later versions are much simpler. Whom should I imagine myself now to be addressing? Any one who is interested in ritual, anyone interested in theology, in shifting values, or stable values, in personal identity, or in history. I still would like to persuade them not to try to do their work without establishing a basis for comparisons. So many things have changed since 1970. In the 1960s it was understood that social anthropology would have to be comparativist or nothing. Obviously a method would be necessary to avoid subjective bias. Anyone writing about emotions needs to establish the basis for their comparisons, lest they fall into the trap of being surprised that Frenchmen talk French.”

CONTEXT: THE FLOWER POWER ERA

- ▶ “This book started as a comment on student revolt against dead ritual and meaningless forms. But it was not only students who protested, nor only students who transformed the Western world through the 1970s and 1980s, until we found ourselves where we are now. This world we are in still longs for sincerity, and for simple and direct dealings between equals. It still rejects the outward forms of social distinction, and still finds that differences of power and wealth are as effective as barriers to direct communication as ever. At that time, in America, the battles were about Black and White segregation, on buses, in swimming pools, in schools. In the background of all of this they were about guerrilla warfare in Vietnam. In the Catholic Church they were ostensibly about anti-ritualism, about how the Letter lived while the Spirit died. Vatican II attended to the rituals, but in the background the strife was about a hierarchical Church that was too remote to hear the voice of its congregatio... The mood was to sweep away rituals, sweep away the institutions, and let the people be free to speak from the heart . . . as if they would automatically love each other if not prevented by institutional dead wood. Attacking rituals was attacking the surface.”



THE
ELEMENTARY
FORMS
OF THE
RELIGIOUS
LIFE

EMILE

DURKHEIM

CLASSICS OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

KEY DISTINCTIONS: RESTRICTED/ELABORATED, GROUP/GRID

- ▶ „When I first read *The Elementary Forms* I felt puzzled by his description of rituals and the alleged exciting effect on the congregation. That ritual should be seen as a rabble-rouser was a surprise as my upbringing had given me quite another experience of the big rituals of the Roman rite. Dignified, but tedious, slow and elaborate, this is the Corpus Christi procession that used to wind its way down the sidewalks of Hampstead, or the long Easter Vigil at St Josephs, Highgate. Think of the high degree of co-ordination required to bring in every participant at the right moment. The ordered use of flowers, bells, lights and organ music, and the separation of consecrated from unconsecrated elements; it is all too careful and precise to be interrupted by volleys of spontaneous 'Alleluiah' and ecstatic shouting and dancing. Everyone is worried about getting the timing right and fitting in the highly classified parts of the congregation.“

**SOMETHING IS WRONG,
EITHER DURKHEIM OR THE
RELIGION.**

Mary Douglas

KEY DISTINCTIONS: RESTRICTED/ELABORATED, GROUP/GRID

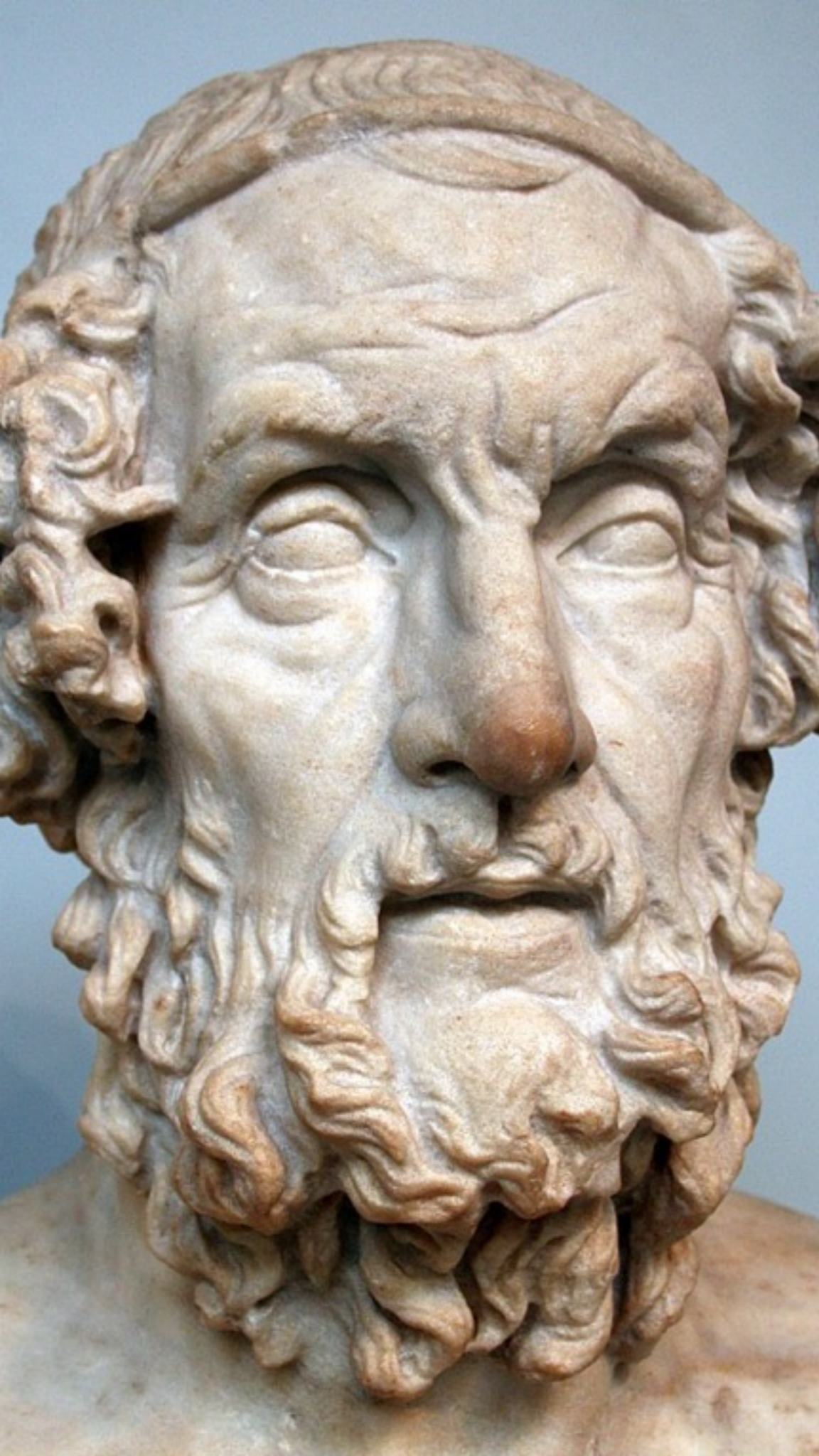
- ▶ 1) Restricted/elaborated speech: The restricted code of speech is a form of ritual, it is not so much about meaning, but reinforcing social structure
- ▶ The anti-ritualism of american and european middle class has been reared in an individualistic way (elaborated speech) and therefore has not incorporated any group feeling
- ▶ 2) Group/grid: A family is a group: common name, common dwelling etc. Groups indicate how clearly defined an individual's position is as inside or outside.
- ▶ Grid is how social behavior is determined by seniority, sex, age etc. Grids indicate how clearly defined an individual's role is within networks social privileges, claims, obligations.
- ▶ Societies vary very much in how much they are controlled by each factor.

KEY DISTINCTIONS: OPENNESS

- ▶ “So secularism, on this view, is a consequence of a social factor, openness. The freedom of individuals to move out if they are being harrassed by neighbours is a freedom to disbelieve the divine punishments that afflict those who defy the community standards. The freedom to say goodbye and walk away does not necessarily imply a loss of religious belief, but it does shake the walls of established religions. Open society leads to private religion.”

KEY DISTINCTIONS: SOCIAL/PHYSICAL BODY

- ▶ “The social body constrains the way the physical body is perceived. The physical experience of the body, always modified by the social categories through which it is known, sustains a particular view of society.”
- ▶ „There can be no such thing as natural behaviour. Every kind of action carries the imprint of learning, from feeding to washing, from repose to movement and, above all, sex. Nothing is more essentially transmitted by a social process of learning than sexual behaviour, and this of course is closely related to morality.”

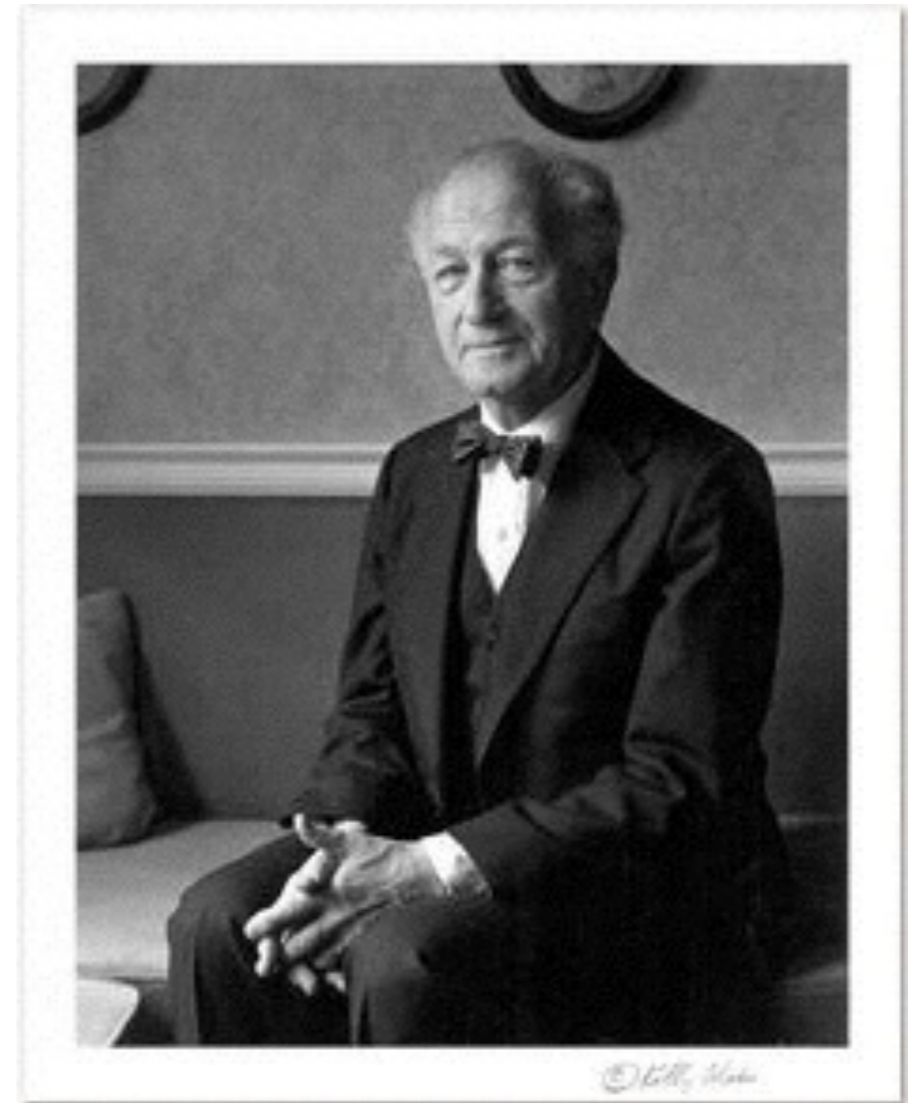


HOMER, THE SINGER
OF TALES

ALBERT B. LORD

HOMER, THE SINGER OF TALES

- ▶ Distinction: non-literate authors of the Homeric epics/scribes who later wrote them down
- ▶ The texts that have been preserved are a transcription by a listener of a single telling of the story.
- ▶ The story itself has no definitive text, but consists of innumerable variants, each improvised by the teller in the act of telling the tale from a mental stockpile of *verbal formulas, thematic constructs, and narrative incidents*.



THE POESIS OF POETRY

- ▶ *Poïesis* is etymologically derived from the Greek and means "to make".
- ▶ It was first used as a verb, an action that transforms and continues the world, and not in the romantic sense of creation or as sheer technical production.
- ▶ Distinction: Autopoiesis/Allopoiesis

WHAT 'IS' ORALITY? AND WHAT ISN'T?

- ▶ Anything can be performed orally.
- ▶ Not the performance, *the composition during oral performance* is important.
- ▶ Oral composition is not just improvisation.
- ▶ Oral composition is improvisation, modified by the restrictions of a particular style.
- ▶ Oral transmission of oral epic is not just transmission by word of mouth from one singer to another: learning/composition/transmission merge, they become one process.



Fig. 29 Avdo Medjedovitch, peasant farmer, is the finest singer the expedition encountered. His poems reached as many as fifteen thousand lines. A veritable Yugoslav Homer!

ORALITY: SINGERS OF TALES

- ▶ An oral poem is not composed *for* but *in* performance.
- ▶ The performance is a moment of creation for the singer.
- ▶ An oral poet is not reproducing - he is a composer.
- ▶ Singing/performing/composing are facets of the same act.

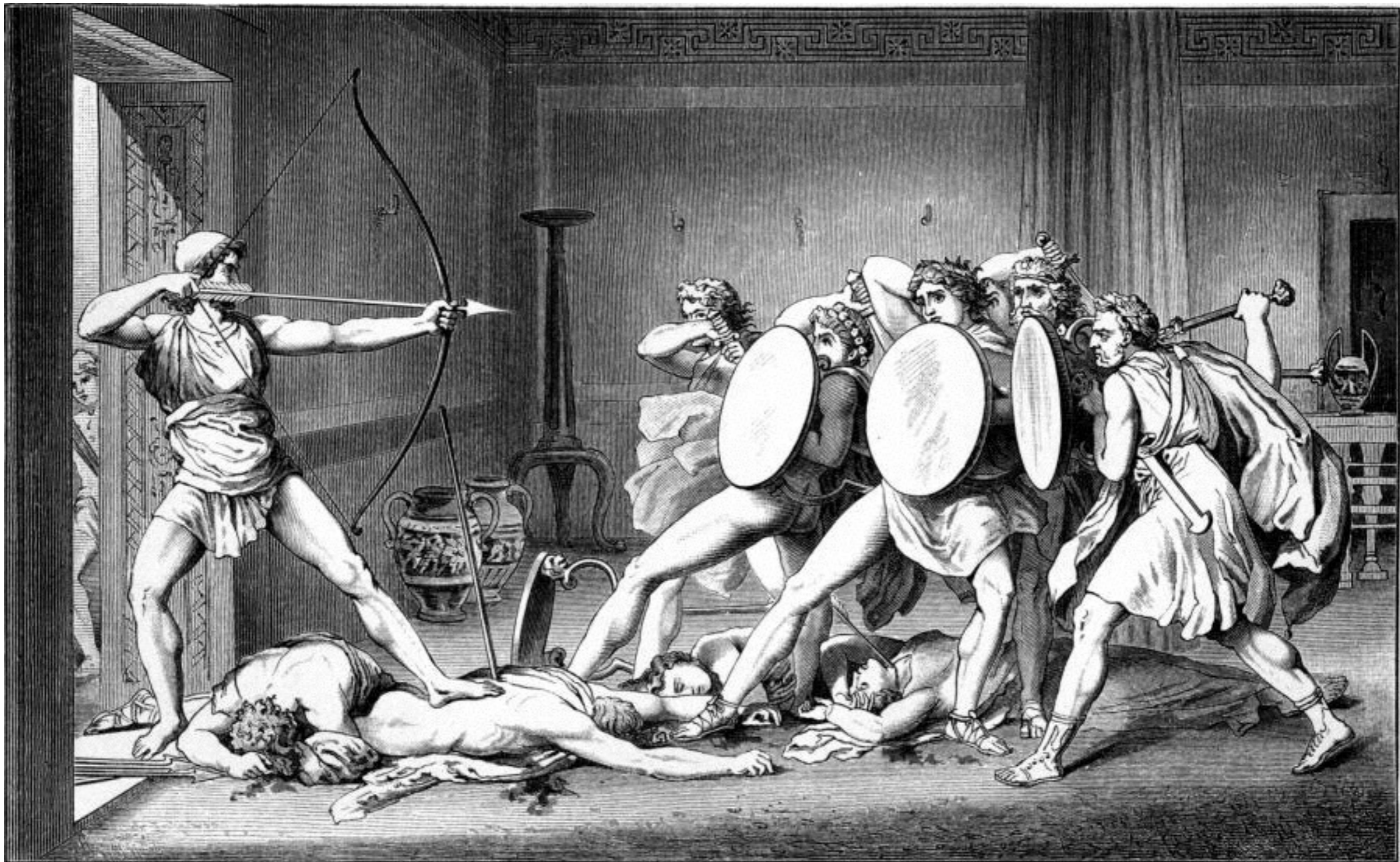






AB 1896





ORALITY: SINGERS OF TALES

- ▶ Did Homer write *The Odyssey*?
- ▶ Or should we consider multiple authorship?
- ▶ Or was Homer the last redactor and compiler?
- ▶ Did writing exist back then? (And if not, how have his poems attained their length?)

ORALITY: SINGERS OF TALES

- ▶ Writing existed. But *The Odyssey* is not written poetry.
- ▶ The peculiarities of language and structure of Homeric poems are those of oral poetry.
- ▶ “The great minds who could formulate the most ingenious speculation, failed to realize that there might be another way of composing a poem than that known to their own experience. They always thought in terms of a fixed text.”

ORALITY: SINGERS OF TALES

One of the difficulties in comprehending the change from oral to written style lies in the fact that we think of the written always in terms of quality, and that of the highest. We assume without thinking that written style is always superior to oral style, *even from the very beginning*. Actually this is an error in simple observation of experience, perpetrated alas by scholars who have shunned experience for the theoretical. A superior written style is the development of generations. When a tradition or an individual goes from oral to written, he, or it, goes from an adult, mature style of one kind to a faltering and embryonic style of another sort. The Homeric poems could not possibly belong to a “transitional” or early period of written style. Bowra’s phrase that the richness of these poems “suggests reliance on writing”²³ is ambiguous.

CHARACTERISTICS: PARATAXIS

- ▶ Parataxis (from Greek "act of placing side by side", from para "beside" and táxis "arrangement") is a technique that favors short, simple sentences.
- ▶ Distinction: coordination/subordination
- ▶ Images or fragments are juxtaposed without a clear connection. Readers are then left to make their own connections.
- ▶ The sun was shining brightly; we went for a walk. The sun was shining brightly, and we went for a walk. The sun was shining brightly, so we went for a walk.
- ▶ Paratactics: The sun was shining brightly. We went for a walk.
- ▶ Famous example: Veni, vidi, vici.

CHARACTERISTICS: THEMES

- ▶ Before the singer starts to sing, he knows the song - thematically, not textually!
- ▶ The time to plan a line in advance is a hindrance, not an advantage.
- ▶ Key points in the performance draw the poet into one direction or the other.
- ▶ "One cannot write song. To bind it is to destroy it. One cannot lead Proteus captive."
- ▶ *The Odyssey*: a return song combined with a maturing story.



CHARACTERISTICS: FORMULA STRUCTURE

- ▶ A formula is "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea."
- ▶ Parry's discussion focuses on repetitions of meter and pitch more than textual content.
- ▶ An unbroken line indicates a formula; broken line: unformulaic. An unbroken line indicates a formula; broken line: unformulaic.
- ▶ Distinction: stichic/stanzaic
- ▶ Enjambement: periodic - non-periodic (adding) style
- ▶ Rhythm: 'hexametric'.
- ▶ *Sage mir, Muse, die Taten des vielgewanderten Mannes*
...
- ▶ Problem: What to do with 'run over words'? The hexameter is too long!

Upon the grass no longer hangs the dew;
Forth hies the mower with his glittering scythe,
In snowy shirt bedight, and all unbraced,
He moves athwart the mead with sideling bend,
And lays the grass in many a swathy line:
In every field, in every lawn and mead,
The rousing voice of industry is heard;
The haycock rises, and the frequent rake
Sweeps on the fragrant hay in heavy wreaths.

Joanna Baillie, *Haymaking*

I had no time to hate, because
The grave would hinder me,
And life was not so ample I
Could finish enmity.
Emily Dickinson, *I had no time to hate*

CHARACTERISTICS: FROM ORALITY TO LITERACY

- ▶ The *Odyssey*: an orally dictated text - the nearest one can get to an actual performance.
- ▶ The method Homer knew served the very purpose of rapid composition. *The Odyssey* was a sung text which arose from the pressure of rapid composition.
- ▶ Only after Homer had sired them, both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* became these two monoliths - for the first time in Greek epic tradition.
- ▶ Reproducers replaced recreators. The set ('correct') text had arrived: the original.
- ▶ A development *from stability of essential story to stability of text*, to the exact words of the story.

NEXT WEEK READINGS

- ▶ MONDAY: Werner H. Kelber, "Language, Memory, and Sense Perception in the Religious and Technological Culture of Antiquity and the Middle Ages." In: Kelber, Werner H., *Imprints, Voiceprints, and Footprints of Memory. Collected Essays*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 2013, 133-166.
- ▶ THURSDAY: Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*. Second Edition. Translated by G.E.M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 1997, 6-21.

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 11

MYTH, LANGUAGE, PERCEPTION

Werner H. Kelber, "Language, Memory, and Sense Perception in the Religious and Technological Culture of Antiquity and the Middle Ages." In: Kelber, Werner H., Imprints, Voiceprints, and Footprints of Memory. Collected Essays. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 2013, 133–166.

Michel Serres, Angels: A Modern Myth. Paris: Flammarion 1995, 7–12; 45–55.



incipit aurea bul
la imperialium con
stitutionum. et pri
mo in iudicio ad sum
mum creatorem. o

Domi
potes
eterni
deus
spes
vni

sa mundi. Qui celi
fabricator ares qui
gubitor orbis. Tu po
puli memor esto tu
i sic mittis ab alto
prospice ne gressu
faciat ubi regnat e
rnis. Imperat alle
to leges dictante m
gera. Sed potius v
tute tu quem dili
gis huius. Celsus
insignis karoli de
us alme ministra

Ut valeat ductore
pio per amena vir
cta. iflorentium sey
nemorum sedesq
vratas. Ad latites
nitrate pios vbi se
mina vite. Diuini



animantur aquis
a fonte supno. Ven
ficata leges spiritus
mundatur a temp
tis. Ut messis que
at esse dei meritiq
future. Maxima ce
tenum cumulare
per horrea fructus

SHIFTING ROLES OF
LANGUAGE, MEMORY AND
SENSE PERCEPTION

WERNER H.
KELBER

SHIFTING ROLES OF LANGUAGE, MEMORY, SENSE PERCEPTION

- ▶ Walter Ong: Major developments in culture are related to the evolution of the word.
- ▶ Structure: 1) Milman Perry, Albert Lord - "I like", because they initiated the field of oral tradition literature; 2) Their impact goes beyond oral tradition - the rediscovery of speech culture (in the Western tradition) has in turn encouraged reflection of the nature of texts.
- ▶ "There is something different about many of our classical texts."
- ▶ Modes of communication are shapers of consciousness

GORGIAS: THE EMOTIVE AND MAGICAL POWERS OF SPEECH

- ▶ Speech as a powerful ruler
- ▶ Neither sign nor signification, not carrier of meaning or revealer of truth: language as a force, potent ruler intent on governing his subjects
- ▶ Aesthetics of reception: Arousal of pain and pleasure, fear and pity
- ▶ Language: supposed to make you feel something (influencing, moulding, converting the soul)
- ▶ Danger: flattery, manipulation

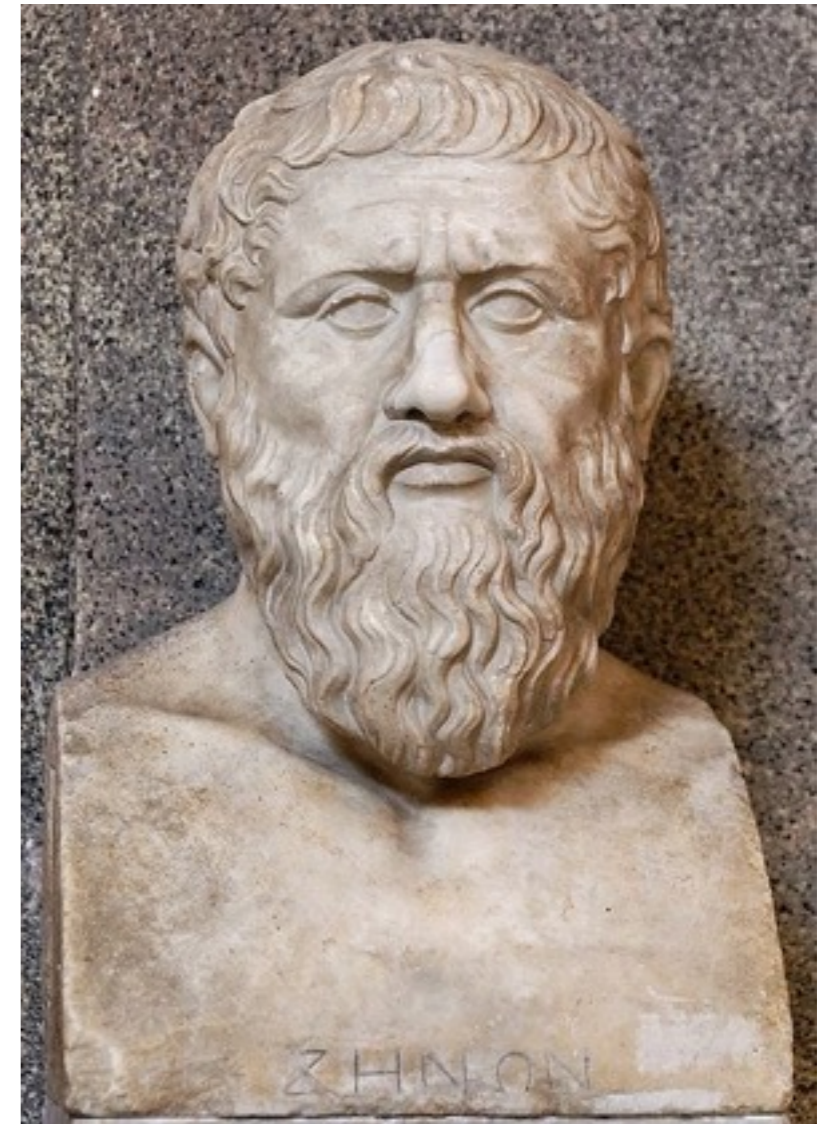
THE SPELL OF WORDS

- ▶ Words, especially poetic words, were perceived to be closely allied with magic and witchcraft
- ▶ Poetic performances, the conversion of the soul escaped rational probings
- ▶ They created a god-like trance among hearers
- ▶ Speech put into effect by oral practitioners could amount to a form of madness



PLATO: TRUE KNOWLEDGE VS. PSYCHIC POISON

- ▶ No poets in my well-ordered state!
- ▶ The mimetic art practiced by “friend Homer” corrupted the soul and destroyed its rational part, the rhythmic and emotional spells are a kind of “psychic poison”
- ▶ The dramatic performance indoctrinates a plurality of hearers about matters such as justice and the good
- ▶ Had Homer been able to truly educate the people, he would have “possessed not the art of imitation but real knowledge”
- ▶ We need to determine “what each thing really is”; and to do so, we need to convert from the many (plural impressions) to the one (abstracted object, timeless truth)



PLATO: LANGUAGE AS A CATALYST OF COGNITION

- ▶ But: Plato's conception of language was oral
- ▶ 1. Writing implants forgetfulness in our souls, 2. Writing is anti-social, it segregates itself from living discourse, it maintains "a solemn silence", telling readers "just the same thing forever" (books cannot answer or ask a question); 3. Writing will fall into the hands of the wrong people; 4. It is an unacceptable exteriorisation of thought, gives only the appearance of wisdom
- ▶ Rhetoric? Should be a search for truth
- ▶ Dialectic: Isolate and define subject matters, divide until you reach the limit of division, arrive at the "very essence of each thing", apart from all perceptions of sense

ARISTOTLE: MEMORY AND RECOLLECTION

- ▶ The myth: Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, bore Zeus nine daughters, the Muses. The Muses represented a civilisation constituted by writing and music, the tragic performance and comedy - but they always functioned as the daughters of Mnemosyne.
- ▶ "Memory, not textuality, was the centralising authority."
- ▶ Key feature of memory: the theory of images. Aristotle: No thought can exist without mental pictures. Words and things: localisable at places.
- ▶ Memory tradition vs. theories of pure thought and verbocentrism

**THE THINGS THEMSELVES ARE NOT
PRESENT TO MY SENSES; WHAT IS
PRESENT IN MY MEMORY HOWEVER
ARE THEIR IMAGES.**

Augustine

AUGUSTINE: THEOLOGY OF SIGNIFICATION

- ▶ Augustine adopts the spatial metaphor of memory - as "a large and boundless chamber". Images can be recalled to sight.
- ▶ In Augustine's culture, quality of thought was related to the powers of remembering.
- ▶ But he couldn't remember God: "I will pass even beyond this power of mine which is called memory; yea, I will pass beyond it, that I may approach unto Thee, o sweet light."
- ▶ Trinitarian unity: Memory, internal vision, and the will "which unites both".



AUGUSTINE: THEOLOGY OF SIGNIFICATION

- ▶ Rhetoric needs a place in Christian teaching. Eloquence cannot be rejected out of hand. Cicero: model of Christian oratory. Eloquence and wisdom are related, because true wisdom is ineffective without it.
- ▶ Augustine's reflections are centered on the Bible - eloquence is not paganism any longer. But the Bible was obscure, ambitious - obscurities that are "part of a kind of eloquence", designed to exercise our mind in search of hidden meanings.
- ▶ Gorgias: magical endorsement of words, Plato: dialectical discourse of reason; Augustinus: teaching of the biblical writings
- ▶ Distinction: signum/res (sign/things)
- ▶ Augustinus: "By means of words, therefore, we learn nothing but words."

WRITING IN THE MIDDLE AGES: COPY WITHOUT PASTE

- ▶ Medieval scribability was a craft, the production of manuscripts hard work
- ▶ Scribes were dedicated copyists, they served as catalysts (media) of orally dictated compositions
- ▶ Literacy remains the privilege of a few, and reading is still practiced as an oral activity
- ▶ Punctuation, word and chapters divisions: meant to support oral reading

**READING WAS LINKED WITH THE
DICTATION AND RECITATION OF TEXTS
MORE THAN WITH PRIVATE REFLECTION.**

Werner H. Kelber

THE DETACHMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

- ▶ Ideas and experiences, 'enshrined' in writing: stable
- ▶ The detachment of knowledge from oral tradition: depersonalisation, subject to reflection and analysis (see Lord)
- ▶ The textual base enhanced the possibilities of comparative and critical thought - reflections on language grew out of a working relationship with text

MEMORY IS A HOUSE CONTAMINATED WITH INTOLERABLE FILTH. INTO IT RUNS ALL ABOMINATION AND UNCLEANNESS. MEMORY IS A STOMACH CONGESTED WITH FOULNESS.

Bernard of Clairvaux

ST. THOMAS: INTEGRATING MEMORY

- ▶ Peter Abailard: The very vastness of verbal materials ... appeared to be not only in themselves different, but truly also contradictory.
- ▶ St. Thomas: nonemotional, stylised, ascetic - a supreme rationalization that was nevertheless constrained by rhetorical conventions
- ▶ St. Thomas: Yes, we need to keep the shape of images intact. Yes, Aristotle was right, all our cognition takes its rise from sense perception. "Man cannot understand without image." But memory is always of particulars, it has no grasp of universals. Our job is to reflect on and abstract from the particularity of sense images. Truly worth knowing: the divine universals.



OCKHAM: EARLY CONSTRUCTIVISM

- ▶ Do universals really exist?
- ▶ Ockham: No. "A universal is not a substance existing outside the mind of individuals and really distinct from them."
- ▶ But does God exist?
- ▶ Yes. But it "cannot be known from propositions by themselves, since in every argument something doubtful or derived from faith will be assumed".
- ▶ No. "The unity of God cannot be evidentially proved."
- ▶ Modes of knowing: 1) intuitive cognition (cognitio simplex), 2) abstractive cognition (cognitio abstractiva), along with memory.
- ▶ Concepts and images do not represent metaphysical essences - they are mental substitutions for the particulars.

OCKHAM: EARLY CONSTRUCTIVISM

- ▶ The particular, the experiential, the contingent moved to the center of inquiry.
- ▶ Signum/res? No - for Ockham, there was no correspondence between linguistic signs and metaphysical realities.
- ▶ Modern: "A spoken and written term does not signify anything except by free convention." The relation between sign and thing is arbitrary.



FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 12

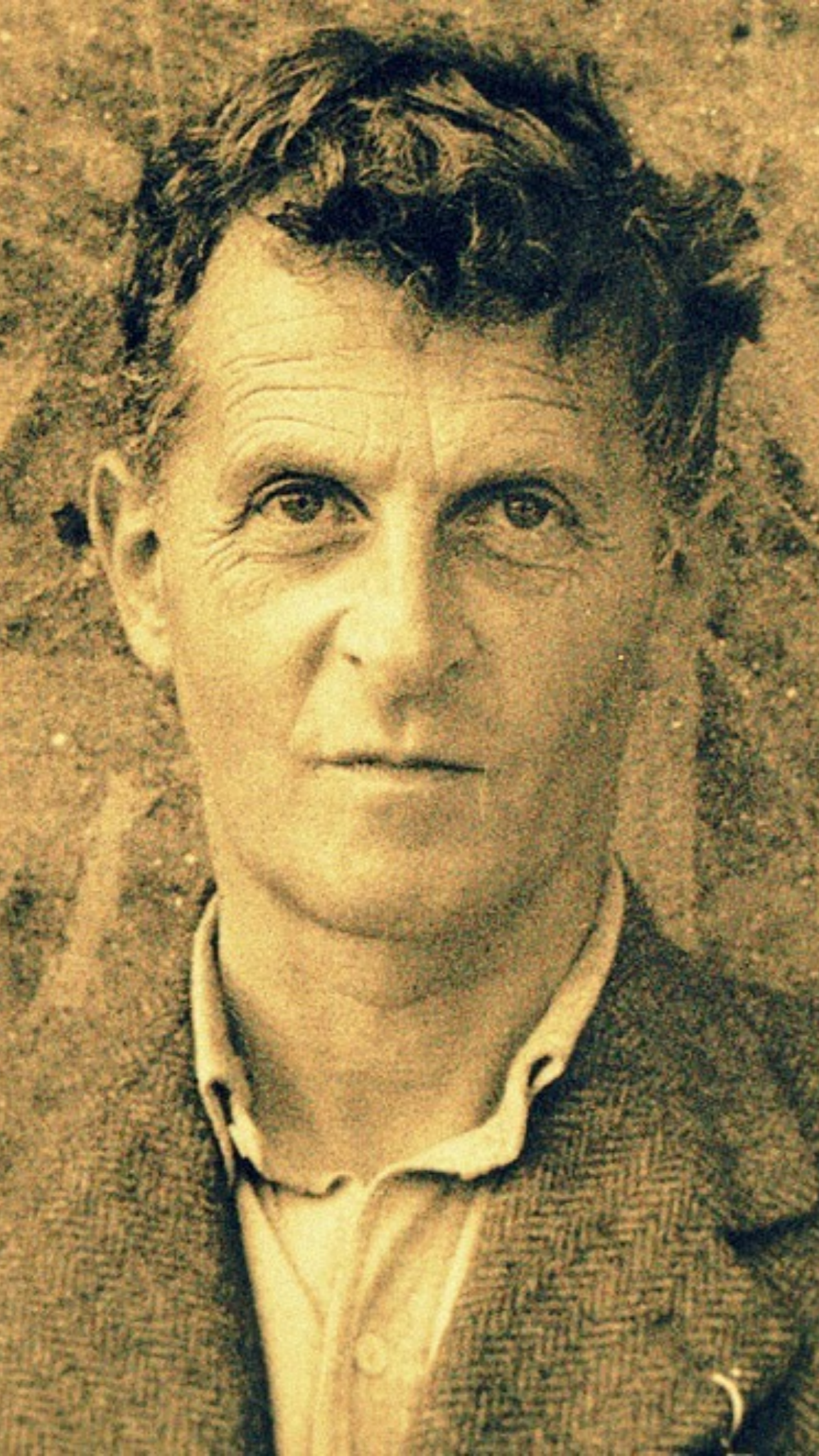
MEDIA PHILOSOPHY

Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations. Second Edition.

Translated by G.E.M. Anscombe.

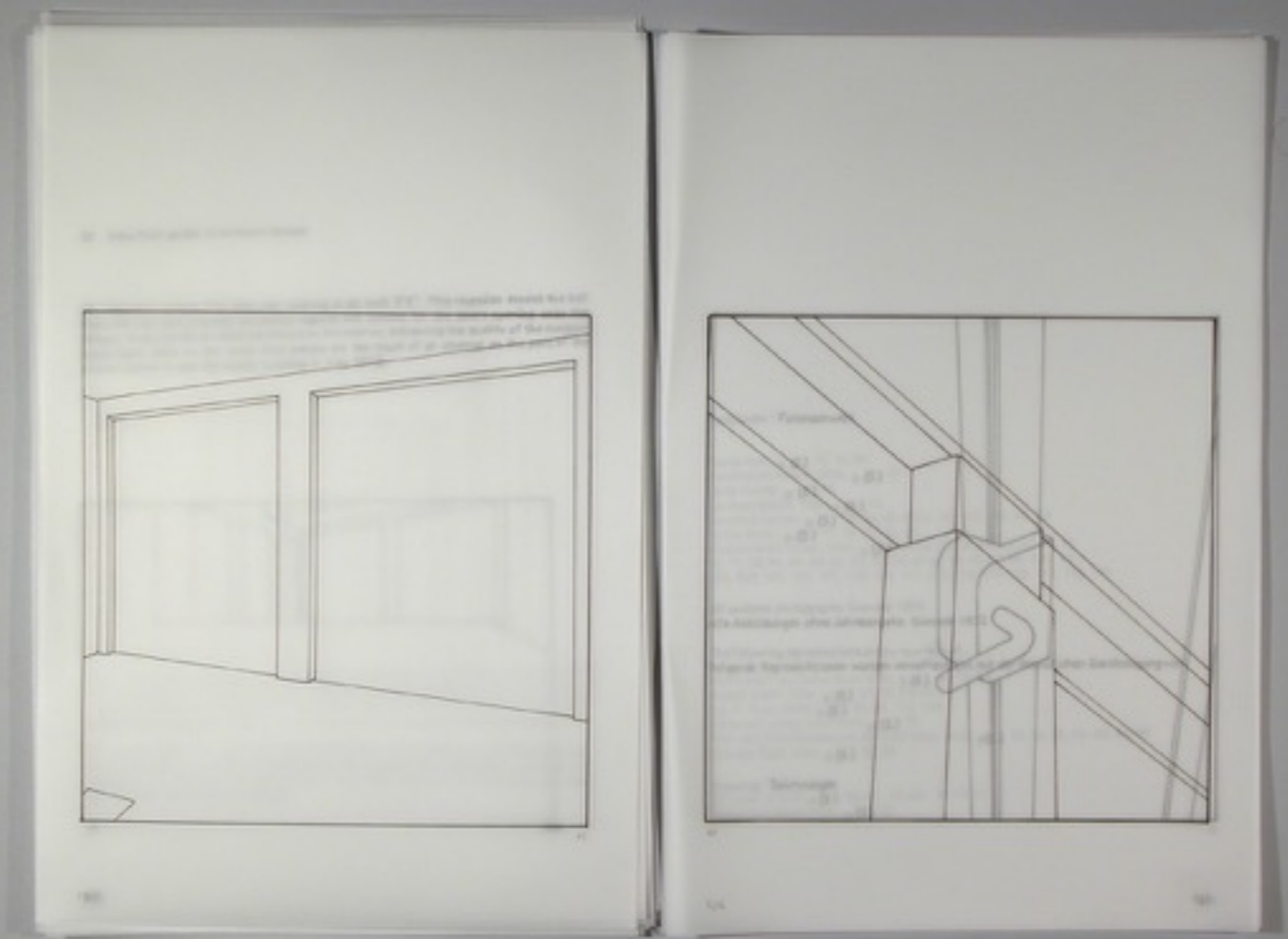
Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 1997,

6-21.



THE THINGS WE DO
WITH LANGUAGE

**LUDWIG
WITTGENSTEIN**



*

46
16. 8. 46.

Sobald ein Punkt nicht zu gleicher

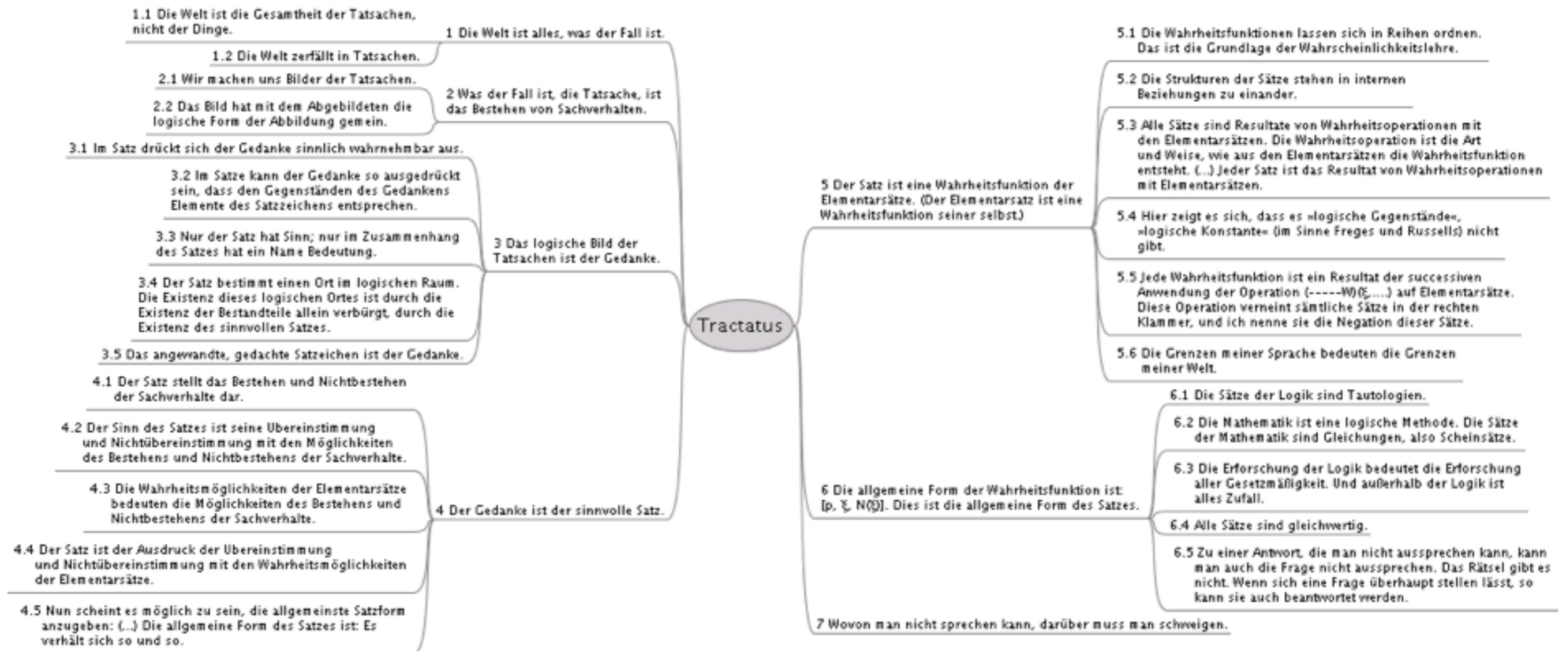
Zeit rot und grün sein kann
muss dem gegebenen Ausdruck
wegen seiner logische Unmo-
glichkeit sein. ^{Physische} Physische
keltische Ausdrucksweise

~~Das~~ reduziert sie zu
einer kindlichen Unmöglichkeit.
Zeit. Man sieht zwischen rot
und grün besteht eine ver-
wunderliche der Punkt aus.

Dies nun fordert
sich die Physik gar noch
in der Höhe. Und was
sieht man wie hier die
wahre Punkt der Physik
stande, aus nicht ge-
bracht wird.

Sobald ein Teilchen nicht
zu gleicher Zeit an zwei
Orten sein kann das

TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS: DESIGN



**THE WORLD IS ALL
THAT IS THE CASE.**

Ludwig Wittgenstein

**WHAT WE CANNOT SPEAK
ABOUT, WE MUST PASS
OVER IN SILENCE.**

Ludwig Wittgenstein





THE INDIVIDUAL WORDS IN LANGUAGE NAME OBJECTS – SENTENCES ARE COMBINATIONS OF SUCH NAMES. EVERY WORD HAS A MEANING. THIS MEANING IS CORRELATED WITH THE WORD. IT IS THE OBJECT FOR WHICH THE WORD STANDS.

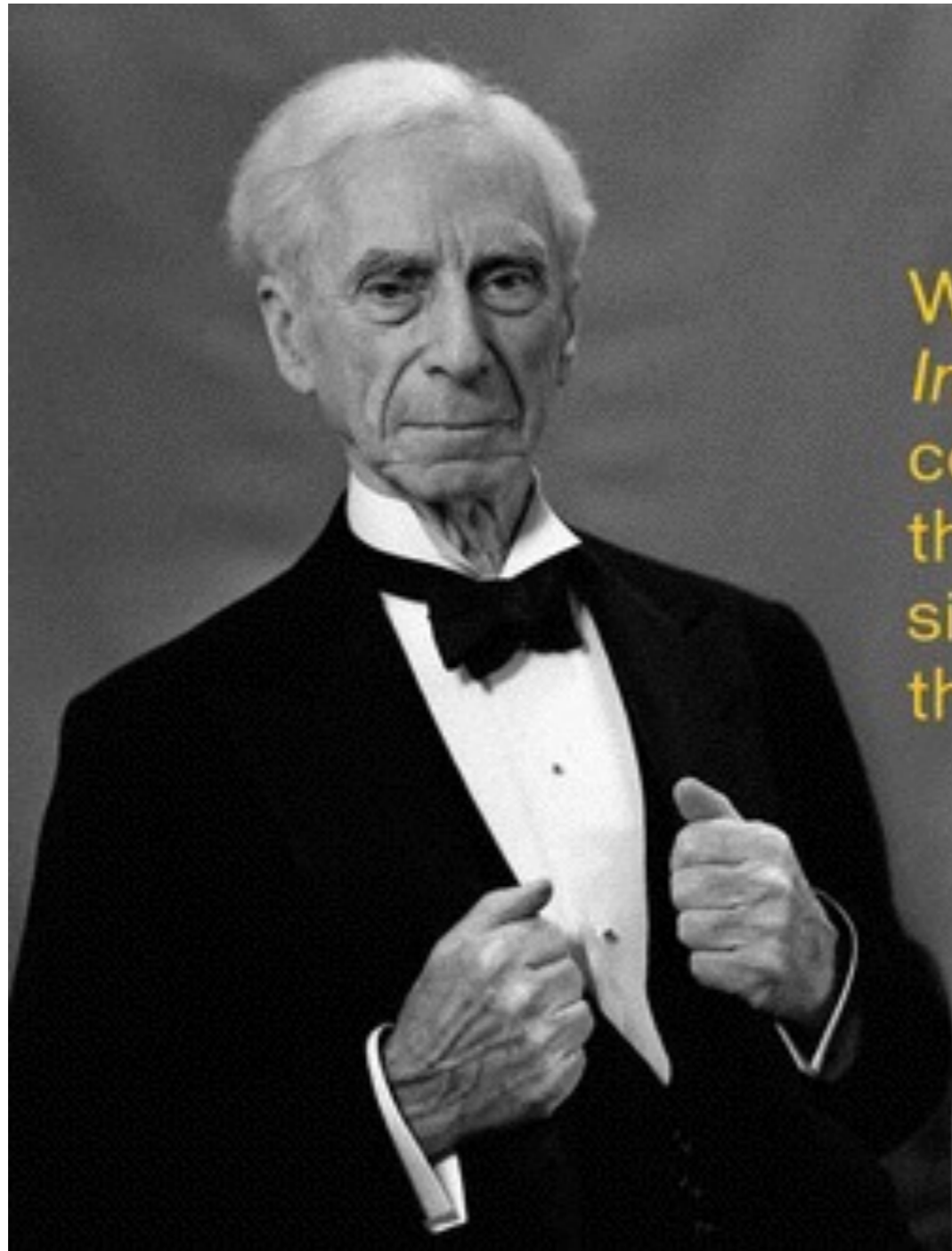
St. Augustine

PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS: THE WORLD VS. PURE LOGIC

- ▶ The meaning of a word is its use.
- ▶ **Language games:** Communication involves using conventional terms in a way that is recognised by a linguistic community. We are playing a conventionally accepted language game.
- ▶ Do lions or ants have a language? Probably. It would be based in the social dynamics of their hunting and mating activities.
- ▶ Language is a social practice: a game.
- ▶ Slang, banter, jokes: are not poorly structured 'secondary' forms of communication. "A serious and good philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes."
- ▶ Language games bind a community together.

PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS: THE WORLD VS. PURE LOGIC

- ▶ **Family resemblance:** Things which we think are connected by one essential common feature may in fact be connected by a series of overlapping similarities, where no feature is common to all (distinction: polythetic/monothetic).
- ▶ Look at the proceedings that we call "games": Is there anything common to all?
- ▶ "We can see how similarities crop up and disappear ... We see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities."
- ▶ The expression to characterise these similarities is family resemblance: "for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way."



Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* "seems to concern itself . . . only with the different ways in which silly people can say silly things."

– Bertrand Russell

A special message
brought to you by
THE LATE NOW

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 13

ORIGINS OF WRITING

**Denise Schmandt-Besserat, How
Writing Came About. Austin, TX:
University of Texas Press 1992**

DENISE SCHMANDT-BESSERAT





FROM MIMETICS TO
VISUALS TO AURALS

**THE ORIGINS OF
WRITING**

LINEAR B PICTOGRAPHS

											
man	woman	deer	horse	mare	stallion	ewe	ram	nanny goat	billy goat	sow	boar
											
cow	bull	wheat	barley	olive oil	spice	cyprus	kapo	kanako	oil	wine	arepa
											
meri	bronze	gold	wool	horn	cloth	garment	armour	month	tree	helmet	
											
footstool	bathtub	spear	arrow	sword	wheeled chariot	chariot	chariot frame	wheel	dart		



THE GREAT HOMINID ESCAPE: MIMETIC LANGUAGE

- ▶ Without language, *Homo erectus* nonetheless slowly developed a culture based on mimetics – intentional mime and imitation, facial expression, mimicry of sounds, gestures etc.
- ▶ This was a qualitative change, because it allowed for intentionality, creativity, reference, coordination and, perhaps above all, pedagogy, the acculturation of the young. It was a momentous change also because minds/individuals were no longer isolated.
- ▶ “Even highly sophisticated animals, such as apes, have no choice but to approach the world solipsistically because they cannot share ideas and thoughts in any detail. Each ape learns only what it learns for itself. Every generation starts afresh because the old die with their wisdom sealed forever in their brains.” (Peter Watson)
- ▶ The shift to mimesis was the great divide in history – it was The Great Hominid escape from the nervous system.

BRAIN VOLUME – GROUP VOLUME?

- ▶ Brain size is probably correlated with social intelligence.
- ▶ According to one estimate, the australopithecines lived in groups with an average size of sixty-seventy individuals, whereas *Homo habilis* groups averaged around eighty. These provided the basic 'cognitive group' of early man, the group he had to deal with on an everyday basis, and the increasing size of this cognitive group stimulated the growth of man's social intelligence.
- ▶ (Antithesis: Lions hunt quite successfully in groups without language.)
- ▶ Distinguishing one group member from another, and one's own kin within this wider group, would have become much easier once language had developed, and easier still once beads and pendants and other items of bodily adornment had been created, with which people could emphasise their individuality.



TOOLS, KIN GROUPS & LANGUAGE

- ▶ The standardisation of stone tools: Is it possible for this to have happened, say some palaeontologists, without language?
- ▶ Language would have been needed. For the teacher to impress upon the student what the exact form the new tool should be. Really?
- ▶ In the same way, the development of elaborate kin systems would also have required the development of words, to describe the relationships between various relatives. Some primates, such as chimpanzees and gorillas, have rudimentary kin systems: brothers occasionally recognise each other, and mothers their offspring. But this is not highly developed, is inconsistent and unreliable. Gorilla 'family units', for example, are not kin groups as we would recognise them.

ORIGINS OF LANGUAGE

- ▶ One view is that language emerged in the click sounds of certain tribes in southern Africa (the San, for example, or the Hadzabe). Clicks being used because they enabled the hunters to exchange information without frightening away their prey on the open savannah.
- ▶ Another view is that language emerged 300,000–400,000 years ago, and even 1.75 million years ago, when early man would sing or hum in a rhythmical way. Initially, these sounds were ‘distance calls’, by which males from one group attracted females from another group (as happens with some species of chimpanzee), but then the rhythmic chanting acted as a form of social bonding, to distinguish one tribe from another.

LANGUAGE STAGES

- ▶ The various features of language developed as follows:
- ▶ H and e, the first vocal sounds = 100,000 years ago
- ▶ 'Timbric sounds' (nasal) - u, i, a, j, w = 25,000 years ago
- ▶ w, m, p, b = 15,000 years ago
- ▶ t/d, k/g = 12,000 years ago
- ▶ I/you, here/there, stay/go, good/bad = 10,000 years ago
- ▶ Third person = 9,000 years ago

BONES & LANGUAGE

- ▶ Many specialists claim that carved or notched bones are tallies of hunters, others say that the signs can be divided into male (lines and dots) and female (ovals and triangles) and that Ice Age humans really were on the brink of an alphabet.
- ▶ In covering bones with carved images alongside a series of dots, in rows and columns, early humans were constructing Artificial Memory Systems (= writing).

Franco-Cantabrian signs in cave art	{	δ † ◻ ▣ ▤ ▥ ▦ ▧ ▨ ▩ ◊ ⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Hieroglyphics	•	⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘
Sumerian	•	◻ ⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Indus valley	•	◻ ⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Linear A	•	⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Linear B	•	⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Phoenician	•	⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Etruscan	•	⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Greek	•	⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Runic	•	⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿
Signs on Chinese oracle bones	{	⚡ ⊕ ⊖ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙ ⊚ ⊛ ⊜ ⊝ ⊞ ⊟ ⊠ ⊡ ⊢ ⊣ ⊤ ⊥ ⊦ ⊧ ⊨ ⊩ ⊪ ⊫ ⊬ ⊭ ⊮ ⊯ ⊰ ⊱ ⊲ ⊳ ⊴ ⊵ ⊶ ⊷ ⊸ ⊹ ⊺ ⊻ ⊼ ⊽ ⊾ ⊿

Figure 2: Similar signs among early forms of writing and proto-writing
 [Source: Richard Rudgley, *The Lost Civilisations of the Stone Age*, New York, The Free Press, 1999, page 78]

SIGN SIMILARITY

- ▶ Some archaeologists believe that a considerable number of the deliberate marks found on both parietal and mobile art from the Franco-Cantabrian region are remarkably similar to numerous characters in ancient written languages, extending from the Mediterranean to China.
- ▶ Is there perhaps a genetically determined limit to our imagination?
- ▶ In 2005 a study of 115 different alphabets found that most languages average three strokes a character. Mark Changizi: "This is no coincidence. Three happens to be the biggest number our brains can recognise without having to count."

THE WEST AND THE REST RELOADED

- ▶ Merlin Donald: "I hereby highlight certain important stages in language development, in particular rhetoric, logic (dialectic) and grammar."
- ▶ These comprised the medieval *trivium* in Christendom, which separated these basic skills from the *quadrivium* - mathematics, astronomy, geometry and music.
- ▶ In so far as ideographic, hieroglyphic and alphabetical systems of writing vary in their rhetorical, logistical and grammatical possibilities, does this difference help account for the different trajectories of the disparate civilisations around the world? **Does the physical form of writing affect thinking in a fundamental way?**
- ▶ The *trivium* was based on the idea that dispute - argument - was a trainable skill. Was it this which, at base, would provide the crucial difference between the West and the rest? Did it encourage the assault on religious authority, the important break with mythic thinking?

A LIST OF FIRSTS

- ▶ In 1946 the American scholar Samuel Noah Kramer began to publish his translations of Sumerian clay tablets and in doing so he identified no fewer than twenty-seven 'historical firsts' discovered or achieved or recorded by the early Iraqis.
- ▶ The first schools, the first historian, the first pharmacopoeia, the first clocks, the first arch, the first legal code, the first library, the first farmer's almanac, and the first bicameral congress. The Sumerians were the first to use gardens to provide shade, they recorded the first proverbs and fables, they had the first epic literature and the first love songs.
- ▶ What is the reason for this remarkable burst of creativity?



INDIA!

- ▶ The most recent candidate for the birth of writing takes us to India. There, traditionally, the earliest major civilisation was known as the Indus civilisation, the capitals of which were Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, dating back to 2300-1750 bc.
- ▶ In May 1999 it was announced that a tablet, 5,500 years old, and bearing an inscription, had been discovered at Harappa. A month later, another announcement claimed that the script had been deciphered. According to Drs Jha and Rajaram, it says: 'It irrigates the sacred land.' The language is allegedly 'pre-Harappan', much more primitive than other Indus seals. Four other examples have been found in the region. The Indian scholars believe that this script, like other primitive scripts elsewhere, does not use vowels, though in this case the use of double consonants is meant to indicate vowels. In other words, it shows early writing in the course of evolution. Scholars associated with the discovery believe this is enough to move the 'cradle of civilisation' from Mesopotamia to the Indus region.

ORIGINS OF WRITING

- ▶ Writing - a system of graphic marks representing the units of a specific language - has been invented independently in the Near East, China and Mesoamerica. The cuneiform script, created in Mesopotamia, present-day Iraq, ca. 3200 BC, was first.
- ▶ It is also the only writing system which can be traced to its earliest prehistoric origin.



FROM COUNTING TO WRITING

- ▶ The Mesopotamian cuneiform script can be traced back to an eighth millennium BC counting system using clay tokens of multiple shapes.
- ▶ The development from tokens to script reveals that writing emerged from counting and accounting. Writing was used exclusively for accounting until the third millennium BC, when the Sumerian concern for the afterlife paved the way to literature by using writing for funerary inscriptions.
- ▶ The evolution from tokens to script also documents a steady progression in abstracting data, from one-to-one correspondence with three-dimensional tangible tokens, to two-dimensional pictures, the invention of abstract numbers and phonetic syllabic signs and finally the ultimate abstraction of sound and meaning with the representation of phonemes by the letters of the alphabet.



CUNEIFORM EVOLUTION: 4 PHASES

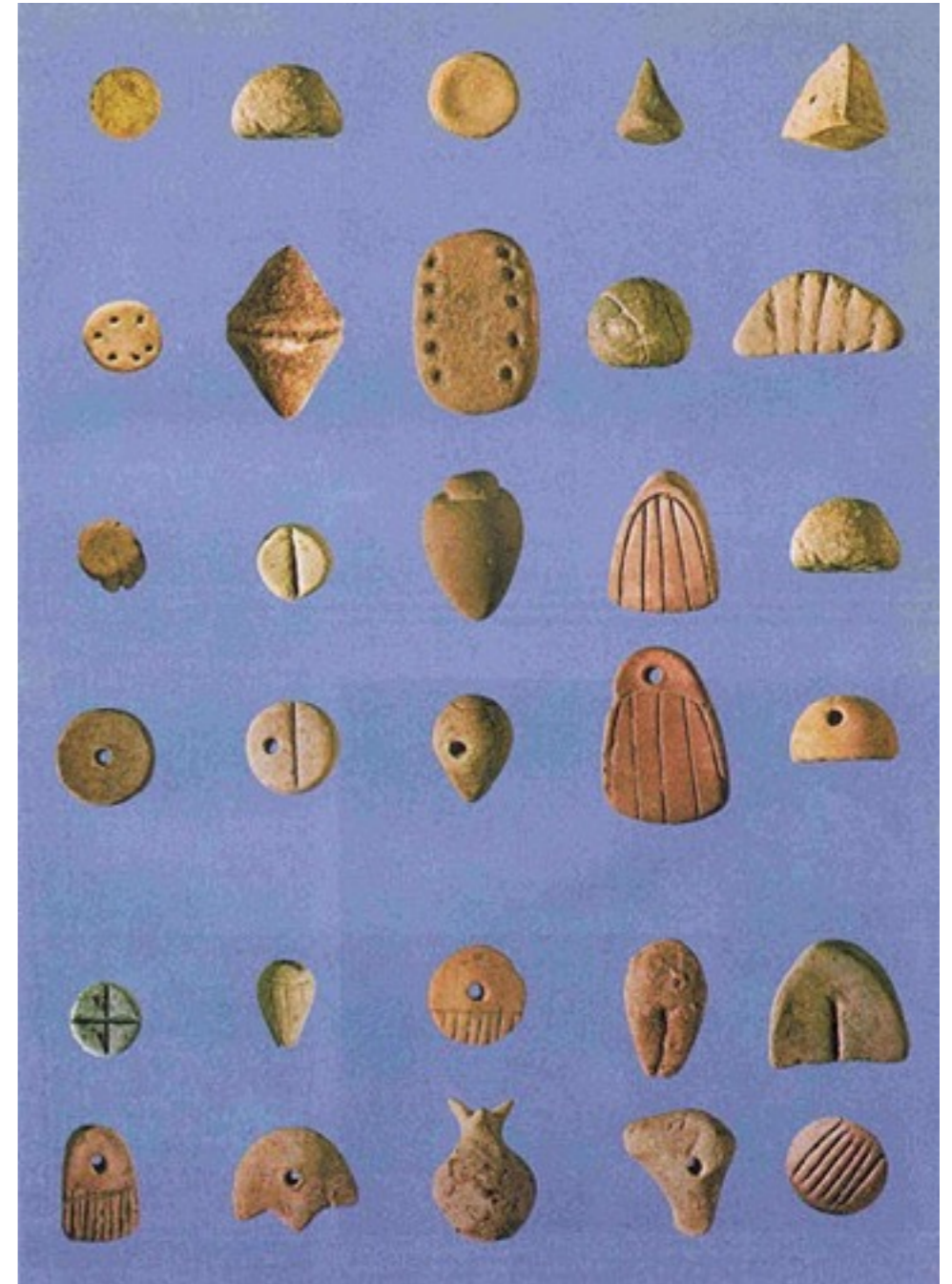
- ▶ (a) clay tokens representing units of goods were used for accounting (8000–3500 BC)
- ▶ (b) the three dimensional tokens were transformed into two-dimensional pictographic signs, and like the former tokens, the pictographic script served exclusively for accounting (3500–3000 BC)
- ▶ (c) phonetic signs, introduced to transcribe the name of individuals, marked the turning point when writing started emulating spoken language and, as a result, became applicable to all fields of human experience (3000–1500 BC)
- ▶ (d) with two dozen letters, each standing for a single sound of voice, the alphabet perfected the rendition of speech. After ideography, logography and syllabaries, the alphabet represents a further segmentation of meaning.

THE FIRST PHASE: TOKEN LANGUAGE

- ▶ The direct antecedent of the Mesopotamian script: a recording device consisting of clay tokens of multiple shapes - cones, spheres, disks, cylinders and ovoids.
- ▶ The tokens were used as counters to keep track of goods. It is the earliest code – a system of signs for transmitting information.
- ▶ Each token shape was semantic, referring to a particular unit of merchandise. For example, a cone and a sphere stood respectively for a small and a large measure of grain, and ovoids represented jars of oil. The repertory of some three hundred types of counters made it feasible to manipulate and store information on multiple categories of goods.

'TOKING' VS. TALKING

- ▶ Like a word, a token stood for one concept.
- ▶ Unlike speech, tokens were restricted to one type of information only, namely, real goods.
- ▶ Unlike spoken language, the token system made no use of syntax (their meaning was independent of their placement order). Three cones and three ovoids, scattered in any way, were to be translated 'three baskets of grain, three jars of oil.'
- ▶ The fact that the same token shapes were used in a large area of the Near East, where many dialects would have been spoken, shows that the counters were not based on phonetics.



FROM TOKEN TO SCRIPT

- ▶ At a certain point, tokens, probably representing a debt, were stored in envelopes until payment.
- ▶ These envelopes made of clay in the shape of a hollow ball had the disadvantage of hiding the tokens held inside. Some accountants, therefore, impressed the tokens on the surface of the envelope before enclosing them inside, so that the shape and number of counters held inside could be verified at all times. These markings were the first signs of writing. The metamorphosis from three-dimensional artifacts to two-dimensional markings did not affect the semantic principle of the system. The significance of the markings on the outside of the envelopes was identical to that of the tokens held inside.
- ▶ About 3200 BC, once the system of impressed signs was understood, clay tablets – solid cushion-shaped clay artifacts bearing the impressions of tokens – replaced the envelopes filled with tokens. The impression of a cone and a sphere token, representing measures of grain, resulted respectively in a wedge and a circular marking which bore the same meaning as the tokens they signified. They were ideograms—signs representing one concept.



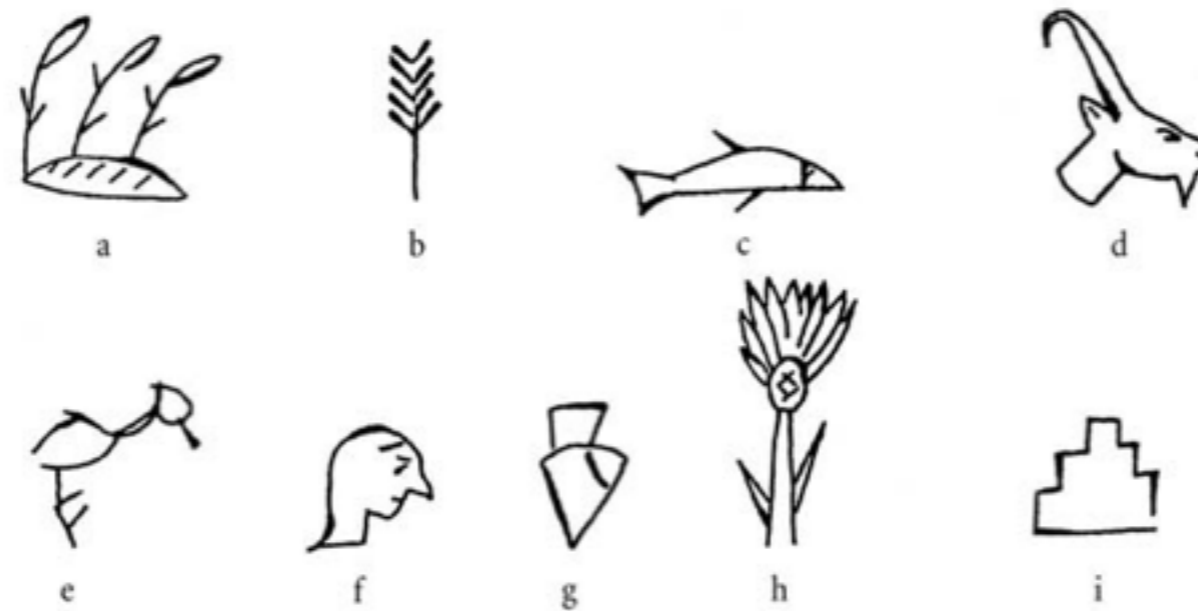


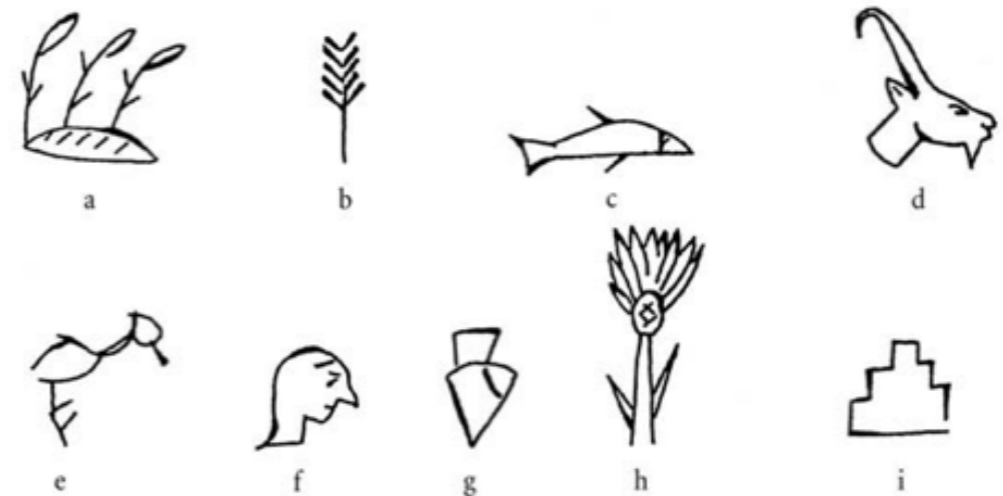
Figure 5: Early pictographs: (a) a group of reeds; (b) an ear of corn; (c) a fish; (d) a goat; (e) a bird; (f) a human head; (g) a form of pot; (h) a palm tree; (i) a ziggurat³⁵
 [Source: H. W. F. Saggs, *Civilisation Before Greece and Rome*, London: B. T. Batsford, 1989, page 62]

Late Uruk Period ca. 3100	Jamdet Nasr Period ca. 3000	Early Dyn. III Period ca. 2400	Ur III Period ca. 2000	Meaning
				SAG 'Head'
				NINDA 'Bread'
				KU 'to eat'
				AB 'Cow'
				'1'

Figure 6: The development of pictographs into Babylonian cuneiform script³⁶
 [Source: Hans J. Nissen, *The Early History of the Ancient Near East: 9000–2000 BC*, translated by Elizabeth Lutzweiler with Kenneth J. Northcott. © 1988 by the University of Chicago]

APPEARANCE OF PICTOGRAPHS

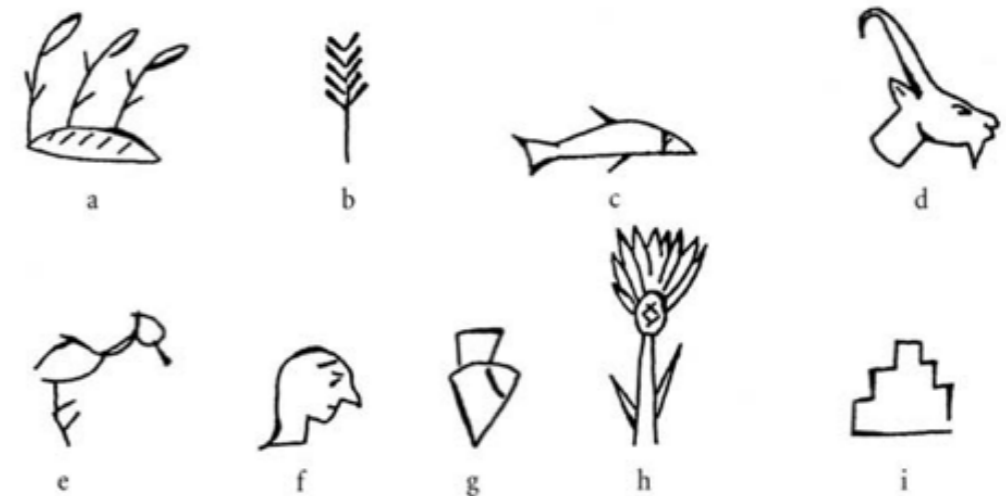
- ▶ Pictographs – signs representing tokens traced with a stylus rather than impressed – appeared about 3100 BC. These pictographs referring to goods mark an important step in the evolution of writing because they were never repeated in one-to-one correspondence to express numerosity.
- ▶ Besides them, numerals – signs representing plurality – indicated the quantity of units recorded. For example, ‘33 jars of oil’ were shown by the incised pictographic sign ‘jar of oil’, preceded by three impressed circles and three wedges, the numerals standing respectively for ‘10’ and ‘1’. The symbols for numerals were not new. They were the impressions of cones and spheres formerly representing measures of grain, which then had acquired a second, abstract, numerical meaning. The invention of numerals meant a considerable economy of signs since 33 jars of oil could be written with 7 rather than 33 markings.



Late Uruk Period ca. 3100	Jamdet Nasr Period ca. 3000	Early Dyn. III Period ca. 2400	Ur III Period ca. 2000	Meaning
				SAG 'Head'
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				KU 'to eat'
				AB 'Cow'
				'1'

TURNING OF PICTOGRAPHS

- ▶ Why were the images turned through ninety degrees?
- ▶ Peter W.: "This would surely have made the images less legible and that in turn may have provoked a more simple way of writing. Circular and curved marks were always more difficult to produce in wet clay and this is why cuneiform emerged as a system of simple strokes and wedges."



Late Uruk Period ca. 3100	Jamdet Nasr Period ca. 3000	Early Dyn. III Period ca. 2400	Ur III Period ca. 2000	Meaning
				SAG 'Head'
				NINDA 'Bread'
				KU 'to eat'
				AB 'Cow'
				'1'

THE 2ND PHASE: FROM VISUAL TO AURAL

- ▶ About 3000 BC, the creation of phonetic signs – signs representing the sounds of speech – marks the second phase in the evolution of Mesopotamian writing. The medium parted from its token antecedent in order to emulate spoken language. As a result, writing shifted from a conceptual framework of real goods to the world of speech sounds.
- ▶ With state formation, new regulations required that the names of the individuals who generated or received registered merchandise were entered on the tablets. The personal names were transcribed by the means of logograms – signs representing a word in a particular tongue. Logograms were easily drawn pictures of words with a sound close to that desired (for example in English the name Neil could be written with a sign showing bent knees 'kneel').
- ▶ When a name required several phonetic units, they were assembled in a rebus fashion. A typical Sumerian name 'An Gives Life' combined a star, the logogram for An, god of heaven, and an arrow, because the words for 'arrow' and 'life' were homonyms.
- ▶ Phonetic signs allowed writing to break away from accounting. Inscriptions on stone seals or metal vessels deposited in tombs of the 'Royal Cemetery' of Ur, c. 2700-2600 BC, are among the first texts that did not deal with merchandise, did not include numerals and were entirely phonetic. The inscriptions consisted merely of a personal name.























PUABI, QUEEN



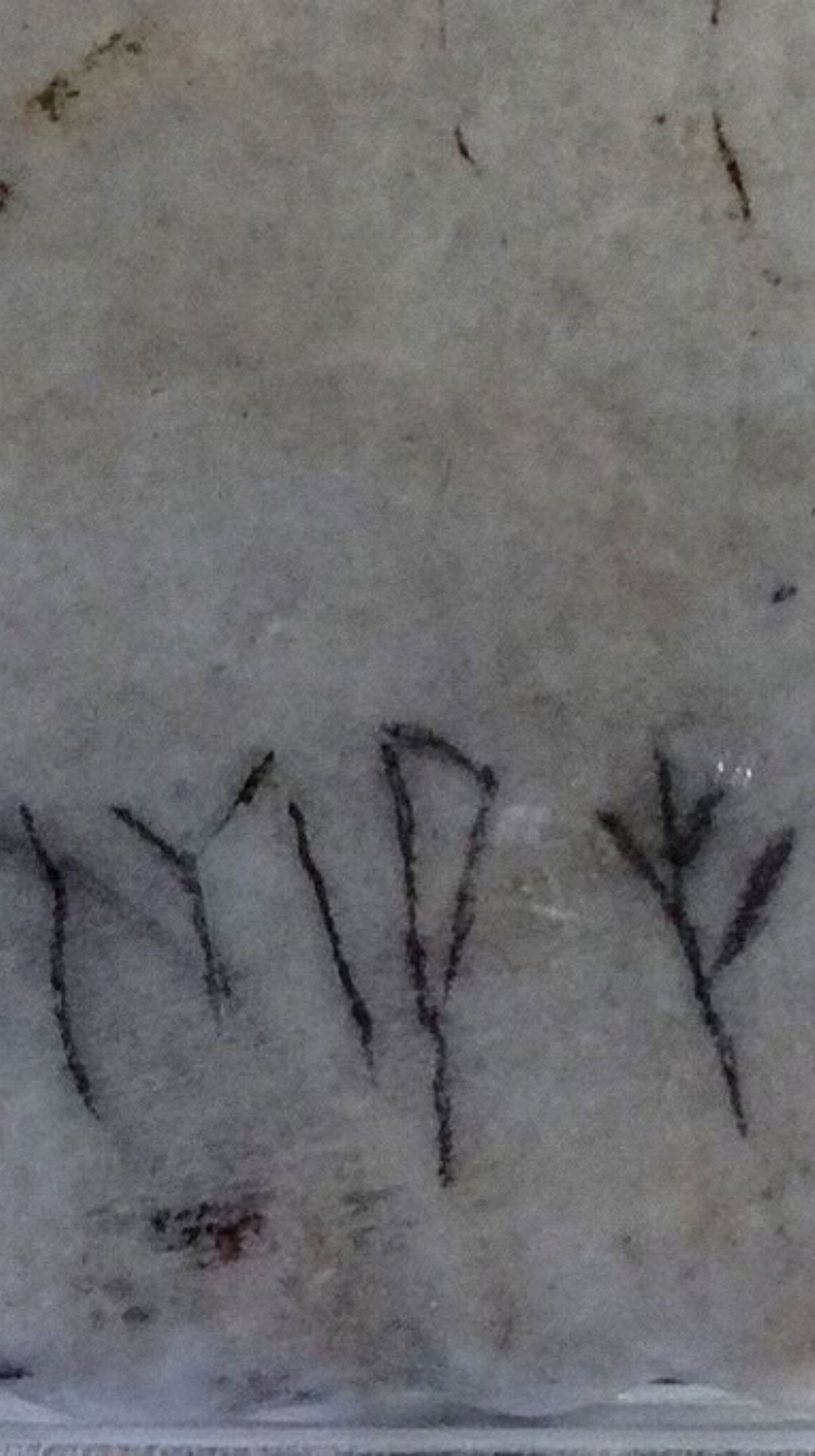
THE ALPHABET

- ▶ The invention of the alphabet about 1500 BC ushered in the third phase in the evolution of writing in the ancient Near East.
- ▶ The first, so-called Proto-Sinaitic or Proto-Canaanite alphabet took advantage of the fact that the sounds of any language are few. It consisted of a set of 22 letters, each standing for a single sound of voice. This earliest alphabet was a complete departure from the previous syllabaries. First, the system was based on acrophony – signs to represent the first letter of the word they stood for – for example an ox head (alpu) was 'a,' a house (betu) was b. Second, it was consonantal – it dealt only with speech sounds characterized by constriction or closure at one or more points in the breath channel, like b, d, l, m, n, p, etc. Third, it streamlined the system to 22 signs, instead of several hundred.

PROTO-CANAANITE	EARLY LETTER NAMES AND MEANINGS
	alp oxhead
	bet house
	gaml throwstick
	digg fish
	hif(?) man calling
	ud (uwu) mace
	zif(n) ?
	hif(?) fence?
	sf(?) spindle?
	yad arm
	kapp palm
	lamd ox-goad
	mem water
	nahl snake
	ein eye
	pit corner?
	sq(d) plant
	qr(p) ?
	ra'i head of man
	tann composite bow
	td (tau) owner's mark

From token to sign





A BARBARIAN
WRITING SYSTEM

**THE POWER OF
RUNES**

HOW TRUE GERMANS WRITE

- ▶ The term 'Germanic' is an artificial creation by philologists based on a study of known languages from later times: English, German and Gothic.
- ▶ The earliest evidence comes in the form of runes, short messages written in characters made up of straight lines, and dating from the end of the second century ad.



KYLVER STONE



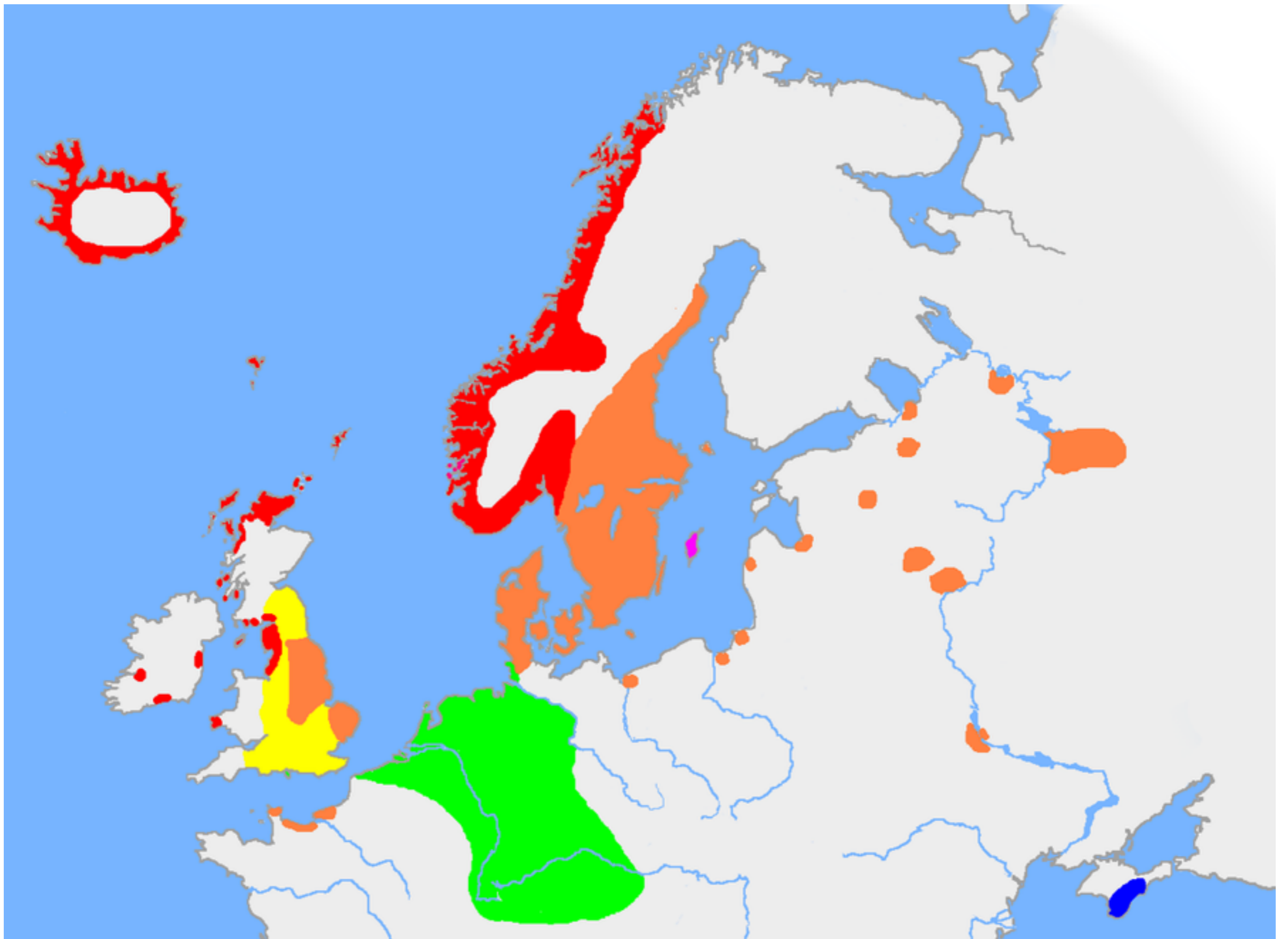
RUNES: ETYMOLOGY

- ▶ The name comes from the Germanic root *run-*, meaning *secret/whisper*.
- ▶ In Old Irish Gaelic, *run* means *mystery, secret, or intention*.
- ▶ In Welsh and Old English, the word *rhin* and *run* respectively means *mystery, secret, secret writing, sometimes miracle*.
- ▶ In Baltic Languages, the root *run-* means speech; in Lithuanian, *runoti* means both *to cut* (with a knife) and *to speak*.



RUNES: HISTORY

- ▶ Runes began to appear in the first or second century ad, the prevailing view now being that this was a *deliberate attempt to devise a system of writing comparable to the Latin alphabet*, as a result of cross-cultural contact between the barbarians and the Latin-speaking Romans.
- ▶ Runes were made up mainly of straight lines, so they could more easily be cut into stone or wood. There are no horizontal strokes. Why?
- ▶ When carving a message on a flat staff or stick, it would be along the grain, thus both less legible and more likely to split the wood.



VICTORY RUNES

- ▶ Medieval sources - notably the *Poetic Edda* - mention victory runes to be carved on a sword, "some on the grasp and some on the inlay, and name *Tyr* twice".
- ▶ *Poetic Edda*: modern attribution for a unnamed collection of Old Norse poems; several versions exist, all consisting primarily of text from the Icelandic medieval manuscript *Codex Regius*.
- ▶ It influenced writers like Strindberg, J.R.R. Tolkien, Ezra Pound, or Jorge Luis Borges - especially its terse, stress-based metrical schemes working without any final rhyme by instead using alliterative devices.
- ▶ The Eddic poems were minstrel poems, passing orally from singer to singer for centuries.



MAGIC POWER

- ▶ Odin: "I know a twelfth one if I see,/up in a tree,/a dangling corpse in a noose,/I can so carve and colour the runes,/that the man walks/And talks with me" (*Hávamál, Codex Regius*)
- ▶ Earliest runic inscriptions: name of the craftsman or the proprietor or ... ?
- ▶ It is possible that runes were not so much used as a writing system, but rather as magical signs. The name rune itself seems to indicate that knowledge of the runes was restricted to an elite.
- ▶ The Björketrop Runestone warns: "Haidzruno runo, falahak haidera, ginnarunaz. Agar haeramalaus uti az. Weladaude, sa'z pat barutz. Uparba spa." English translation: I, master of the runes, conceal here runes of power. Incessantly (plagued by) maleficence, (doomed to) insidious death is he who breaks this (monument). I prophesy destruction.



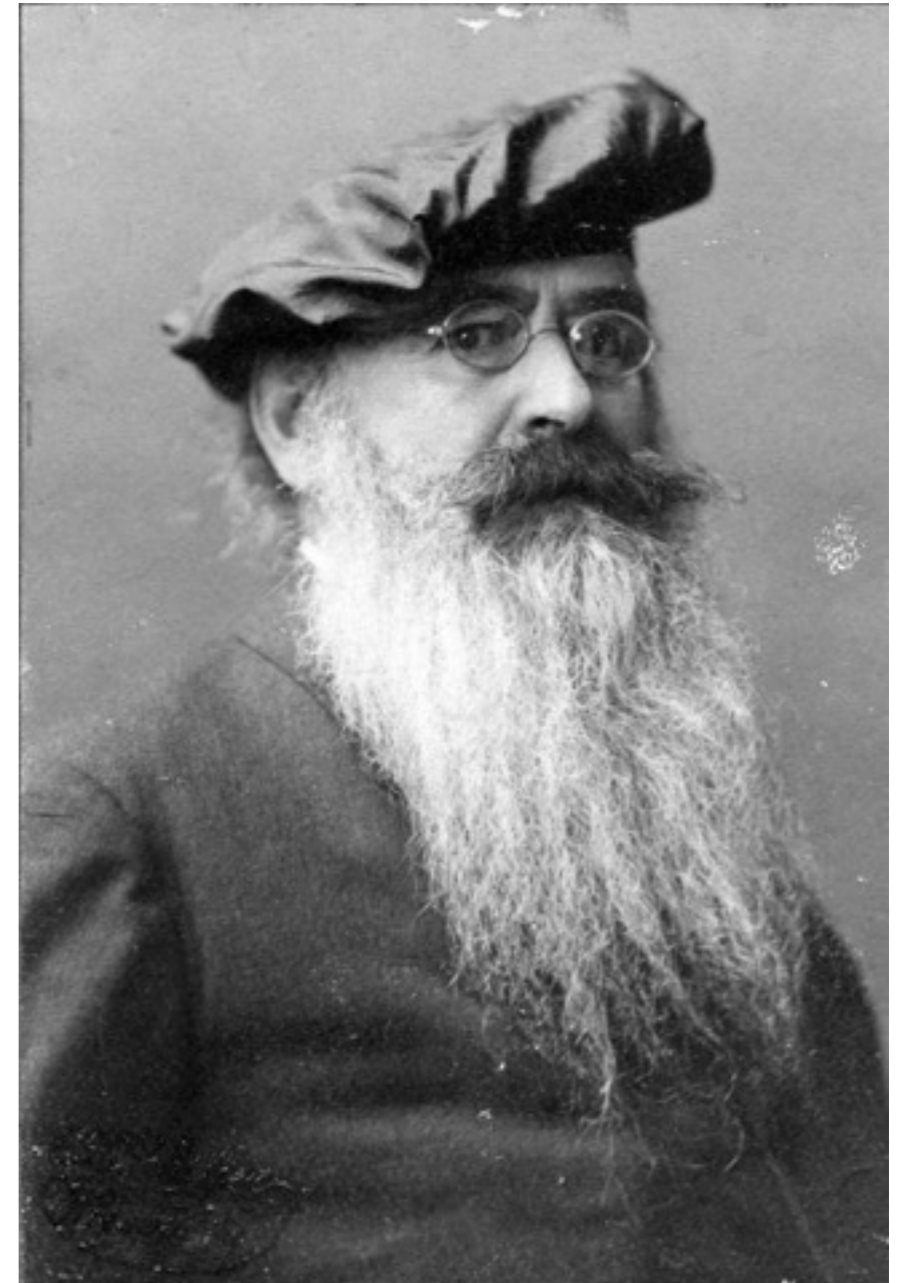
MAGIC POWER

- ▶ In Norse mythology, the runic alphabet has a divine origin (reginkunnr). The runes themselves say it: "And interpret the ones of divine origin."
- ▶ 1. According to the poem *Hávamál*, Odin received the runes through self-sacrifice: "Veit ek at ek heck vingda meioi a/netr altar nio,/geiri vndapr ok gefinn Ooni,/sialfr slalom mer,/a perm pedi, er mango veit, hers hand af atom renn." English translation: I know that I hung on a windy tree/nine long nights,/wounded with a spear, dedicated to Odin,/myself to myself,/on that tree of which no man knows where its roots run. (It continues:) No bread did they give me nor a drink from a horn,/diwnwards I peered;/I took up the runes; screaming I took them,/then I fell back from there.
- ▶ 2. According to the *Poetic Edda*, Rig/Heimdall sired three sons, Thrall (slave), Churl (freeman), and Jarl (noble) by human women. When Jarl began to handle weapons, Rig returned and taught him the runes.
- ▶ 3. According to the exiled Swedish archbishop Olaus Magnus, a man named Kettil Runske had stolen three rune staffs from Odin.



GUIDO VON LIST: FATHER OF RUNIC ESOTERICISM











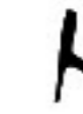







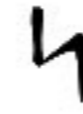












- ▶ Guido Karl Anton List, better known as Guido von List, expounded a modern Pagan religious movement known as Wotanism. Its practitioners modelled their faith on pre-Christian belief systems adhered to by the Germanic people of Iron Age and Early Medieval Europe.
- ▶ Some of their rituals involved chanting runes or rune poems, in order to create a communal mood and allow participants to enter into altered states of consciousness. Divination using runes was also a common practice - items with runic markings on them would have been pulled out of a bag or bundle and read accordingly.
- ▶ "List ... was regarded by his followers as a bearded old patriarch and a mystical nationalist guru whose clairvoyant gaze had lifted the glorious Aryan and Germanic past of Austria into full view from beneath the debris of foreign influences and Christian Culture. In his books and lectures List invited true Germans to behold the clearly discernible remains of a wonderful theocratic Ario-German state, wisely governed by priest-kings and gnostic initiates ... " (Nicholas Goodrich-Clarke)









A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
											
M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X
											
	Y	Z	TH	EE	NG	EA	ST				
											



FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 14

ORALITY & LITERACY

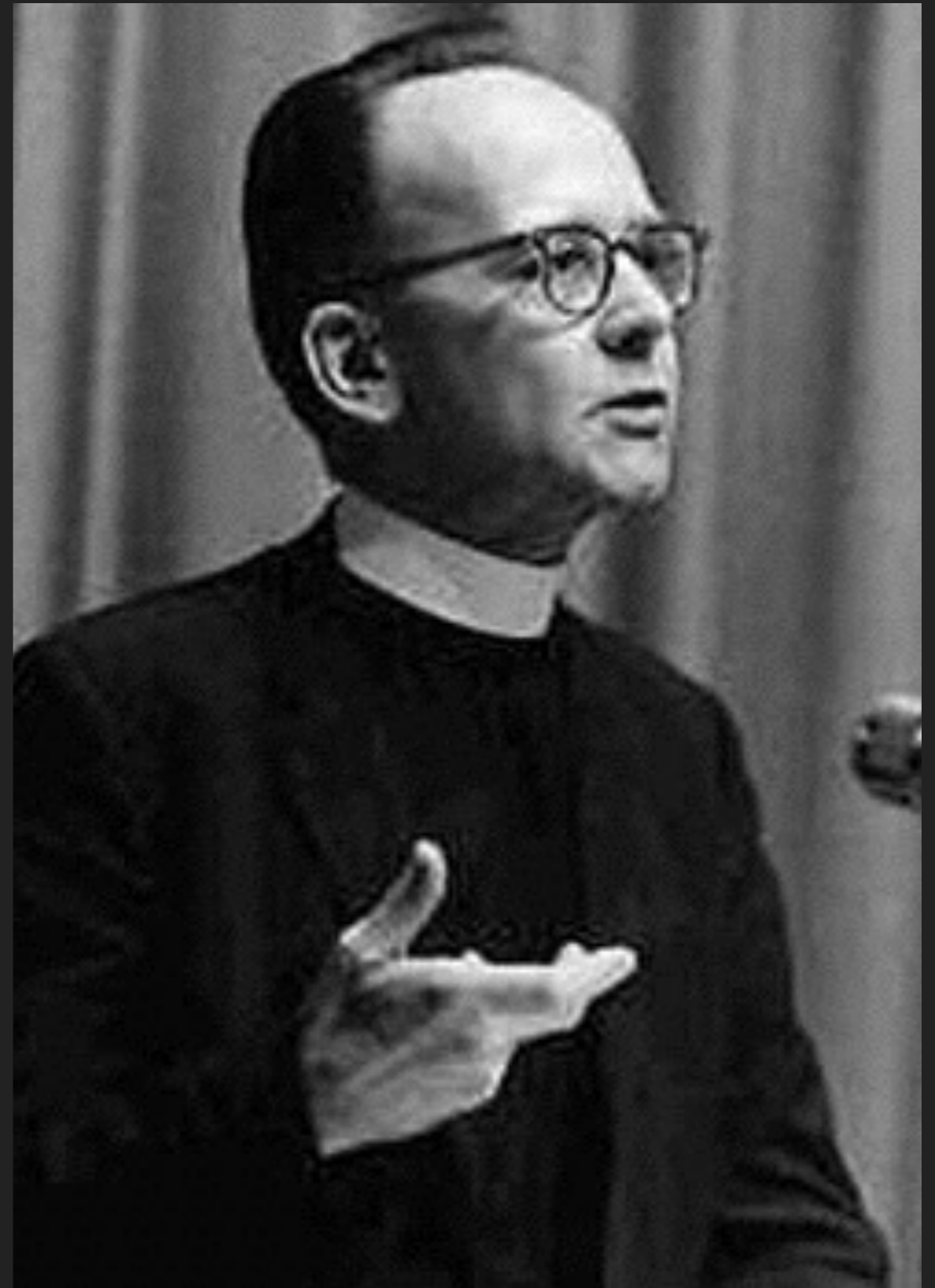
Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word*. London: Routledge 2002, 31–55; 77–100.

ONE OF THE REASONS FOR REFLECTION ON THE SPOKEN WORD, THE WORD AS SOUND, IS OF COURSE NOT TO REJECT THE LATER MEDIA, BUT TO UNDERSTAND THEM, TOO, BETTER.

Walter Ong

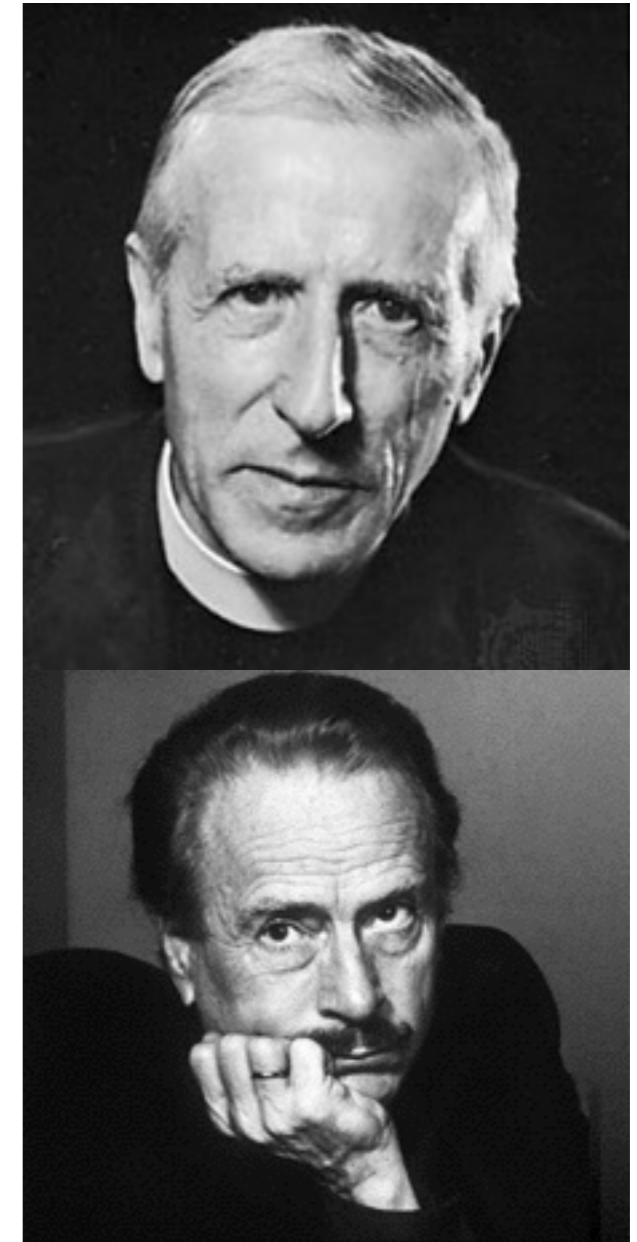
BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP: WALTER ONG

- ▶ Walter Ong, a Catholic priest, the only priest ever elected to the presidency of the Modern Language Association of America (1978), and a member of the Society of Jesus.
- ▶ Ong was primarily interested in the word as speech event, in rethinking textuality from the vantage point of orality.
- ▶ He stands in the legacy of the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition, as the human sensorium, above all auditory and visual perceptiveness, occupied a central role in his thought. Kelber: Ong had a keenly philosophical understanding of where the modern mind came from in promoting a system that “furthered the elimination of sound and voice from man’s understanding of the intellectual world and helped create within the human spirit itself the silences of a spatialized universe” (Ong 1958, 318).
- ▶ Drawing on Brian Stock’s concept of a “textual community” , Ong ventured a definition of the church in media terms, bringing the full force of media complexities into play, and stating that “this oral-textual-oral-textual-oral interpretive community is the Church”.



MEDIA CATHOLICS: ONG, CHARDIN, MCLUHAN

- ▶ Kelber: Along with his Jesuit friend, the paleologist and geologist Teilhard de Chardin, Ong envisioned a universal worldview, an aspiration that included his growing interest in cosmology.
- ▶ When asked how he would like to be remembered, he replied that it had been his aim to “further understanding of the relationships between verbal as well as other types of human expression *and the total evolution of the cosmos that we human beings are part*”.



FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 15

ORALITY & LITERACY

Werner H. Kelber, "The Work of Walter J. Ong and Biblical Scholarship". In: Kelber, Werner H., Imprints, Voiceprints, and Footprints of Memory. Collected Essays. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature 2013, 441-464.

Jan Vansina, Oral Tradition as History. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press 1985, 13-32; 95-108; 124-133; 186-201.

**WRITING AND PRINT ISOLATE
THE INDIVIDUAL OR, IF YOU
PREFER, LIBERATE HIM FROM
THE TRIBE.**

Walter Ong



TEXTUALITY & DEATH

- ▶ There are thousands of references pointing to connections between writing and death, Ong observed.
- ▶ Among the numerous examples he cites are 2 Cor 3:6 ("the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life"), Longfellow ("books are sepulchres of thought"), Bacon ("libraries, which are the shrines where all the relics of the ancient saints, full of true virtue, ... are preserved and imposed").
- ▶ While associations of writing with death are not readily accessible to the historical, literary analysis of texts, they are nonetheless "manifold and inescapable" (240). Ong probes the *psychodynamics* (a favorite word of Ong) of textual-oral interfaces and touches on the deeper structures underlying biblical texts.

BOOKISH PEOPLE: LITERATE CHILDREN OF TYPOGRAPHY

- ▶ Ong: “You biblical folks will be the very last ones to catch on, because you are the most bookish people of all.”
- ▶ Modern biblical studies, in Ong’s view, are dominated by an excessive confidence in words-in-space and driven by a sense of domination by textuality, and a lack of sensibility toward the oral-aural operation and apperception of biblical words. They had lost touch with the oral substratum and rhetorical outreach of many biblical texts, and generally had little awareness of the multiple oral-textual interfaces residing in the Bible as a whole.
- ▶ Ong calls us literate children of the typographic age: Ours is a “disability [that] has interfered with our understanding of the nature of the Bible, with its massive oral underpinnings, and of the very nature of language itself ” (1967b, 20-21).
- ▶ Our rapidly increasing reliance on the printed text implies a reduction of the medieval plural senses to the one historical sense (*sensus literalis sive historicus*): the exploration of the historical conditionedness of texts, reading them both in the context of their historical genesis and predominantly with a view toward authorial intentionality.



ΟΝΑΠΑΡΑΝΟΝΚ

ΑΡΤΕΑΜΕΝΚΙΟΝ

ΥΠΕΡΟΝΚΑ

ΑΤΟΝΚΙΟΝ

ΚΙΟΝΚΙ

ΟΝΑΡΤΕΡ

BOOKISH PEOPLE: LITERATE VIEWS ON ORALITY

- ▶ Ong criticises our tendency to imagine tradition, even oral tradition, on the model of a linear sequentiality.
- ▶ Many of the notions that flourished under the aegis of the typographic medium (individual authorship, authorial property, production of entirely identical texts, rigidly formatted texts furnished with punctuation marks, construction of “critical editions,” and others) had no place in the ancient media culture. Many of our historical methods and assumptions about biblical texts, about intertextuality, about tradition, both oral and scribal, originated in the analysis and interpretation of these typographically objectified and monumentalised biblical texts.
- ▶ The critical analysis of the Bible and the historical reconstruction of early Christian history should be seen as a hallmark of the intellectual ethos of modernity.



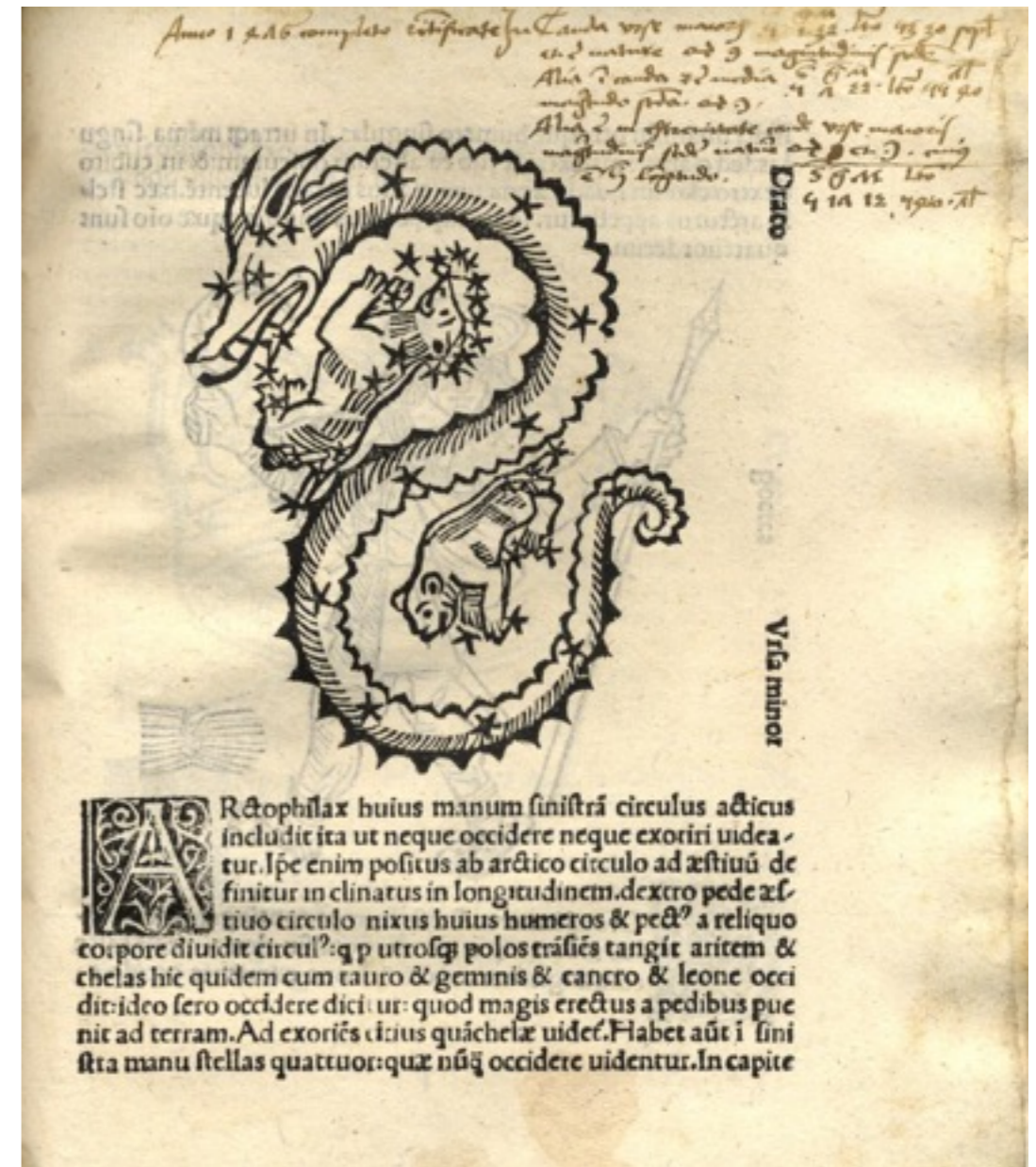
TEXTS CONSTRUCTUS VS. TEXTUS RECPTUS

- ▶ The Greek text of the New Testament is entirely the creation of the medium of modernity: the product of an ongoing process of selection from a number of manuscripts and from a vast and growing pool of textual variants. It is an eclectic or composite text - a text that has never existed before, most certainly not during the ancient and medieval centuries of oral, chirographic, performative communication. **It is entirely the constructed product of modernity's dominant medium and of typographically facilitated and accelerated selection processes.**
- ▶ Given the existence of "tens of thousands of medieval manuscripts," what is the rationale, Dagenais asks, for marginalizing, discarding, and categorising them into lists of variants, instead of appreciating them "as living witnesses to the dynamic, chaotic, error-fraught world of medieval literary life that we have preferred to view till now through the smoked glass of critical editions"?
- ▶ "What is the intellectual value (and cultural significance) of taking a text that was written and read in a variety of forms in numerous medieval manuscripts and transforming it into a single printed book?"

ONE BOOK: STANDARDIZING THE BIBLE

Textual uniformity, an essential ingredient for the acceptance of the Bible as a single, authoritative book, was not the forte of manuscript culture. It simply was not within the power of chirography to produce one single standard type. To say that prior to printing the Bible existed in scribal multiformity is to make the point that no manuscript, not even biblical manuscript, was exactly like any other.

It was only with print technology that a standardized Bible and the dissemination of a virtually limitless number of fully identical copies became an attainable objective.





THE TYPOGRAPHIC BIBLE: BASIS OF MODERNITY

- ▶ Ong: “The discovery that it was possible to produce hundreds of identical copies led to a new confidence in the book’s [i.e., the Bible’s] authority, and with it the assumption that the identical copies represented an authoritative edition”. It was the typographically standardised Bible, the first major mechanically produced book of early modernity, that served as midwife to the birth of modern biblical scholarship, and ever since has provided the authoritative textual basis for the philological, historical, and theological examination of the Bible.
- ▶ Aesthetics was a concern uppermost in the mind of Gutenberg (Giesecke 1991, 134-46). To be sure, the chirographically produced medieval manuscripts were already showpieces of aesthetic perfection, and, as is well known, Gutenberg used manuscripts as models for his project. He scrutinized page layout, individual letter types, the composition of color in illuminated manuscripts, specifically the application of gold, the making of parchment, and numerous other technical attributes. But he did so with a conscious view toward surpassing medieval chirography via the new technology. His goal was not primarily a speedy reproduction and mass distribution, and the propagation of faith, as one might assume as a matter of course. His forty-two-line Bible was entirely unsuitable for propagandistic purposes. Gutenberg was a superior technician and craftsman, and his deepest aspiration was to produce a technically perfect and aesthetically superior Bible. Owing to the typographically accomplished sameness of the Bible, an artistically executed internal proportionality, a perfectly executed layout, a rigidly methodical formatting of the text, and the ability to produce a potentially infinite number of totally identical exemplars, all these attributes contributed to the authority of the print Bible, which was rapidly recognized to be technically superior over the chirographic Bible.

SPOKEN WORDS: EVENTS

- ▶ Bultmann: It is “immaterial [not relevant] whether the oral or written tradition has been responsible; there exists no difference in principle”.
- ▶ Ong persistently reminds us that spoken words “are occurrences, events”, “sounded, and hence power-driven” and never assimilable to spatial surfaces. By opting for form as its key concept, form criticism immediately nudged its thinking on orality and oral tradition in the direction of stable, objectifiable language, that is, toward a literary paradigm. It now seems that form criticism, in choosing its foundational category and in designating its disciplinary approach, was misdirected from its very inception. *Instead of form, the normative category should have been performance*, which suggests an event that is linguistically incomplete and contingent on communicative and social contexts.
- ▶ “A [spoken] word can live only while actually issuing from the interior, physical and psychic, of the living individual. As soon as it has passed to the exterior, it perishes” (1992d, 69).

SPOKEN WORDS: ALWAYS ORIGINAL

- ▶ Even though the Gospels, as most ancient manuscripts, were calibrated for oral delivery and auditory reception, the awareness of narrative unity renders the postulate of autonomous, orally functioning, detachable units increasingly problematic. None of this, of course, is to challenge the concept of a living oral tradition in early Christianity. The point is that practitioners of form criticism should guard against our easy acceptance of the concept of detachable, oral units.
- ▶ Spoken words “never occur alone, in a context simply of words” (Ong 1982, 101). The social context in which speech is enmeshed, to which it responds, and from which it receives relevant cues is an all-important contributor to oral performance.
- ▶ Ong: “Each oral utterance emerges from a situation that is more than verbal: a certain person or persons at this time situated in living relationship with a certain other person or persons. The repetition of oral utterance is itself not context-free” (1992b, 196).
- ▶ No matter how many different oral performances, or how many repeat performances of a saying or a parable Jesus transacted, each rendition was freshly composed, and none was intelligible as a variant of the so-called original. Neither the speaker himself nor his audience would ever have thought of differentiating between primary oral wording and its secondary or tertiary derivations. Albert Lord had pointed out that “each performance is ‘an’ original, if not ‘the’ original” (1960, 101).⁴⁵⁸ The heart and ethos of oral tradition consists of multiple originality.

ORAL POETRY WORKS LIKE LANGUAGE, ONLY MORE SO

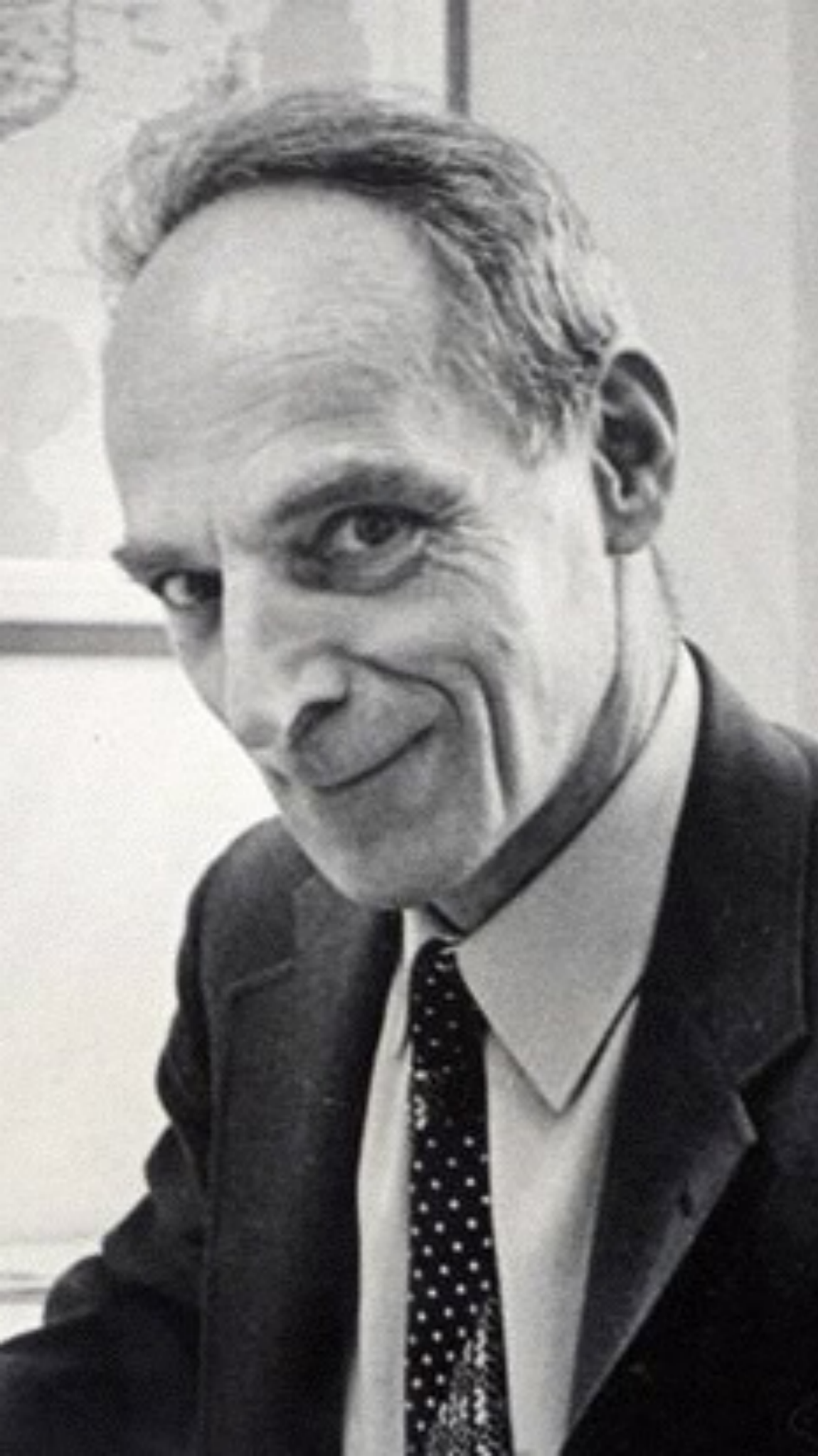
- ▶ In the historical, social context, sayings address and respond to live audiences, whereas in the narrative context, sayings are first and foremost responsible to the Gospel's immediate written narrative environment.
- ▶ Writing, mostly created in isolation, has a tendency to isolate its product from live discourse. It turns itself into a second-level participant in dialogue, its actualization being postponed in time, subject to reading or re-oralization of its basically inert text. The actualization of a text is always delayed and variable, depending on the situation of reader or performer. Voice, by contrast, is programmed for personal interaction and is entirely wrapped in social contextuality. Again, Ong saw this very clearly: "Both Jesus' oral sayings and the oral memory of them were always contextual, though they of course could have universal relevance".
- ▶ Foley has articulated what has become a classic formulation in orality-literacy studies: "Oral poetry works like language, only more so" (2002, 18, passim).
- ▶ Word power is actualized not by the mere delivery of words as such, but by multiple interactions with social contexts.

ONG: A BOOKISH MAN HIMSELF?

- ▶ *Chirographically crafted manuscripts and oral verbalisation tended to operate interactively, with scribality more often than not variously contingent on speech, and handwritten documents bent on being heard rather than viewed. But the particularities of those interactive relations must remain unknown and unknowable without a prior understanding of the distinctive characteristics of oral versus scribal communication.*
- ▶ Written words: “only marks on the surface,” which had the advantage of outlasting speech. The idea of “ ‘line’ is obviously a text-based concept”. Oral and scribal verbalizations operated in multiple interactions with each other. *Intermediality* is the technical term for this phenomenon.
- ▶ Spoken words have “not even a trajectory” (Ong 1982, 31).
- ▶ Discuss: **Has Ong’s differentiation of an oral versus a literary phenomenology idealized the former at the expense of the latter? Is his research also rooted in a post-Gutenberg intellectualism and therefore patently culture-bound and specifically media-bound?**
- ▶ Frank Kermode: *Walter Ong is a good typographical man: encyclopaedic, repetitive, and committed to the past.*

ONE – TWO – THREE

- ▶ 1) The historical-critical paradigm is entrenched in a post-Gutenberg intellectualism and locked in what may be called a typographic captivity.
- ▶ 2) **The high tech of the fifteenth century and the rapidly disseminated print culture throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was an agent of hitherto unparalleled changes in all walks of life in Western history.**
- ▶ 3) A gaping gulf separates the typographic culture and print mentality, in which modern New Testament scholarship is rooted from the scriptographic culture of its subject matter. “Scribal themes are carried forward, post-print trends are traced backward” (Eisenstein 1979, 1:9) in a manner that makes it exceedingly difficult to reimagine a culture that was driven by wordpower, speech events, interior visualization, hand-copying, memorization activities, composition-in-dictation, and many more.



CLASSIFYING ORAL
TRADITION

JAN VANSINA

MESSAGE/NO MESSAGE

- ▶ All traces from the past fall in two major categories according to a basic characteristic: whether they are messages or not. This is the most important feature of a source from the point of view of the rules of evidence. A pot, dug up from an ancient site, is not a message. It bears direct testimony to the age when it was made and used. An oral tradition, an inscription, and a charter are all messages.
- ▶ Messages are information that has been interpreted in the mind of one or more persons, contemporary to the events or situations in question, and has to be interpreted again through the mind of the person who receives them, in the last analysis the historian who uses them. Messages are therefore characterised by a double subjectivity, that of the sender(s) of the message and that of the receiver. All other sources are evidence which has only to go through a single interpretation, that of the person who uses them for an historical reconstruction. Messages encompass written sources, iconographic sources, oral history, and oral tradition.

CLASSIFYING ORAL TRADITION

- ▶ The sources of **oral historians** are reminiscences, hearsay, or eyewitness accounts about events and situations which are contemporary, that is, which occurred during the lifetime of the informants.
- ▶ As messages are transmitted beyond the generation that gave rise to them they become **oral traditions**. They are no longer contemporary.
- ▶ Among traditions exist different classes according to the further evolution of the message. A first class consists of **memorized messages**, and within it one distinguishes messages in everyday language (formula, prayer) from messages subject to special language rules (poetry). **Memorized traditions** behave very differently over time from others. Among the latter, one distinguishes again between formal speech (epic) and everyday language (narrative). Narratives themselves belong to two different classes according to the criterion of factuality. Some are believed to be true or false, others are fiction. Factual traditions or accounts are transmitted differently - with more regard to faithful reproduction of content - from fictional narratives such as tales, proverbs, or sayings.

CLASSIFYING ORAL TRADITION

- ▶ oral historians/oral traditions
- ▶ oral traditions:
 - ▶ 1. **Memorized messages** - formula, prayer/poetry
 - ▶ 2. **Memorized traditions** narrative/epic
- ▶ **Narratives:** fact/fiction
 - ▶ The distinction fact/fiction does not exclude a) a case in which a given tradition may now be considered to be true and later to be false or b) shifts from factuality to fiction, as is shown in some societies by the existence of historical tales.

CATEGORIES: 1. MEMORIZED SPEECH

- ▶ A composition to be memorized is supposed to remain unchanged from recitation to recitation, although in fact its actual wording will vary over time; but there was no standard against which the accuracy of a recitation could be checked.
- ▶ In theory the poetic form should help mnemonic retention, but we know in practice that simple formulas and prayers tend to be very well remembered. Such is the case of the Lord's Prayer among Christians and of the *fatihah* among Muslims. But, of course, these are prayed in literate societies, and most direct prayers in oral societies are much more variable.
- ▶ The difference between epic and poetry is that in the former the exact wording does not matter and improvisation is encouraged, and that the latter is memorized.

I beseech thee: Go to the Kwilu of Pombo of Zombo,
which receives many tributaries.

Ngul of Kaaxr

The Mbuun of Mbanza Wemba have chased men of the hut
with the chiefly insignia of the Samba.

They wear little pads on their heads.

The mountains lie at their feet.

Magic formula (Mbuun, Zaire)

CATEGORIES: 2. ACCOUNTS

- ▶ a) historical gossip
- ▶ b) personal tradition
- ▶ c) group account
- ▶ d) traditions of origin and genesis
- ▶ e) cumulative

- ▶ The dynamics of accounts start with historical gossip or personal traditions. The latter subsequently become group traditions and eventually traditions of origin. Accounts of origin, group accounts, and personal accounts all are different manifestations of the same process in different stages.
- ▶ **a) historical gossip:** is not necessarily ephemeral. All sorts of news and hearsay generated as events occur and communicated through the usual channels of communication in a community do not disappear when the novelty has worn off. A village once founded on a given spot may be deserted fifty years later, but one may still remember which man was responsible for its foundation and perhaps why it broke up. Thus a great mass of information survives beyond the generation in which it happened and can then be kept for long periods of time
- ▶ **b) personal tradition:** Eminiscences become family traditions, known and told by one or more people even after the death of the person whose reminiscences they were. Under suitable circumstances such anecdotes, quite similar to historical gossip, crop up, often in a stable form. They are hard to recall on demand, but in a proper setting the cue recalling them is triggered and they are told. Personal traditions of this sort tend then to be transmitted in the fashion of jokes or historical gossip, but unlike gossip they are not considered of great importance.
- ▶ **c) group account:** Group accounts are the typical "oral traditions" of many authors. They are the oral memories of groups such as villages, chiefdoms, kingdoms, associations, and various kinship groups. Vansina calls them "groups" because they embody something which expresses the identity of the group in which they are told or substantiates rights over land, resources, women, office, and herds.
- ▶ **d) traditions of origin and genesis:** Every community in the world has a representation of the origin of the world, the creation of mankind, and the appearance of its own particular society and community. Such traditions of origin or genesis are what anthropologists term myth. They are accounts that originate out of speculation by local sages about these questions, out of preexisting material of the same nature or borrowed from other communities, and out of heavily fossilized group accounts (that is, accounts reduced to clichés).
- ▶ **e) cumulative:** Cumulative accounts are accounts such as lists or genealogies which have to be continually updated. They form a basis for the local chronology by providing epochs, units of duration used to evaluate how far in the past something happened. But this is not why they exist. They are of direct relevance to the social structures today. Genealogies show what the relationships between contemporary groups and between individuals today are and when these change they are manipulated to reflect the new relationships.

OUR THREE-VOLUME NOVEL AT A GLANCE.



VOL. I.—She sat apart, a cloud hanging on her fair brow, and her sweet eyes downcast.



He threw himself at her Feet.



And crushing her slender Fingers within his—



“Lettuce fly!” he murmured.



She turned a little pale—



And tossing her head in the air,



She swept past him,



Flung herself out of the room, and disappeared through one of the doors.



Quickly recovering himself,



“Foiled!” he cried.



His suit had been declined!



VOL. III.—In another second he found himself in the street.



THERE IS A GAP IN THE ACCOUNTS, WHICH I WILL CALL THE FLOATING GAP. THE GAP IS NOT OFTEN VERY EVIDENT TO PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITIES INVOLVED, BUT IT IS USUALLY UNMISTAKABLE TO THE RESEARCHERS. SOMETIMES, ESPECIALLY IN GENEALOGIES, THE RECENT PAST AND ORIGINS ARE RUN TOGETHER AS A SUCCESSION OF A SINGLE GENERATION.

Jan Vansina

3 STAGES, 3 FUNCTIONS

- ▶ Some anthropologists have taken such stages - recent times, early and earlier periods - to represent different functions in society. The first is myth and corresponds to a timeless past, the second is a repetitive (cyclical) middle period, and the third deals with linear time and change.
- ▶ **1. Mythical accounts justify the bases of existing society and correspond to myth as social charter.**
- ▶ **2. The middle period justifies the working of present day society and is a static model of it.**
- ▶ **3. The recent period is the description of causal change, perceived as a disturbance of legitimate order.**

CATEGORIES: 3. EPIC

- ▶ Epic is a class of traditions all on its own. We call epic a narrative couched in poetic language, subject to special linguistic rules of form. Usually epics contain hundreds or thousands of verses and present a complex tale full of wonders and heroism, centered around a main personage. These latter requirements are not essential. What is essential to the historian is that the wording is totally free, provided the form is kept.
- ▶ Many epics have a historical dimension: The hero once really lived, as in the case of Alexander, or some of the incidents, usually the main plot, correspond to actual events of minor or major importance. There was a war of Troy in which a king Ulysses may have participated.

CATEGORIES: 4. TALES, PROVERBS, SAYINGS

- ▶ Tales are performed in everyday language chosen by the performer, and a certain amount of innovation is highly appreciated. They are considered to be fiction. We have already seen that there is no original and there cannot be an original. Some anecdotes or episodes or motifs can be very old, just as old as the tale about the Fountain of the Sun, which is historical gossip. Every performance is a premiere and appreciated as such by the audience. The public likes to hear known tales in new garb.
- ▶ Tales, which are important sources for the historian, contain material of very mixed age and parentage. Anyone hearing or now reading "Puss in Boots" realizes that the social setting is archaic but cannot pin it down to a given place and time, even if the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries and northern Italy seem most attractive. Besides tales, proverbs, sayings, and *Geflügelte Worte* ("famous words") also belong in this class of traditions, for neither exact wording nor any special linguistic form is required of them.



FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 16

PRINTING PRESS

Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, The Printing Press as an Agent of Change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1980, 43–87; 80–88; 683–708.

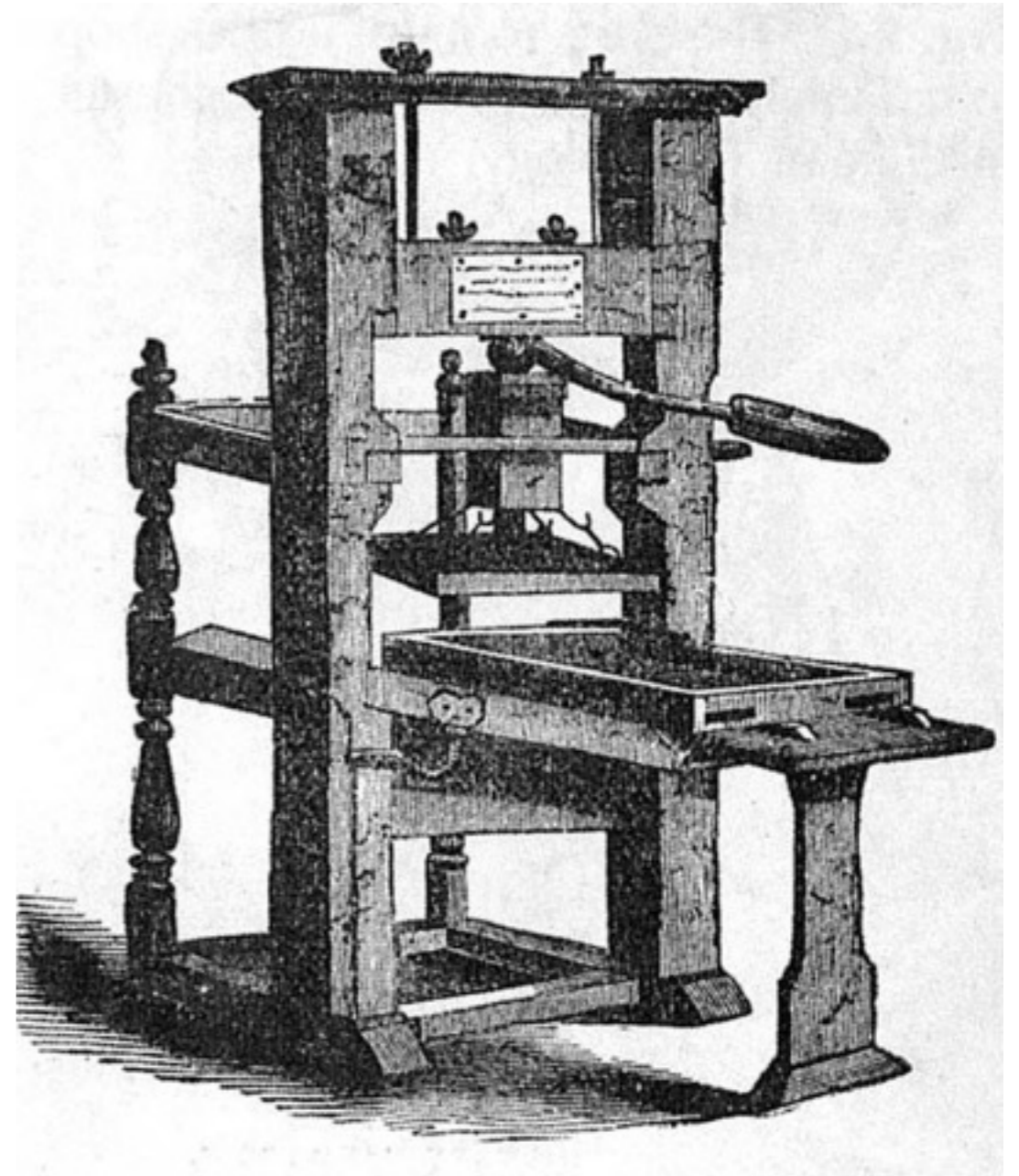


THE PRINTING PRESS
AS AGENT OF CHANGE

**ELIZABETH
EISENSTEIN**

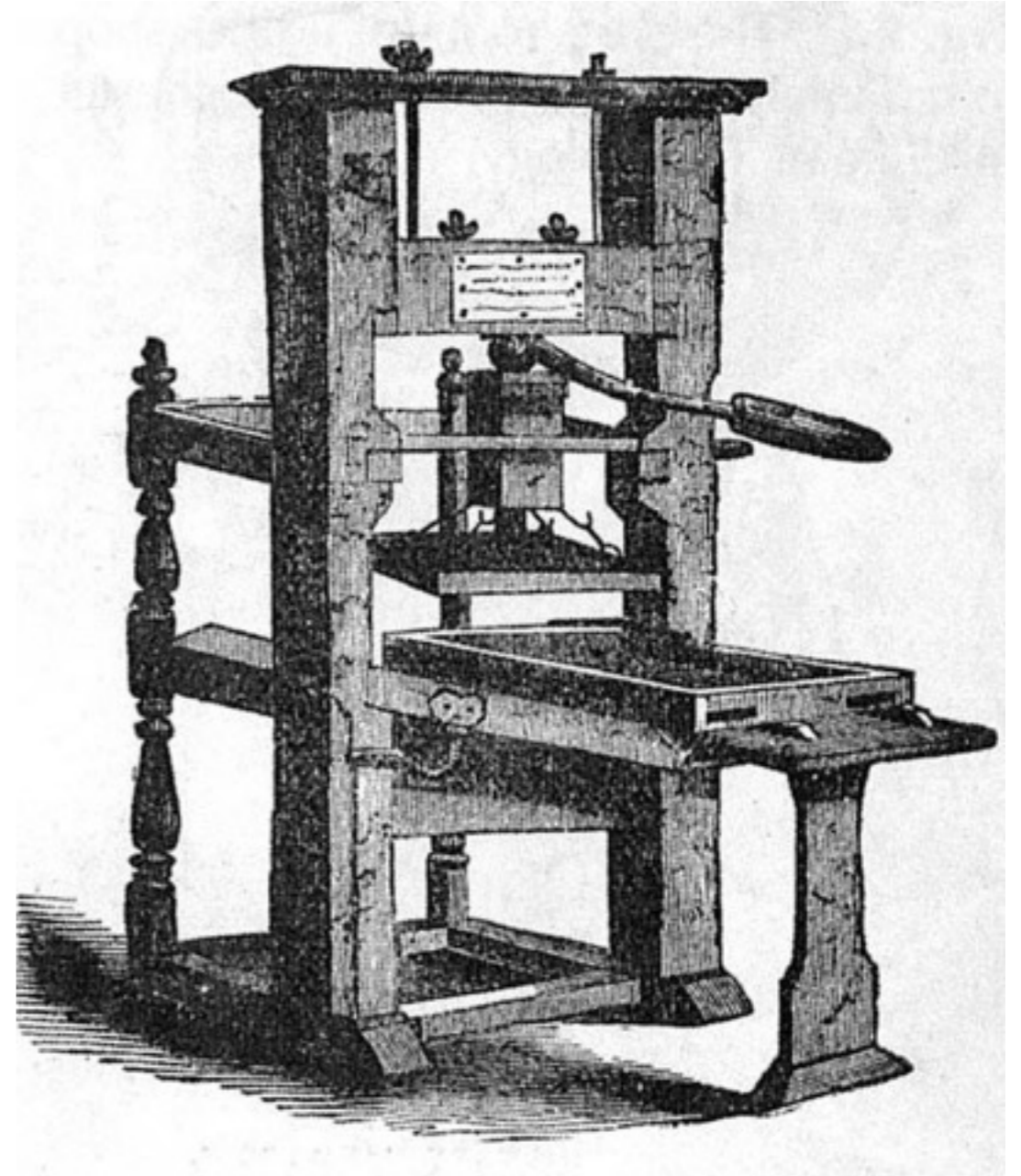
CHANGE AGENT PRINTING PRESS

- ▶ The Printing Press as an Agent of Change is a two-volume, 750-page exploration of the effects of movable type printing on the literate elite of post-Gutenberg Western Europe. Eisenstein focuses on the printing press's functions of dissemination, standardization, and preservation and the way these functions aided the progress of the a) Protestant Revolution, b) Renaissance, c) the Scientific Revolution.
- ▶ Eisenstein's work brought historical method, rigor, and clarity to earlier ideas of Marshall McLuhan.
- ▶ Eisenstein calls the revolution that occurred after the invention of print "the unacknowledged revolution", as it was often overlooked. Print media allowed the general public to have access to books and knowledge that had not been available to them before; this led to the growth of public knowledge and individual thought. Print also "standardized and preserved knowledge which had been much more fluid in the age of oral manuscript circulation".
- ▶ Eisenstein recognizes this period of time to be very important in the development of mankind; however, she feels that it is often overlooked, thus, the 'unacknowledged revolution'.



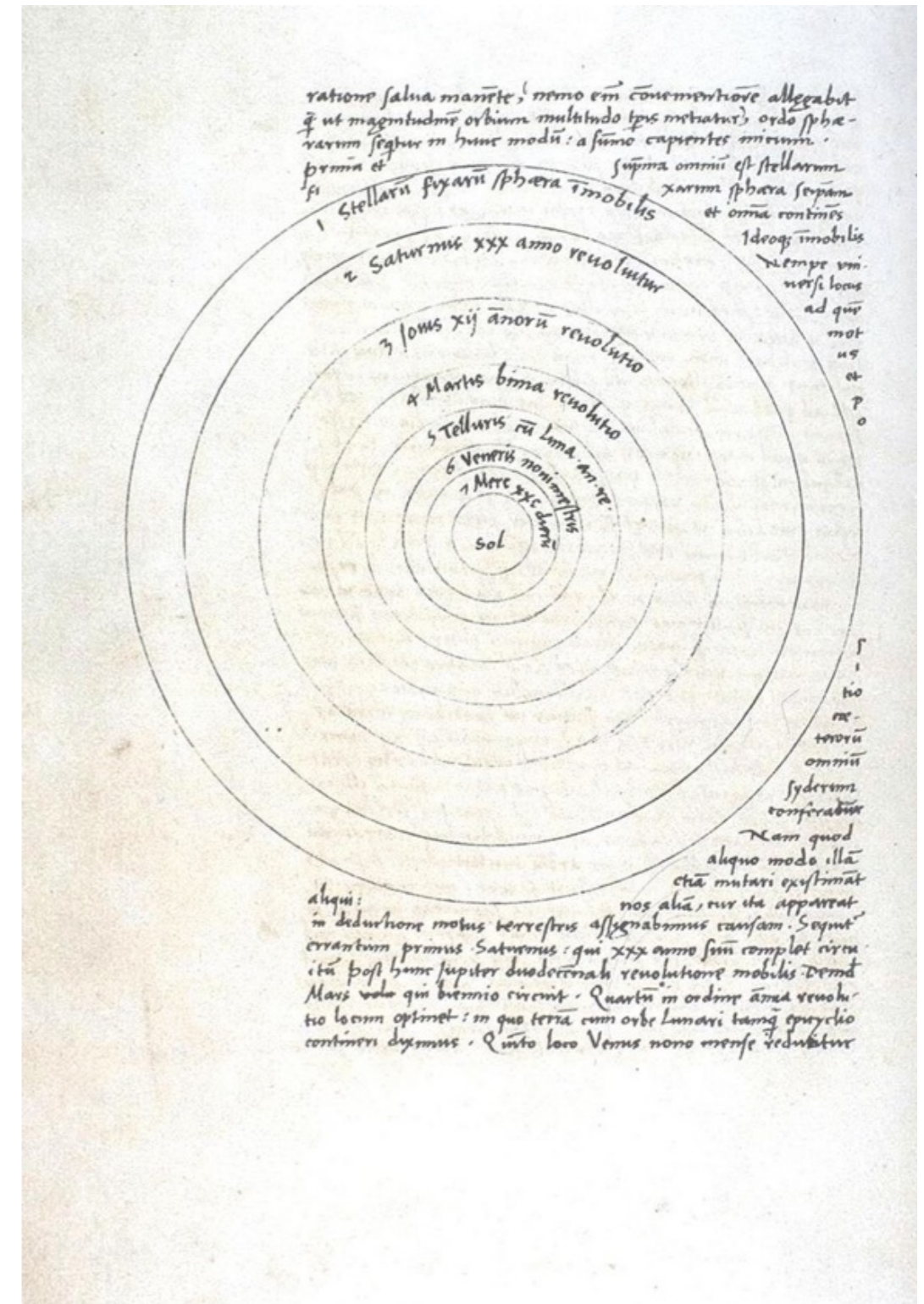
CHANGE AGENT PRINTING PRESS

- ▶ Her focus are the effects of printing on written records and the literate elites, as a shift from one kind of literature to another, not from an oral to a literate culture. She is too interested in the spread of literacy, but in how printing altered written communications within “the commonwealth of learning”.
- ▶ She considers the printing press as *an* agent, not *the* and not the only agent. As an agent of change, printing altered methods of data collection, storage and retrieval systems and communications networks used by learned communities throughout Europe. Eisenstein: “The notion that these other developments could ever be reduced to nothing but a communications shift strikes me as absurd.”
- ▶ Distinctions: Written history produced by scribes/written history after print; oral folk culture/print-made culture.



CHANGE AGENT PRINTING PRESS

- ▶ Many valued texts were barely preserved from extinction - survival often hinged on the occasional copy by an interested scholar.
- ▶ Identical copies? The hardest task. (Many manuscripts were copied from early printed books.)
- ▶ The market-value of hand-copied books.
- ▶ Distinction: print as divine or diabolic.
- ▶ Distinctions: **printer/scribe**; **handwork/presswork** - different procedures.
- ▶ There was no change in product - but a massive change in methods of production.
- ▶ Distinction: **radical change/continuity** i.e. gradual evolutionary change.
- ▶ Printing brought many innovations: footnotes, running heads, tables of contents, cross references etc.



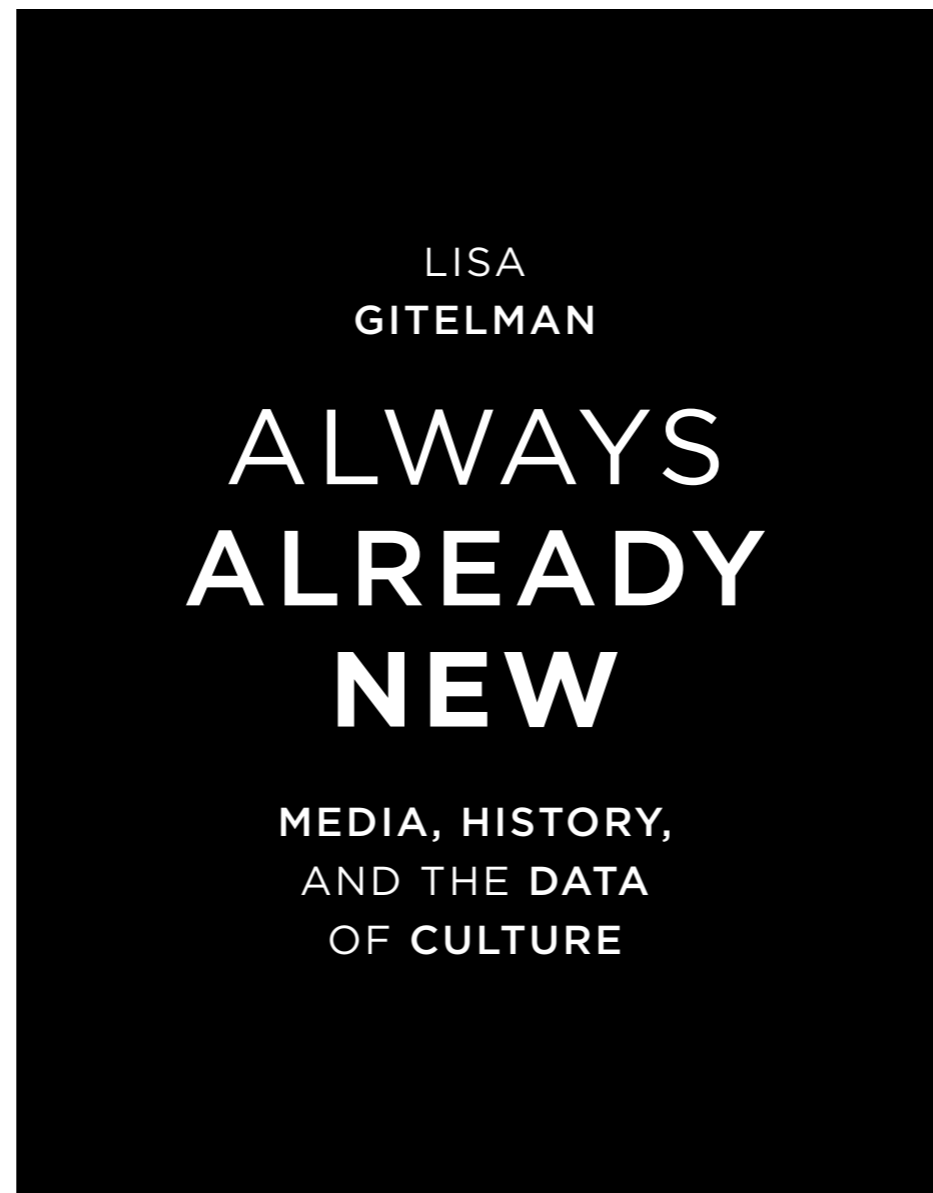
CHANGE AGENT PRINTING PRESS

- ▶ Not all who can read are members of a book-reading public.
- ▶ Distinction: learning to read/learning by reading.
- ▶ Eisenstein: "Gifted students no longer needed to sit at the feet of a given master in order to learn a language or academic skill. Instead they could swiftly achieve mastery on their own, even by sneaking books past their tutors ... "
- ▶ Medium cathedral: Printing eliminated many functions previously performed by stone figures or glass windows in churches.
- ▶ The new "image-less way of remembering through abstract dialectical order" reinforced iconoclastic tendencies.
- ▶ Gregory the great: Statues served as the books of the illiterate.
- ▶ Printing fostered a movement from image culture to word culture (which was more compatible with Protestant religion).
- ▶ Distinction: bookhand/typeface.

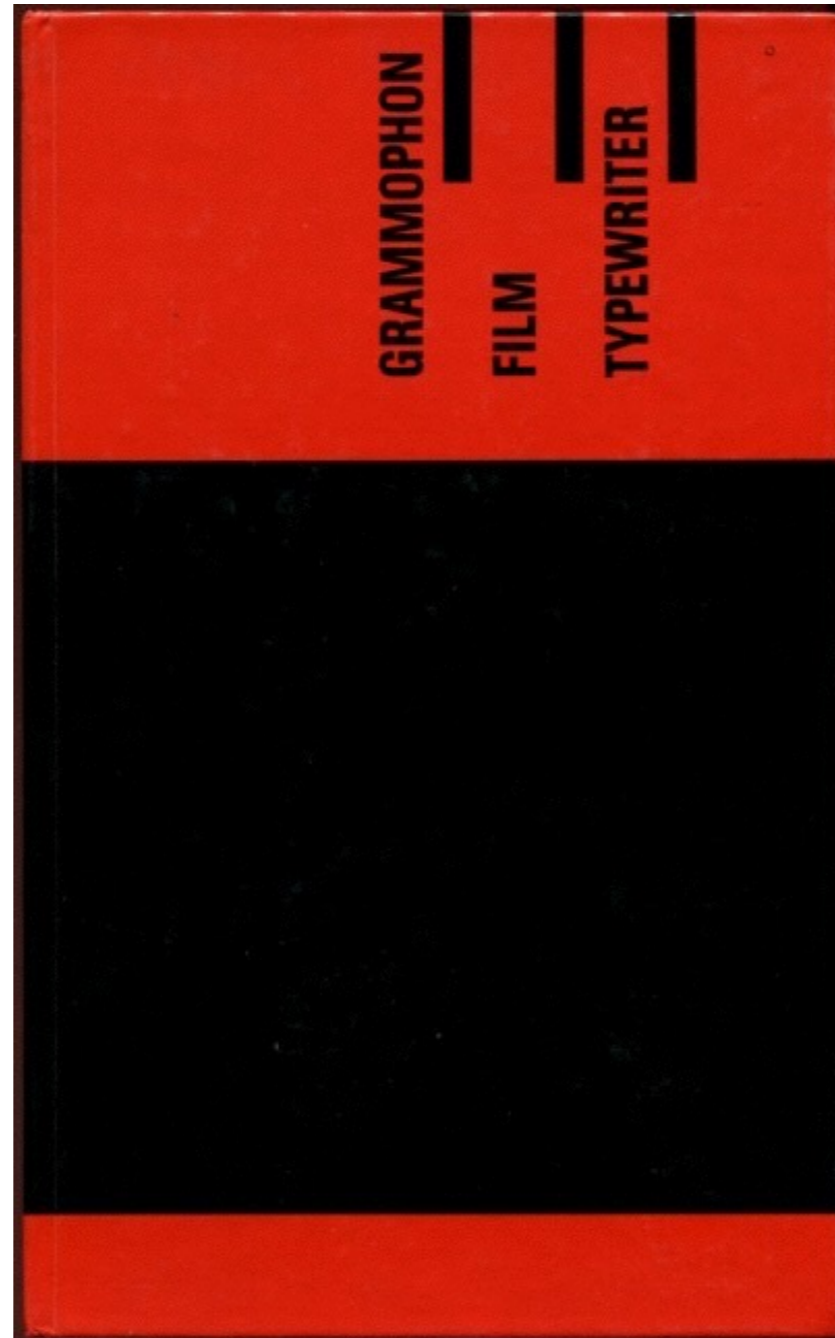
JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS COVER

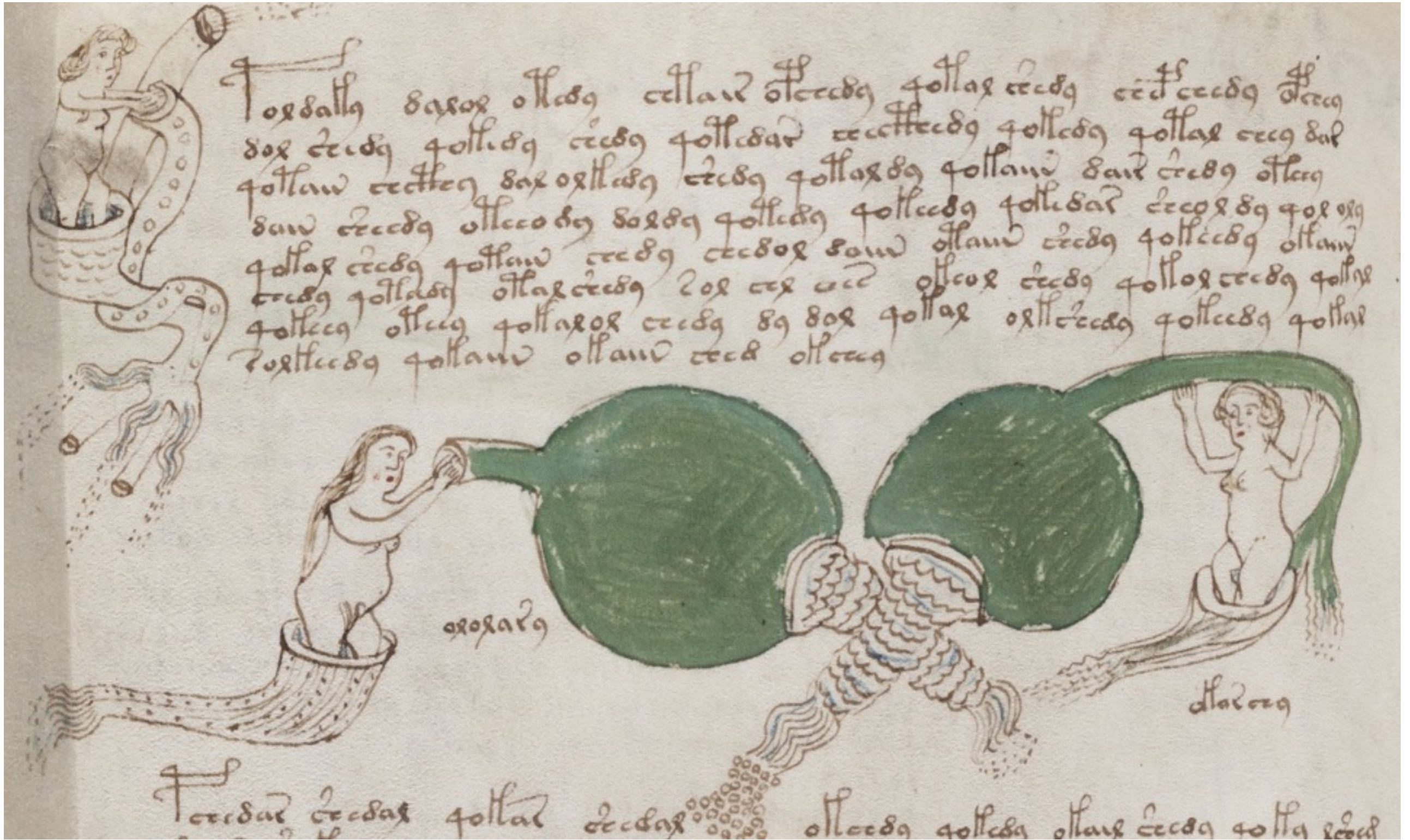


STANDARDIZATION: DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER



JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER







Handwritten text in a medieval script, likely Latin or a Romance language. The text is arranged in several lines, providing descriptions for the plants illustrated on the page. The script is dense and difficult to decipher without specialized knowledge of the language.



Handwritten text in a medieval script, located below the first illustration. It likely describes the plant shown above.



Handwritten text in a medieval script, located below the second illustration.

Handwritten text in a medieval script, located below the third illustration.



Handwritten text in a medieval script, located below the large illustration at the bottom of the page.





matheo: rursus i matheo iohannis et
marci: et in ceteris reliquis que i alijs
propria sunt immutauerunt. Et itaq;
canones legentis qui subiecti sunt: con
sultatione retere sublati: et scia omniu
sciro: et singulis sua que; restituerit.
In canone primo concordat hinc:
matheo-marco-lucas-iohannes. In
secundo vero: matheo-marco-lucas.
In tertio vero: matheo-lucas-iohannes.
In quarto vero: matheo-marco-lu
cas. In quinto duo: matheo-lu
cas. In sexto duo: matheo-in arcu.
In septimo duo: matheo-iohannes.
In octavo duo: lucas-marco. In no
no duo: lucas-iohannes. In decimo
propria uniusquisq; q; no habentur
in alijs redduntur. Singulis vero eu
angelio ab uno incipiens usq; ad fi
nem libroru dispar numerus accesor.
Hic nigro colore prescriptus sub se ha
bet aliu et minus discolorat numerum:
qui ad tercia usq; pedes indicat: pri
mo numero in quo sit canone requiren
dus. In tercio agro codice ubi geana
illud sine illud capendu fore voluerit
nisi canonis sit statim et subiecto nume
ro heretico: et reuerso ad principia in
quibus canonu est distincta congruen
tioru: statim canone et nullo scio
inuenio: illi qui querebas numerum
et: scire tuam qm qui et ipse et inscri
ptione signat numero: atq; e vicino
cetero numero inscriptio: qo numero
origone habuit adnotatio: et cum
scitis reuere ad volumina singulo
rum: sive nota quomo numero qo
est signatura: expresse a lord-i qui
dus vel ead vel vicina dicitur. Et pro
ut i ipso ualeat et ueritate non pa
pa breuissim. *Explicit epistola: quap
arguuntur in ead qm s matheum*

Mattheo et iudea sine in
ordine primo ponitur: ita
euangelium in rubra primo
scriptum: nam uocatio ad
uim et publicano addis fuit: duon
i generatione ipi principia summo:
uno: cui prima accedens i cetera: al
terius: cui scdm cor electo fuit. Et uel
q; tui peribis ipi. Hinc: herodiano
numero restituit postea principia
a corda fide in dectiois temp; per
rigans: et et dicitur usq; in randa
generatione die usq; in ipm dectio
dectio aduere: dmi ostendit gene
ratione et numero sanctoru i uari:
ur et se qd illi ostendit: et di i se o
pus mo strano: etia in hys quoy ge
nus posuit qm optantio a principio
restituitio uo negaret. Quas omniu
ren: tempus: uo: numero: dispositio
uel ratio: q; hui necessarii est: de ror
est: qui factus est et mulier: factus sub
lege: nat: et uirgin: passus in cano
nina in euer hui: ut euangelio q
in seueris reuere in corpore: a po
mo uouit in parib filio: a hys uouit
pam restituit in filio: sine principia
sine hui ostendit unu se cano pte et
se quia un: est. In quo euangelio un
le est distinctio du: sit prima uel me
dia uel pfecta cognoscat: ur et uocan
tionem apostoli et opus euangelij et
dilectiois in in euer nascens: p uni
uersa legunt intelligat: atq; id in eo
in quo appretu fuit: et appretu de
re appetit cognoscat. Nobis cum
huc studio arguuntur hui et fide sa
de rei: et dicit: a optans in uel ligid
diligent est dispositio querebas
non uocet. *Explicit arguuntur: In
quap euangelij: adu: matheum*

GENES

Hic generatio ihesu xpi
sij dauid: sij abraham.
Abraham genuit isaac:
isaac autem genuit iacob.
Iacob autem genuit iuda et sero et:
iudas autem genuit phares et zaca de
thamar. Phares autem genuit elion:
elion autem genuit aram. Aram autem
genuit aminadeb: aminadeb autem ge
nuit naas. Naas autem genuit salo
mon: salomon autem genuit booz de raab.
Booz autem genuit obeh et nathobeh
autem genuit esse. Esse autem genuit da
uid regi: dauid autem rex genuit salo
monem et ea q; hui uir. Salomon autem
genuit roboram: roboram autem genuit
abiam. Abias autem genuit asa: asa
autem genuit iosaphat. Iosaphat autem
genuit ioram: ioram autem genuit ozia
am. Ozias autem genuit ioathan: ioa
than autem genuit achaz. Achaz autem
genuit manasse: manasse autem genuit
ammon. Ammon autem genuit ioseph:
ioseph autem genuit iechoniam et sero et:
i ierusalem generatione babilonis. Et post
transmigrationem babilonis ierusalem
genuit salathiel: salathiel autem genuit
zoroabel. Zoroabel autem genuit abi
ud: abud autem genuit isachim. Is
achim autem genuit azor: azor autem ge
nuit sadoch. Sadoch autem genuit a
chim:achim autem genuit eliab. Eliab
autem genuit elazar: elazar autem genuit
marthan. Marthan autem genuit iacob:
iacob autem genuit ioseph uirum marie:
de qua nat: est ihesus: qui uocatur
xpi. Omnes itaq; generationes ab a
braham usq; ad dauid: generationes
herodotum: et a dauid usq; ad trans
migrationem babilonis: generationes
herodotum: et a transmigratione babilonis

usq; ad xpm: generationes quatuor
decim. **X**pi autem generatio sic test.
Cum esset desolata mater ihesu ma
ria ioseph: atq; conuenit inuenta f
i uero habes de spiritu sancto. Ioseph
autem uir est: cu esset iustus: et nollet
eam tradere: uoluit occulte dimittit
et eam: hui autem eo cogitauit: ecce age
lus dmi apparuit i somnis ioseph di
cens. Ioseph fili dauid: noli timere ac
cipere mariam conuenem tuam. Quia non
est in ea uir: sed spiritus sanctus est. Pari
et autem filius: uocabit nomen eius ih
sum. Ipse enim saluum faciet populum suum
a peccatis eorum. Hic autem totu factu
est: ut adimpletetur qd dictu est a do
mino p prophetas dicentem. Ecce uir
go in uero habebit et pariet filium: et uo
cabit nomen eius emmanuel: qd est in
reptum nobiscum deus. **E**rgo
autem ioseph a somno freit sicut precepit
ei angelus dmi: et accepit conuenem suam.
Et non cognoscebat eam donec peperit
filium suum primo genitum: et
uocauit nomen eius ihsum. **I**
Cum uero esset ihesus in bethle
em iude: i diebus herodis regis: ce
re magi ab oriente uenerunt iherosoli
mam dicentes. Ubi est qui natus est
rex iudeor: **V**idimus enim stellam eius
in oriente: et uenimus ad adorare eum. Au
dimus autem herodes rex iudeor: f:
et omnis iherosolima cu illis. Et cogre
gatis omnino principes sacerdotu et
scribas ipi: sciscitauerunt ab eis ubi xpi
nascere. At illi dixerunt ei. In bethlem
iude. Sic enim scriptu est p prophetam.
Et tu bethlem terra iuda: nequaquam mi
nima es i principibus iuda. Et tu es
et tu qui regis populum iudeor israhel.
Sic herodes clam uocant magis dili
genter didicit ab eis tempus stelle q

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

WEEK 17: READING DAYS



BACK-UP

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MEDIA THEORY 1

BRIEF HISTORY OF MEDIA THEORY I

Plato, Phaedrus. In: Plato, Complete Works. Edited, with introduction and notes, by John M. Couper. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing 1997, 535–540.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Laocoon; or The Limits of Poetry and Painting. Translated from the German by William Ross. London: Ridgway and Sons 1836, 12–35; 146–163.

Johann Gottfried von Herder, "Treatise on the Origin of Language". In: Herder, Johann Gottfried von, Philosophical Writings. Translated and edited by Michael N. Forster. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004, 65–76.

– "On the Cognition and Sensation of the Human Soul". In: Herder, Johann Gottfried von, Philosophical Writings. Translated and edited by Michael N. Forster. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004, 187–216.

BRIEF HISTORY OF MEDIA THEORY I

Jean-Jaques Rousseau, "Essay on the Origins of Language". In: Rousseau, Jean-Jaques, The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997, 247-299.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Lectures on Fine Art. Translated by J.M. Knox. Volume 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1975, 1-14; 64-90.

Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Non moral Sense". Retrieved from: <http://www.austincc.edu/adechene/Nietzsche%20on%20truth%20and%20lies.pdf>

Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics. Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye. In collaboration with Albert Riedlinger. Translated, with an introduction and notes by

FROM RUNES TO BYTES

EPILOGUE



THE MAN WITHOUT
QUALITIES

ROBERT MUSIL

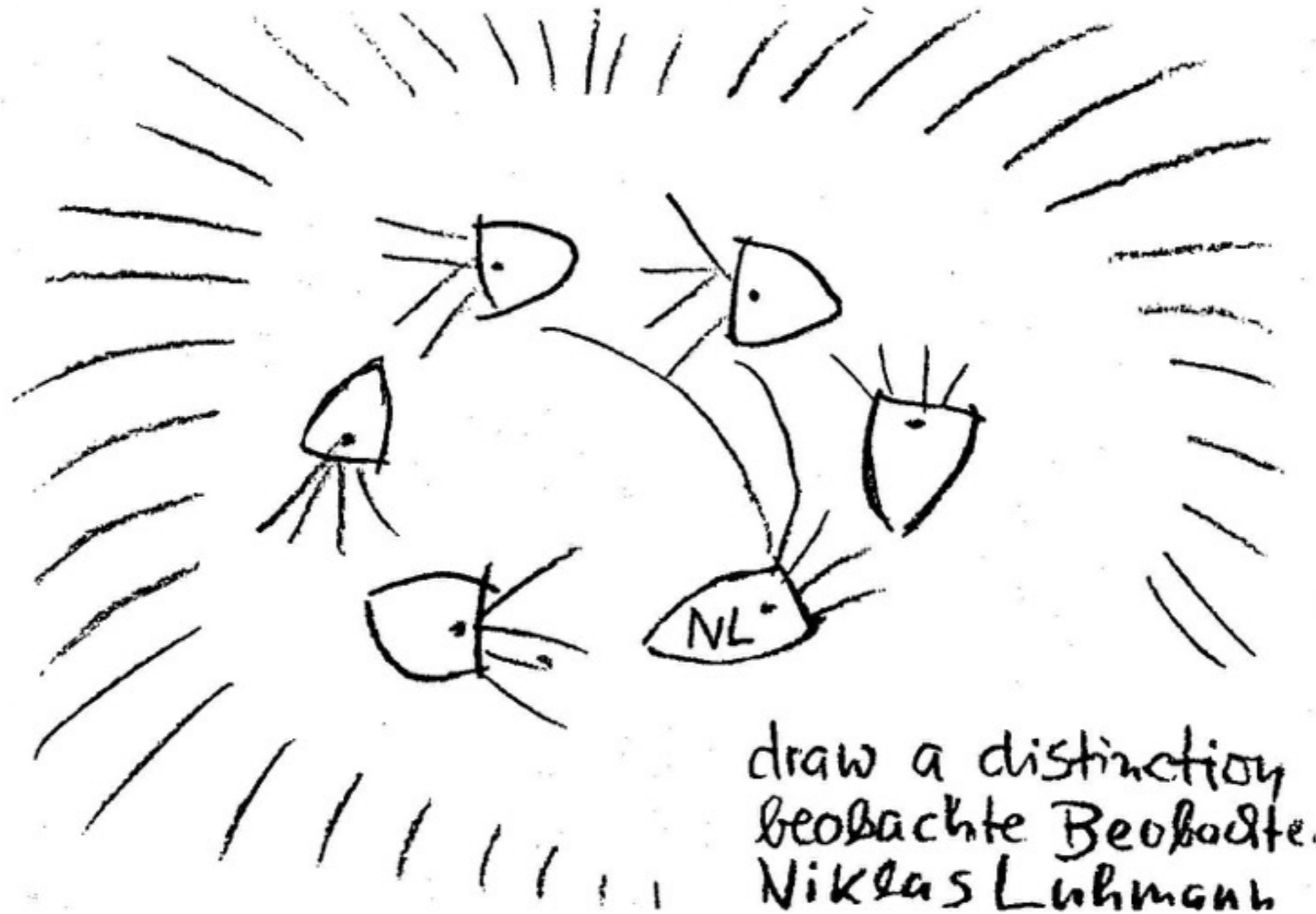
ROBERT MUSIL, MAN WITHOUT QUALITIES

- ▶ "Everything is so uncertain. It all seems to shrink to nothing and expand again endlessly. It won't let you do anything, but the inactivity is also unbearable because it really presses in all directions against closed walls."
- ▶ "You notice that the world no longer remembers today what it wanted yesterday, that its mood keeps changing for no perceptible reason, that it's in a constant uproar and never resolves anything, and if we imagined all this chaos of humanity brought together in a single head, we'd have a really unmistakable case of recognizable pathological symptoms that one would count as mental insufficiency ... "

ROBERT MUSIL, MAN WITHOUT QUALITIES

- ▶ "And in one of those apparently random and abstract thoughts that so often assumed importance in his life, it struck him that when one is overburdened and dreams of simplifying one's life, the basic law of this life, the law one longs for, is nothing other than that of narrative order, the simple order that enables one to say: 'First this happened and then that happened' It is the simple sequence of events in which the overwhelmingly manifold nature of things is represented in a unidimensional order, as a mathematician would say, stringing all that has occurred in space and time on a single thread, which calms us; that celebrated 'thread of the story,' which is, it seems, the thread of life itself. Lucky the man who can say *when*, *before*, and *after*! Terrible things may have happened to him, he may have writhed in pain, but as soon as he can tell what happened in chronological order, he feels as contented as if the sun were warming his belly. This is the trick the novel artificially turns to account: Whether the wanderer is riding on the highway in pouring rain or crunching through snow and ice at ten below zero, the reader feels a cozy glow, and this would be hard to understand if this eternally dependable narrative device, which even nursemaids can rely on to keep their little charges quiet, this tried-and-true *foreshortening of the mind's perspective*, were not already part and parcel of life itself. Most people relate to themselves as storytellers. They usually have no use for poems, and although the occasional *because* or *in order that* gets knotted into the thread of life, they generally detest any brooding that goes beyond that; they love the orderly sequence of facts because it has the look of necessity, and the impression that their life has a *course* is somehow their refuge from chaos. It now came to Ulrich that he had lost this elementary, narrative mode of thought to which private life still clings, even though everything in public life has already ceased to be. narrative and no longer follows a thread, but instead spreads out as an infinitely interwoven surface."

DRAW A DISTINCTION: OBSERVE THE OBSERVERS



DRAW A DISTINCTION!



DRAW A DISTINCTION!

