Form miming meaning

Iconicity in language and literature

edited by Max Nänny and Olga Fischer

FORM

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Edited by

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Preface

The studies assembled in this volume represent a selection of papers that were originally given at the international and interdisciplinary symposium on 'Iconicity in Language and Literature', organised by the University of Zurich in co-operation with the University of Amsterdam and held in Zurich, 20–22 March 1997. To our knowledge this was the first international gathering of both linguists and literary scholars to present studies on iconic aspects in both language and literature. It can thus be said that the organisers of, and the participants in, the Zurich conference were not just following a trend but leading one. For although linguists have shown an increased interest in iconicity in the last decade or so (see the recent MLA-Bibliographies for this), we feel that the symposium and the resulting collection of papers in this volume put the interdisciplinary study of iconic dimensions, especially of iconicity in literary texts, on the map. It is to be hoped that this publication will stimulate new research into the still largely unploughed but potentially fruitful field of iconicity in both language and literature.

The symposium and the publication of papers would have been impossible without the help of institutional sponsors. We should therefore like to express our deep gratitude for the generous financial contributions made by the 'Hochschulstiftung des Kantons Zürich', the 'Philosophische Fakultät I' and the 'Englisches Seminar' of the University of Zurich, as well as by the 'Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek' (NWO) and the 'Faculteit der Letteren' of the University of Amsterdam. We should also like to thank the University of Zurich for its hospitality and its logistic help in organising the symposium. We are especially grateful to Barbara Hess Prusse and Jürg Joss for their unflagging assistance before and during the symposium, and in addition we would like to thank Therese Lutz for typing one of the papers into the computer, and Jettie Peterse for her work done on the abstracts.

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M.N. and O.F.

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Introduction

Iconicity as a Creative Force in Language Use

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> Adam's one task in the Garden had been to invent language, to give each creature and thing its name. In that state of innocence, his tongue had gone straight to the quick of the world. His words had not been merely appended to the things he saw, they had revealed their essences, had literally brought them to life. A thing and a name were interchangeable. After the fall, this was no longer true. Names became detached from things; words devolved into a collection of arbitrary signs; language had been severed from God. The story of the Garden, therefore, records not only the fall of man, but the fall of language (Paul Auster, *City of Glass*, 70).

There seems to be an innate iconic streak in us that makes us somehow feel or believe that there is a direct link between a word or name (the 'signifier') and the object or concept (the 'signified') it stands for. Following Paul Auster's mythical interpretation in the above excerpt from his *City of Glass*, we may construe this latent streak as a relic of a prelapsarian innocence, a primeval state when the signifier and the signified were still, in Auster's words, "interchangeable". According to this mythical view, the Edenic innocence of iconic signification was destroyed by the Fall, which led to the babelisation or equally fatal Fall of language: for Adam's pristine language fell apart into a plurality of different languages. This had the effect that the same meaning was now expressed by *different* linguistic signs: "words devolved into a collection of arbitrary signs". Auster's fictional myth belongs to the tradition of what Simpson (1978: 662) refers to as the "natural language fantasy", i.e. the fantasy that 'nature' had established a *real* connection between signs and the things they signify.

One late literary reflection of the "natural language fantasy" may be found in Modernist efforts at renewing poetry by going back to the archaic or pictographic roots of human language. Thus Ezra Pound welcomed (and edited) Ernest Fenollosa's epochal essay *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* (1918), asking poets to adopt an iconic way of writing similar to the one described in this treatise. In Fenollosa's and Pound's (largely mistaken) view, the Chinese written character is basically an iconic pictogram,

> something much more than arbitrary symbols. It is based upon a vivid shorthand picture of the operations of nature. In the ... spoken word there is no natural connection between thing and sign: all depends on sheer convention. But the Chinese method follows natural suggestion (Pound 1964: 8).

Speaking of a "natural connection between thing and sign" Fenollosa (an Emersonian) took up again the long tradition (going back at least to the Middle Ages) of seeing and evaluating everything primarily in terms of similitude or similarity. Even John Locke, who was the first to use the term 'semiotics' and one of the Moderns to shift the weight away from the ideal of similarity to that of 'difference' (which is at the very centre of all arbitrariness), still spoke of the 'natural' sign when meaning the iconic sign.

Now Fenollosa, opposing the sculpture of Laocoön[1] to a line from Browning, also contrasts poetry in general and Chinese poetry in particular with the western visual arts:

> The untruth of a painting or a photograph is that, in spite of its concreteness, it drops the element of natural succession. [...] One superiority of verbal poetry as an art rests in its getting back to the fundamental reality of *time*. Chinese poetry has the unique advantage of combining both elements. It speaks at once with the vividness of painting, and with the mobility of sounds. It is, in some sense, more objective than either, more dramatic. In reading Chinese we do not seem to be juggling mental counters, but to be watching *things* work out their own fate (Pound 1964: 9).

Thus, the poetic medium of the Chinese written character has the advantage of being both an iconic *image* (visually concrete, spatial, vivid) and an iconic *diagram* (sounds and ideograms in succession). Today, this semiotic combination is not just found in film but is typical of such twentieth-century literary movements as imagism[2] and futurism (with its attempt at the combination of typographic space and movement), of the montage poetry (with its non-linear sequences of images and scenes) of such Modernist pioneers as Ezra Pound (*The*

Cantos), T.S. Eliot (*The Waste Land*) and of the later novels of James Joyce (*Ulysses, Finnegans Wake*).

However, the same combination of iconic image and diagram can also be found in modern literary representations of the world generally. For twentieth-century writers had become aware that the literary expression and reflection of the new metropolitan environment and of a diverse global culture demanded new devices, new methods of composition that went beyond mere diagrammatic narration. So Ezra Pound justified the use of associative juxtaposition or what he called the 'ideogrammatic method' by the writer's urgent iconic need of having to match a radically changed, manifold and complex urban environment – which was no longer amenable to a simple, linear or merely temporal narrative order – by means of non-linear, so to speak, spatialised verbal images and compositional devices:

> The life in a small town or village is narrative, in a city the visual impressions succeed each other, overlap, overcross, they are 'cinematographic', but they are not of a simple linear sequence. They are often a flood of nouns without verbal relations ... a species of ideographic representations (Pound 1921: 110).

Similarly, in 1923 Eliot, having Joyce's *Ulysses* and also his own *The Waste Land* in mind, praised the 'mythical method' (which implies a quasi-spatial timelessness, simultaneity) over the 'narrative method' (which follows a temporal sequence of cause and effect) in literary composition. To him, only the 'mythical method' was "a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" (Kermode 1975: 177). As the expressions "shape" and "panorama" suggest, Eliot was in favour of a method of iconic writing that combined spatial image with temporal diagram.

Moving from a phylogenesis of language development – from its mythical origins in 'natural language' to some twentieth-century literary revivals of pristine iconicity – to ontogenesis, we discover that a natural language fantasy is also strongly present in children, as many studies have shown (cf. Slobin 1985, Pontecorvo 1994, Fónagy 1980, and this volume). It is well-known that children make much more frequent use of onomatopoeic words than adults, resorting, for instance, to the sounds made by animals as a name for these animals. Additionally, Fónagy (this volume) shows that children from different language backgrounds consistently associate certain sounds with particular characteristics of the objects signified. Children are also spontaneous folk-etymologists and tend to change forms and meanings of signs in such a way that they become in their eyes more 'natural'.[3] For instance, Dutch children may refer to the word *rotonde* 'round-about', as *rontonde*, thereby indicating that they consider the expression to have a relationship with 'round' (Dutch /ront/ means 'round'). Similarly, *opereren* 'to operate upon' often becomes *openreren*, because they associate it with the body that has to be *open*ed up. Adults etymologise less in this way because they have discovered the arbitrary value of most signs, i.e. they have come to learn that most signs are 'symbols' (in the Peircean sense).[4] It is interesting, however, that folk-etymology again may play an active part once a sign has for some reason become opaque, e.g. through infrequency of use, through language change, or because it is a borrowed word and as such less transparent. Thus, the change in the form and/or meaning of words like *hangnail* (from OE *ang nægl*, a nail that gives 'distress') and *bridegroom* (from OE *brydguma*) occurred because the words *ang* and *guma* ('man') had disappeared from the language.

Another way in which children are highly iconic is in how they treat letters as pictures, as iconic images, before they have actually learned to read and write. Thus, an English child once perceived the sign *bed* as a perfect icon for the object 'bed': the upright strokes of the 'b' and 'd' functioning as the bedposts and the circular 'o' attached to the strokes of the b and d functioning as the pillow (or head) on one side, and the elevation of the feet on the other. (Poets are similar to children in this respect, cf. Paul Claudel's pictural interpretation of *locomotive*, quoted by Nänny, this volume.) Pontecorvo (1994) shows in her study of Italian four- to five-year olds, that there is a distinct tendency in children who have not yet learned how to write but have nevertheless developed a 'sense' of letters to use more (imaginary) letter-signs for the Italian word *case* (a plural form, 'houses') than for *casa* (singular, 'house') in spite of the fact that the plural inflection in Italian does not *add* any sounds/letters but contains the same number of letters as the singular. In other words, the extra letter-signs that these children produce are iconically motivated, motivated by their perception of the objects in the 'real' world. In a similar way some children also use smaller letter-signs to 'write' the word *casetta* (It. 'little house').

In view of the above observations, and in view of the fact that the ontogenetic development of organisms – and perhaps also of such cultural artefacts as language – to some extent may be said to re-enact their phylogenetic development (cf. Stampe 1979, but see also Aitchison 1996: 93–94), it is not surprising that quite a number of linguists believe that language, both spoken and written, may have started off iconically. Bolinger and Sears (1981: 129) write:

> Everything points to icons as more primitive than symbols. Children invent them. Two speakers without a common language resort to them for communication. But however vivid the beginnings, the color has long since faded to a uniform gray ... Language has become an almost purely conventional code, with a few exceptions listed as curiosities.

These linguists also suggest that icons do not play a large part in language anymore. Indeed, within Saussurean or structural linguistics, the idea that the linguistic sign is essentially arbitrary has long reigned supreme. Similarly, the advances that were made in historical linguistics by the Neogrammarian school in the late nineteenth century were fully based on the notion of the arbitrariness of the sign. However, even the Neogrammarians had to admit that there were exceptions to their 'sound-laws'. These they listed under the rather vague notion of 'analogy'. Analogy, as will be discussed below, must be seen as a type of change that is motivated, a change against an iconic backcloth. It seems then that in language change, and therefore in language in general, both arbitrary and iconic rules play a role. Many linguistic signs (or structures) may once have started off as icons, but in the course of time they have tended to become worn down to mere symbols. (This, however, is not only true for language, but for all cultural artefacts, as Haiman 1993, among others, has shown.) In language, however, there is a constant opposition between economy, which causes linguistic items and structures to be eroded, thus becoming conventional, that is, more and more 'symbolic' (arbitrary), and the need for expressivity to counterbalance the erosion (cf. Plank 1979, Haiman 1983). This is very nicely expressed by Langacker (1977: 106–107) in his metaphor of language as a "compacting machine":

> It would not be entirely inappropriate to regard languages ... as gigantic expression-compacting machines. They require as input a continuous flow of creatively produced expressions formed by lexical innovation, by lexically and grammatically regular periphrasis, and by the figurative use of lexical and periphrastic locutions. The machine does whatever it can to wear down the expressions fed into it. It fades metaphors by standardizing them and using them over and over again. It attacks expressions of all kinds by phonetic erosion. It bleaches lexical items of most of their semantic contents and forces them into service as grammatical markers. It chips away at the boundaries between elements and crushes them together into smaller units. The machine has a voracious appetite. Only the assiduous efforts of speakers — who salvage what they can from its output and recycle it by using their creative

> energies to fashion a steady flow of new expressions to feed back in — keep the whole thing going.

Langacker emphasises the speakers' "creative energies". It is here indeed that iconicity comes back in: i.e. iconicity is not just characteristic of an earlier, more primitive stage of language, but it plays a role whenever a speaker's (or a writer's) expressivity is at issue: when, for whatever reason (poetic, practical, humorous, out of sheer necessity), he or she is trying to express himself or herself anew, in a more concrete or less worn-down form of language.

Hence, we discover iconicity in circumstances in which language is created: more consciously, as in literary texts,[5] but also unconsciously in children's acquisition of language, in the creolisation of pidgins,[6] and (as we have noted above) in situations in which linguistic structures have become opaque for some reason or other, have become difficult to process because of changes having taken place elsewhere, so that some re-analysis is inevitable.[7] In all these situations language users unleash their creative energies, which, we think, involve iconicity. And as "our linguistic system is inextricably interwoven with the rest of our physical and cognitive selves" (Sweetser 1990: 6; and see also especially Haiman, Kortmann and Norrman, this volume), with the world we live in, we tend to fall back on our power of imitation, which, according to Lieberman (1991: 140–42), is one of the most primitive means that humans have that allows them to adapt and succeed in the struggle for survival.

Considering, as we have noted above, that there are two competing forces at work in language (that of 'economy' and that of 'expressivity'), it may not come as a surprise that there have been proposals to distinguish also two systems in language formation or language generation. Thus, Ivan Fónagy (1995: 285–86) has suggested that there is a dual structuring of sentences at work, namely a linguistic and a paralinguistic coding, the latter involving an expressive transgression of the regular linguistic rules. In this volume, Fónagy refers to the paralinguistic (or "secondary") code as a "Distorter" or "Modifier", which processes all linguistic units generated by the Grammar (or "primary code") in live speech.[8] Both Grammar and Distorter, however, are rule governed, but the rules of the Grammar are symbolic, arbitrary or conventionalised, whereas those of the Distorter are motivated or iconic.

In his *The Violence of Language* (1990), Jean-Jacques Lecercle makes a similar distinction between the rules of grammar and the rules of what he calls the "remainder". Both types of rules are "intertwined" (1990: 130) in the production of language, but the rules of grammar are normative and have a general application, while those of the remainder are idiosyncratic, and are therefore much more difficult to capture in general terms. He sees the remainder as "excess" (p. 60), as "rhizomatic" (p. 128 ff.), as a locus beyond frontiers (p. 52), that forces us to 'play'. So the rules of the remainder are playful, they play with the normative rules.

* * * * *

The studies presented in this volume will explore iconicity from two different angles. A first group of scholars is especially interested in how far the primary code, the code of grammar, is influenced by iconic motivation (see Tabakowska on rules involved in discourse, Ungerer on rules in word formation, and A. Fischer, Fónagy and Meier on phonological rules) and how originally iconic models have become conventionalised (cf. O. Fischer, Haiman, and also Fónagy). Others go one step further in exploring how, for instance, the presence of iconicity can tell us more about the structure of human cognition (Kortmann, Ungerer) or how the "iconicist desire for symmetry" can be related to the symmetry of the human body (Norrman). A second group of contributors is more interested in the presence of iconicity as part of the secondary code, i.e. in how speakers and writers remotivate or play with the primary code, how they concretise what has become conventional or how they use form to add to meaning (see Bauer, Halter, Müller, Nänny and Webster for this presence in literary texts, A. Fischer and Piller in commercial language, and Wyss in the electronic use of language).

When Bolinger and Sears suggested (cf. above) that icons do not play a large part in language anymore, they were mainly thinking of what we will call here 'imagic iconicity'. However, 'diagrammatic iconicity' (iconicity of a more abstract kind) is pervasively present in language, especially on the higher levels of language, as Bolinger (1980: 18) indeed indicated when he wrote: "Arbitrary and conventional is a fitting description of distinctive sounds, less so of words, even less of sentences, and beyond that scarcely fits at all. The larger the scope, the looser and less arbitrary the system". There is thus a basic difference between 'imagic iconicity' and 'diagrammatic iconicity' (for an overview of the various types of iconicity that will be distinguished here, see Figure 1).

iconicity
- **imagic**
  - oral/aural
  - tactile
  - visual
- **diagrammatic**
  - **structural**
    - isomorphism
    - iconicity of motivation
      - centrality vs. peripherality
      - distance/proximity
      - sequential ordering
      - markedness
      - repetition
  - **semantic**
    - metaphor (cognitive) (cf. Anttila 1989: 14ff.)
    - metaphor (grammatical)
      - analogy
      - grammaticalisation

Figure 1. *Types of iconicity*

In imagic iconicity there is a 'direct',[9] one to one relation between the sign or signifier (usually a morphologically unstructured one) and the signified.

signifier	*miaow*	
↕	↕	(direct likeness in sound/word-shape)
signified	'sound made by cat'	

In diagrammatic iconicity, such a (vertical) direct, concrete relation between signifier and signified is missing, instead there exists an iconic link between the (horizontal) relation(s) on the level of the signifier and the (horizontal) relations on the level of the signified:

signifier	*veni*	→	*vidi*	→	*vici*	*foot*	→	*foot* (of mountain)
↕			↕		↕			↕
signified	'event'	→	'event'	→	'event'	'body-part'	→	'lowest part of mountain'
			(in real world)					

Thus, the temporal relation between the events taking place in the real world may be iconically reflected in the way in which the signifiers naming these events are *ordered* on the linguistic level. Such ordering may be temporally sequential, as in the example from Julius Caesar above, or it may be more spatial, concerning notions of distance/proximity and centrality/peripherality. Similarly, in semantic iconicity, e.g. metaphor, it is the *semantic relation* between the signifier *foot* and its signified, and the *semantic* similarity between a body-object such as 'foot' and the lower part of a mountain, that leads to the same signifier being used for both.

However, even on the imagic level, iconicity continues to play an important role in language and especially in literary language, as quite a number of studies presented in this volume show. The imagic relation may be of an oral, aural (acoustic) or tactile type (see the contributions in Part II of this volume, and the general study by Fónagy),[10] or they may be of a visual type (cf. the contributions in Part III). The latter is especially prominent in playful and highly creative language use, such as in poetry and advertising.

As mentioned above and indicated in Figure 1, diagrammatic iconicity consists of two types, structural and semantic. In both the semantic and the structural type, it is the *perceived* relation in meaning between two concepts that leads to the use of the same form or word or the same shape or structure. Sometimes it also works the other way round (i.e. from form to meaning), but this is less usual. An example of this would be *flaunt* and *flout*: for many speakers they have acquired the same meaning through similarity of form. Similarly, *obsequious* developed into a pejorative term through association with other *ob*-signs, which had a negative ring, like *obstreperous*, *obstinate*, *obnoxious*, etc. (the last item was also originally non-pejorative).

Semantic iconicity (metaphor) is an important source for the creation of new words, and a tool constantly resorted to by poets. Again, it plays a very important part in language change, since the principle usually called 'analogy' is in fact an instance of metaphor (see e.g. Anttila 1989: 88, 99). In analogy, too, the speaker sees a relation in meaning (often grammatical rather than cognitive) between two items, which may cause him or her to create a new form. For example, the use of *-ed* in the past tense of originally strong verbs (as in *burned* for earlier *barn*, *helped* for earlier *halp* etc.) developed because of the perceived relationship (in itself arbitrary) between 'pastness' and the 'weak' dental ending *-ed*. Again, the other way around is also possible, i.e. a sameness in form may influence a word's meaning, but this occurs less frequently. An example is the change in meaning in the Dutch word *gijzelaar* 'hostage' (for some speakers even in *martelaar* 'martyr') from a passive to an agentive noun. Thus, 'gijzelaar' for many speakers of Dutch refers to the hostage-taker rather than to the victim, and 'martelaar' to the torturer rather than to the one tortured. This has happened on the analogy of the more frequent and still productive pattern, *wandelaar*, *moordenaar*, *goochelaar*, etc. (i.e. the one who 'walks', 'murders', 'juggles').

More recently, the notion of metaphor has been extended to explain unidirectional changes (a type of grammaticalisation) in which expressions used in the "content domain" (Sweetser 1990: 11), i.e. the real world of objects and activities, come to serve to express relationships in the speech-act or metalinguistic domain, and from there in the epistemic or reasoning domain. Thus, there seems to be an equation between our physical self and our inner self, which makes us borrow concepts from the socio-physical world, and transfer them metaphorically to our conversational and reasoning world (cf. also Fónagy, Haiman and Norrman, this volume). This transfer, Sweetser believes (1990: 31), may well be universal. It would explain for instance how root-modals (e.g. OE *mæg* expressing physical ability), develop into deontic modals (*may* expressing social permission, as in *You may go*), and additionally acquire epistemic meaning (as in *This may be true*).

Within structural diagrammatic iconicity two types are usually distinguished: isomorphism and iconicity of motivation (cf. Haiman 1980, 1985, and this volume).[11] The first one, Haiman claims, is universal, the second is not. Isomorphism means that there is a one to one relationship between the signifier and the object/concept signified. This can be found on the lexical as well as the grammatical level. It means that Haiman believes that in language the existence of pure synonyms and homonyms is linguistically pathological; it is not a normal state. Thus, the use of French *delit* in Middle English next to its native synonym, *lust*, was occasioned through borrowing. This synonymity, however, was soon 'remedied' through change: *lust* and *delight* are now used in rather different ways. In the case of homonyms, the situation is often remedied by replacing them with other words. E.g. in the homonymous pair *queen* (OE *cwēn*) — *quean* (OE *cwene*), the latter has been replaced. Sometimes, an existent variant pronunciation comes to be used to solve the problem, as for instance with the originally homonymic pair *cheer* and *chair* (cf. the pun in *Macbeth*, Arden ed. V, iii, 21).

Similarly, in syntax, isomorphism entails that one cannot really have *optional* differences in surface structure. In other words, the old generative tenet that several surface structures may have one deep structure, implying that these surface structures all mean the same (because transformations which link deep and surface structures are meaning-preserving), is not really possible. Haiman believes that there is complete isomorphism in language. In other words, exceptions to it are either temporary, or are motivated independently, as Haiman shows convincingly for a number of syntactic cases. It should be added, though, that Haiman is more concerned with syntax than with the lexicon, where such exceptions create less of a problem as long as the non-isomorphous items create no ambiguities in communicative situations. That there is a strong avoidance of homonymy among speakers, however, has been very convincingly shown by Samuels (1972: 144ff.), when he discussed the reason why most early Middle

English [ɛ] words (e.g. *eat*, *lean*, *beast*) became [i:] in standard English and not [e:]. Although [e:] would have been historically more regular, the choice of [e:] would have created a lot more homonyms. Ungerer and O. Fischer (this volume) show the role isomorphism may play in the area of word formation and syntactic change; in the studies by Haiman and Kortmann isomorphism is present as a basic principle in the background too.

The other subtype Haiman distinguishes, 'iconicity of motivation', is somewhat less abstract than isomorphism, and therefore more noticeable in the more concrete language of literature. Haiman's work on this type of iconicity in 'ordinary' language has indeed influenced the study of iconicity in literary language. Nänny (1986; cf. also Cureton 1981) has shown that the same parameters distinguished under 'iconicity of motivation' in Figure 1 also play a significant role in literature, albeit often in a more concrete (more 'imagic') fashion (see O. Fischer 1997: 70–77). Thus the linear sequence of verbal signs may be used as an iconic diagram to signify succession in time or space, continuity, change (growth and decay), duration, rank and motion. But syntactic juxtaposition or typographic arrangement may equally function as iconic diagrams to express, for instance, symmetry, balance, relative position, fragmentation, etc. (Nänny 1985). Almost all poetic devices, from typography (Cureton 1986, Nänny 1992), sounds (Epstein 1975, 1978), meter, lineation, stanza-breaks to rhetorical figures (e.g. chiasmus), as well as a large number of narrative techniques may be fruitfully interpreted in terms of their iconic function with the all-important proviso, however, that the act of interpretation must always proceed from meaning to form (Epstein 1978: 28) and not the other way round. In this volume, Bauer, Halter and Webster look at how typographic space and spacing are used meaningfully in poetry; A. Fischer (in Part III) is interested in its use in advertising; and Müller shows how repetition, sequential ordering and ellipsis is iconically used in prose fiction.

Although the temporal relation illustrated in *veni, vidi, vici*, and the metaphorical one illustrated in *foot* above, can both be called instances of diagrammatic iconicity, they also exemplify two different types of diagrams: the first being strictly semiotic in nature (because the diagram connects the linguistic with the non-linguistic), the second more intra-linguistic. Johansen (1996: 49ff.) refers to this as 'first-' and 'second-degree' iconicity respectively. First-degree iconicity is semiotic because the order of the signs *veni, vidi, vici* mirrors the order of the events they refer to in the real world. Intra-linguistic iconicity involves a lower degree of iconicity because there is no mirroring of any physical or conceptual structure in the outside world, instead there is a relation of similarity *between linguistic signs* based on the fact that the concepts they refer to show some similarity. To make this difference even clearer, Johansen shows that second-degree iconicity may also play a role in the *veni,vidi,vici* example (following Jakobson's discussion of this). However, this second-degree iconicity has nothing to do with temporal order but with the linguistic similarity of the signs themselves (i.e. all three signs start with the same sound, they have two syllables containing a consonant and vowel each, etc.), which reflects and reinforces the similarity between the three activities of Caesar, i.e. the ease of his triumphant conquest. Meier (in this volume) makes a similar 'degree' distinction in his analysis of different types of sound symbolism, which he terms primary and secondary iconicity.[12]

* * * * *

When dealing with iconicity, an interdisciplinary approach is almost mandatory. As literature, indeed all verbal art, consists in an elaboration, an intensification and creative exploitation of the inherent qualities of everyday language, a closer look from a linguist's point of view at how iconicity works in ordinary language is highly instructive for the literary critic too. But the linguist will also greatly profit from a critical examination of the literary use of the iconic potential intrinsic to language, because, as Leech (1987: 68) insists, "it assumes in literature an importance far beyond that which it has in everyday language. [...] Whereas iconicity has only a minor role in everyday language use, in literature it comes into its own as an important communicative device". The fact that literary iconicity is based on a linguistic potential is just one example of what is true of literary devices in general, most of which also have their roots in ordinary language. Thus, Kiparsky (1987: 186; cf. also Attridge 1987: 17) has pointed out that

> 'figures of language' studied by poetics, such as alliteration, rhyme, parallelism, and metrical form ... and the regularities which may govern their distribution in a work or body of literature, *are grounded in the human language faculty*; this is why they always involve linguistic categories of the sort that play a role in the grammars of languages, and why the rules governing them obey principles that also apply to linguistic rules and representations. (Italics added.)

As the quotation makes clear, even metrical form, which Jakobson (quoted in Kiparsky 1987: 193) still thought to be an exclusive device typical of literary texts, has been shown to be an essential part of ordinary language as well. As Kiparsky (1987: 194), referring to recent developments in metrical phonology, writes: "The basic insight to come out of phonology in the study of suprasegmentals is that language itself is metrically organised. By this we mean that language itself has the attributes which we associate with 'metrical' systems". In short, both linguists and literary critics can immensely profit from the research and its results in the neighbouring discipline.

It is for this reason that we have not placed the linguistic and literary studies in this volume in separate sections. We have intermingled the two so as to bring out interdisciplinary similarities, and to show different approaches to a similar topic. In *Part I* we have assembled papers that are of a more fundamental nature. They address basic questions concerning the nature of iconicity, its roots in the human body, its interplay with other semiotic sign categories such as the index, and the relation between iconicity and ritualisation (or conventionalisation). One paper also ventilates the problem of how best to approach the phenomenon of iconicity in literary criticism, pleading for a historical approach.

Ivan Fónagy, whose work on iconicity goes back to the fifties and who was one of the earliest scholars to resurrect an interest in the phenomenon, shows that iconicity is not something that is marginal to language, but is in fact part of the foundation of language (and close to the human body), and a basic principle of live speech, in that all linguistic units used in communication pass, as it were, through an 'iconic filter'. This filter, which has its own externally motivated rules and principles, modifies the internal, conventional rules of grammar. John Haiman approaches the subject of iconicity from a rather different angle, although in his study, too, the human body plays a central role. He looks at how certain conventional forms of linguistic behaviour (in this case the linguistic activity of self-abasement) have developed out of earlier physical activities, which form the basis for this behaviour. Or, in other words, how certain forms of physical activity may become ritualised, and then further stylised and grammaticalised in language. This process he has termed 'sublimation'. He is interested in how iconicity impoverishes during this process, and particularly in how the iconic traces remain visible in the grammaticalised forms still in use. Ralf Norrman's study on symmetry and asymmetry is also closely linked to the human body. Using a scene from Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five* and the text of the Peyote hunt of the north-Mexican Huichols, he discusses man's innate symmetricist desire to overcome mortal asymmetry (e.g. of time) by means of inversion or the enantiomorph. To Norrman this desire is deeply iconicist in character as it originates in and reflects the basic symmetry of our bodies. On the level of language this desire is directly expressed in the rhetorical figure of chiasmus and indirectly manifests itself in the five figures of paradox, oxymoron, antithesis, irony and ambiguity. John White discusses various and complex forms of interaction between the two Peircean sign-functions, iconic and indexical, in selected texts of twentieth-century literature. He starts with a semiotic interpretation of literary footprints in Defoe, Eco and Høeg. He then looks at Nabokov, who thematises semiotic interplay, and at Handke's use of dysfunctional semiosis. Next he analyses a Futurist text by Marinetti and its exploitation of the typographic interplay between iconicity and indexicality. Finally, he scrutinises Hare's film *Paris by Night* for indexical iconic elements. Simon Alderson pleads for a historical frame-working of iconicity in literature. Using a historical approach, he discusses a number of examples of iconicity in some eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prose texts, and the limitations of eighteenth-century literary theorising on iconicity. Starting with Pope's "The Sound must seem an Eccho to the Sense", he discusses the experimental and piece-meal application of this principle to prose, as well as Fielding's and Sterne's interest in the iconic potential of physical book space. He then discusses romantic critics, who began to privilege the relation between language and mind. Alderson argues that we ought to consider contemporary expectations about what counts as reality and the way literary language can be made to match up to that reality.

Part II contains papers that focus on iconic features connected with sound and rhythm. Andreas Fischer addresses a fundamental question: how exactly can speech-sounds be said to be iconic. He distinguishes three different categories of phonological iconicity: auditory, articulatory and associative. The first is clearly imagic, the second is both imagic – it imitates spatial or dimensional meaning – and diagrammatic, because the spatial contrasts expressed may be used to express any kind of contrast by association. The last category is of a purely diagrammatic type, i.e. there is no 'mirroring' of sounds, instead the use of certain sounds depends primarily on how other sounds within the same linguistic system are used. The relations themselves, however, are clearly motivated (above, this was termed 'second-degree' iconicity). Hans Heinrich Meier approaches the same question from a historical angle. He first reviews how linguists in our century have tried to ignore and/or belittle the iconic dimension in phonology. In great detail, he discusses their quantitative ("iconicity applies to only a very small number of linguistic items") and qualitative objections ("the iconic form is not fixed and therefore cannot be truly iconic"), showing that their conception of iconicity is too restricted. Next he turns to linguists of the iconic persuasion, reviewing the development of their ideas and discussing their use of terminology. Special attention is given to the use of phonaesthemes in a diagrammatic way, on both the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic level. Finally, having provided a thorough classification and analysis of facts, Meier considers the unifying factor behind them, which is contained in the speaker, in the *production* of iconicity. Turning now from the segmental to the suprasegmental level, we have a contribution by Walter Bernhart on the semiotic status of poetic rhythm. Basing his argument on Edith Sitwell's and William Walton's *Façade*, Bernhart analyses the poem's imitative rhythm and sound-effects as iconic but also as non-iconic, experiential features; and taking the effect of sound and rhythm on the recipient into account, he perceives their "emotionally based indexical sign-function".

Part III deals with the visual aspects of language and literary texts. Insisting that all iconicity is semantically motivated and distinguishing between transparent, translucent and subliminal letter-icons, Max Nänny investigates how single alphabetic letters ('I', 'C' and especially 'O'), which have always been seen to be merely conventional or 'symbolic' signs, have sometimes been used by mainstream authors since Shakespeare as imagic icons of objects (pillar; crescent; earth, sun, moon, star, eye, opening) or of concepts such as perfection and circularity. Michael Webster discusses the iconic means used by E.E. Cummings in his picture-poems in order to express the notions of 'being' and 'nothing'. He shows how the poet counterpoints rhythmic patterns to the verbal-visual rhythms of lineation. Matthias Bauer offers a thorough interpretation in iconic terms of George Herbert's "Coloss. 3.3", in which nearly every kind of iconic, especially diagrammatic, representation can be found, pointing out that this pervasive iconicity corresponds to the seventeenth-century world view, which was controlled by concepts of similarity in all spheres. Bauer's study of one poet's iconic tendencies covers so much ground that it cannot really be confined to this section, it belongs to Part II as well. Peter Halter deals with the range and subtlety of iconic devices in W.C. Williams's 'visual texts', with Williams's regard for the poem on the page that parallels his interest in the visual arts and design. On the basis of a close reading of a selection of lyrics, Halter analyses and interprets iconic renderings of the perception of objects in space (Tabakowska, below, refers to this as 'experiential' iconicity), of the saccadic eye and of the complex interaction of motion and emotion. He also discusses iconic uses of the stanza form and the textual mirroring of moments of hesitation, changes of directions, 'turns'. Andreas Fischer and Eva Lia Wyss show how a special, iconic use of typography has also reached the world of advertising and the internet. Fischer analyses various examples of how space (including absence of space) and typography reinforce the meaning of the text. Wyss concentrates on the playful manner in which ASCII signs may be manipulated in e-mail messages to add to the meaning conveyed by conventional typography. One reason for doing this, she argues, is that e-mail communication is an intermediary type between spoken and written texts, in which there is a need for features of spoken text to be represented visually. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that quite of few of these new iconic signs have already become conventionalised.

In the *fourth Part*, Friedrich Ungerer turns from the word proper, where iconicity plays a role both imagically and diagrammatically (see Part 2), to word-formation phenomena, where iconicity is always diagrammatic, either of an 'isomorphic' or of a 'motivated' type (see Figure 1). All word-formation, Ungerer argues, begins with a violation of the original signifier/signified (form/concept) correlation, i.e. a disturbance of isomorphism. But, as Ungerer shows, since the aim in word-formation is to produce new *viable* words, the ultimate result is a new isomorphic relation. He shows how this new balance is achieved or near-achieved in entirely different ways in the formation of compounds, blends and acronyms. Derivation is shown to be a different process because here the isomorphism between the lexical base and the concept it stands for remains largely untouched. This is also true for clippings even though the form of the lexical base is affected. Ingrid Piller is interested in a very specific area of word-formation, viz. words that are purposefully created to function as brand names. This may indeed involve entirely new words (in which case phonological iconicity often plays a role), but much more frequently existing words are used with a new signification. The choice of the existing word is always motivated; it is in this sense that iconicity is present in the creation of brand names. Piller distinguishes three main types of diagrammatic iconicity in this area: the product is named by means of (1) foreign or (2) technological words in order to indicate a connotation with a certain culture or field of action, or (3) the syntax of the brand name is itself modelled as an iconic structure.

In *Part V*, syntax and discourse stand at the centre of a scrutiny from an iconic angle. Olga Fischer looks at the role iconicity plays in syntactic change, particularly in processes of grammaticalisation. She argues that grammaticalisation is not necessarily a unidirectional process, steered semantically, as is usually maintained, but that the process may also be reversed, due to underlying iconic principles. She first discusses a number of general principles that play a role in grammaticalisation, such as analogy, isomorphism, metaphorical shift etc., which are all iconically based. After this she investigates two specific cases of syntactic change in English, the development of the semi-modal verb *have to*, and the reversal in the grammaticalisation of the infinitival marker *to*, in both of which iconic principles play a crucial role. Bernd Kortmann's study goes a step beyond iconicity. He starts from the (iconic) assumption that the structure of language in some way reflects the structure of experience. Based on this idea, he asks himself the question what a typological or cross-linguistic study of language structures can tell us about the structure of human cognition. He restricts himself to one linguistic domain, namely adverbial subordinators. He analyses their morphology and semantics and makes this the basis for formulating hypotheses on the internal structure of the semantic space of adverbial relations. Thus, he finds, for instance, that the simplest morphemic structures correlate with the core relations of this semantic space, 'core' in terms of discourse necessity and frequency. Another claim Kortmann makes is that there is a connection between degrees of morphological complexity and degrees of cognitive complexity. Wolfgang Müller explores the iconic potential of British and American fiction discussing the iconic function of ellipsis (which stands for silence, absence of action), of paratactic and often asyndetic syntax (representing a sequence of events, simultaneity and emotion, changing processes of perception). He finally shows analogical relations between the structure of syntax and a novel's overall structure. Elżbieta Tabakowska notes that much research has been done into the relationship between the way in which linguistic elements are ordered (their syntax) and the order of human perception, especially in terms of temporal sequencing. However, the relation between form and meaning, between text and conceptual structure, can also be motivated by the 'order of knowledge'. In fact, Tabakowska asks the same type of question as Kortmann above, but she wishes to test her hypothesis not by means of a typological comparison, but by looking at the way elements are ordered in one particular text – a history of Europe, that has the function of a guidebook as well as a chronicle – where one would expect perceptual or experiential iconicity to underlie the text strategy. She shows that the author of the text in question exploits the conventions of experiential iconicity in order to impose his own world-view on the reader; that is, he shifts the experiential principle from the perceptual to the conceptual level.

Notes

1. It is interesting that Fenollosa refers to Laocoön in this context, for also Lessing in his classic *Laokoon* discusses the aptness of the different media, the visual arts and literature for the representation of space and time. By arguing that the visual arts are better suited to represent spatial objects and that literature is best suited to express time (cf. also Jakobson 1971a: 341), Lessing's debate — as has not been generally recognised — was covertly determined by the principles of similarity or, as we now call it, iconicity. However, in the twentieth century we have learnt that a visual work of art may represent temporal processes and a literary text may have spatial dimensions.
2. Pound's definition of the 'image' also contains a temporal dimension: "An 'Image' is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" (Pound 1954: 4). The briefness of an 'image' is meant to be iconic of the briefness of "an instant of time".
3. Such cases of folk etymology are usually not the result of what we below will call 'first-degree' iconicity, i.e. they are not iconic in a purely semiotic sense, but only in an intra-linguistic sense.
4. The development from an iconic to a symbolic phase in children (and both in turn preceded by an indexical stage) is also recognized in studies in developmental and cognitive psychology (e.g. in the work of Jean Piaget), as pointed out by Johansen (1996: 38–40). However, Johansen notes quite correctly that "even the simplest process of sign interpretation necessarily includes indexical, iconic and symbolic aspects" (p. 38), and that recognition of these three developmental phases does not mean "that the two earlier stages are transitory and lose their importance" (p. 39). In this volume, Bernhart and White reconsider the relation between the three types of sign, especially the interplay between index and icon, in a number of literary texts and in film. They likewise conclude that there are no "fixed types of signs" (Bernhart) or that signs tend to "occur in hybrid rather than pure form" (White).
5. In literature, writers, in order to highlight the 'poetic function' of language in their texts, have had recourse to iconicity to increase "the palpability of signs" (Jakobson 1960: 356) or to "hypersemanticize" poetic language (Cureton 1980: 319). Among others, Leech and Short (1981b) and Bronzwaer (1993) have pointed to the pervasiveness of iconicity in literature. It must be particularly pointed out that the Peirce-Jakobson distinction between iconic image and iconic diagram (see also below) has proved of great use when applied to literary texts.

6. Iconicity in pidgins and creoles is highlighted among others by Romaine (1988) and in examples given in Haiman (1980) and Todd (1984).
7. Plank (1979) and Givón (1985, 1994), among others, have written on iconic principles that play a role in language change, and Fischer (1994) shows, by means of a case study, how Givón's iconic principle of proximity may have functioned in a syntactic change in the history of English.
8. Fónagy's use of "primary" and "secondary" code is similar to the primary and secondary codes distinguished by Lotman (1972) (and see also Bronzwaer 1993: 24ff.). However, for Lotman, the secondary code belongs essentially to the 'poetic function' of language ('poetic' in its Jakobsonian sense) and thus is not always present, whereas Fónagy stresses that *all* live speech is modified by the 'Distorter'. Secondly, Lotman's secondary code involves both first and second degree iconicity (for the terms see below), i.e. similarities motivated both semiotically and purely linguistically, whereas the rules of the Distorter seem to be basically motivated by (our interpretation of) the outside world.
9. This 'direct' relation is not without its problems. The existence of the relation of course always depends on the *interpretation* of the speaker. For this reason, Peirce (and this is quite usual in semiotics, cf. Nöth 1990) uses a so-called triadic system, which distinguishes between the signifier (in Peirce's terms the 'representamen'), the signified (Peirce's 'object') and the sense that is made of the sign by the language user (Peirce's 'interpretant'). Because the iconic relation that is felt to exist is in fact an interpretation on the part of the speaker/listener, it must be clear that the relation between signifier and signified is not fixed or crystal clear. Jakobson (1971c: 700) thus correctly remarks that even icons are partly symbolic, "the full apprehension of pictures and diagrams requires a learning process. No painting is devoid of ideographic, symbolic elements", thus showing that there is no simple contrast between icons and symbols; rather, they are on a cline (for this, see also A. Fischer in Section 2 of this volume).
10. And see also the very interesting, interdisplinary collection of studies on *Sound Symbolism*, edited by Leanne Hinton, Joanna Nichols and John Ohala (1994), which shows again how pervasive imagic iconicity still is in language.
11. Givón (1985: 188–189) does not follow this distinction. For him, isomorphism is a meta-principle, underlying iconicity, it is not a motivation or explanation of iconicity. O. Fischer (this volume) argues that the motivation behind the two types is basically the same and that therefore there may be no need to distinguish them.
12. It is important to note that Johansen's first- and second-degree iconicity, is not the same as Lyons' 'primary' and 'secondary' iconicity, mentioned by A. Fischer in his study in Part II, and also not the same as Tabakowska's distinction, in this volume. For Lyons and Tabakowska primary iconicity is what we have termed here 'imagic' iconicity. Their secondary iconicity involves all diagrammatic types.

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Part I

General

Why Iconicity?

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1. Introduction

Iconicity, far from being a marginal verbal kind of play, is a basic principle of live speech, and more generally, of natural languages.

Speech units — speech-sounds, words, utterances — are the product of a dual encoding procedure. All linguistic units — phonemes, lexemes, phrases, sentences — generated by the Grammar have to pass in live speech through a *Distorter* (or *Modifier*) conveying complementary messages, integrated into the original linguistic message. The principles which govern observable distortions are preverbal (gestural, in a broad sense) and pristine. The dialectic play between Grammar and Distorter has the capacity of generating an infinite variety of complex messages.

I would like to illustrate the functioning of the proposed model of *dual encoding* in live speech, setting out from the analysis of an X-ray sound picture of emotive speech, attempting to define the principles of expressive distortion in sound production, conceived as oral gesturing, and show the interplay of iconicity and convention in live speech.

Speech melody can be conceived in terms of virtual bodily gesturing.

Recurrent (stained) vocal and prosodic distortions form a vocal mask (*persona*) reflecting intimate personality traits 'hidden at the surface'. The analysis of emotive speech allows for a better understanding of the elusive concept of *style*.

The Distorter of the proposed model operates on all linguistic levels. General rules covering expressive distortions can be extended to the level of syntax and semantics, and may encompass even the creative (poetic) use of punctuation marks.

The guided regression to a preverbal and preconceptual level of verbal and mental evolution is also the source of *dynamic synchrony* (liveliness), and the motor of *linguistic change*.

2. Live speech

2.1 *Oral gesturing*

Why do we oppose *live speech* to *dead letters*? — "... the written word is but a scanty reproduction of live speech and lively discourse", objects Phaidra to Socrates in Plato's dialogue *Phaidra* (276a).

2.1.1 *Oral mimetics in unrelated languages*

adio-cinematographic recordings (X-ray pictures) of emotive speech clearly show that the same basic emotions and emotive attitudes elicit similar phonetic strategies in unrelated languages. French and Hungarian actresses were invited to pronounce banal sentences, mostly the same sentence, for expressing different basic emotions — anger, hatred, tenderness, joy and fear; and some emotive attitudes such as MENACE (Fónagy 1976, Fónagy, Han, Simon 1983). ANGER and HATRED induce a higher muscular tension in the speech organs; consequently the contact surface between articulators in unvoiced plosives (p,t,k) is larger (sometimes doubled) as compared to neutral speech. The heightened articulatory effort radically modifies timing. AGGRESSIVE attitudes increase the durations of consonants (especially of 'hard' consonants, such as *p, t, k*) and shorten that of vowels. The formula

duration (p,t,k / Vowels)

could offer a reliable measure of the degree of aggressivity.

ANGER and HATRED elicit spasmodic tongue movements — short transitions are followed by a stiffening of the tongue preceding a second short transition. In TENDER speech, the articulation is smooth: the transitions are slower, more gradual. In the display of MENACE the recordings show that the articulation of *u* is characterized by a triadic mimetic performance: (a) in a first phase the tongue is strongly retracted, the dorsum vaulted 'like a bow'; (b) it is maintained in this position; (c) finally projected towards the hard palate 'like an arrow'. Oral mimicry is particularly striking in the rolled apical Hungarian *r* pronounced in ANGER: the tongue is strongly erected, and first resists the pressure of the outflowing air; deflected from its initial position, it resumes its erect state four or five times (in neutral speech the tongue vibrates mostly twice).

Electro-myographic measurement of expiratory muscles and tomographic recordings of the larynx reflect similar gestural strategies: ANGER and HATRED involve a forceful innervation of the glottal muscles, which induces a narrow constriction of the glottal space (Fónagy 1958, 1962). The vocal folds are squeezed, the false vocal cords are compressed. In spite of considerable expiratory effort the produced sound is generally less loud than the voice generated in TENDER speech by means of a slight expiratory effort, and relaxed laryngeal muscles. The ratio

acoustic energy / physiological energy

is considerably lower for agressive emotions than in tender emotions. (It seems that aggressivity doesn't pay, at least in sound production.)

Let me just mention some further phonetic gestures common to French and Hungarian emotive speech, as observed through the cine-radiographic recordings. The maxillary angle and the vertical labial distance generally increase in simulated ANGER. Lips are retracted in both anger and hatred. In TENDER speech the lips are protruded and rounded. The tongue is advanced for positive feelings, such as JOY and TENDERNESS, and withdrawn in negative emotions, such as ANGER, HATRED or SCORN. The tongue is raised in JOY and lowered in SADNESS or INDIFFERENCE.

2.1.2 *Phonetic paradoxes*

The measurements yield some paradoxical results. A semi-close (mid) vowel such as *e* may be closer than the closest *i* vowel. In the Hungarian *én* 'I', in the indignant exclamation *Én!?* 'I?!' expressing hatred, the mid-vowel comes closer to the palate — due to tense articulation (contraction) — than in the close vowel phoneme /i/ in *Igen*, pronounced with loose articulation, reflecting indifference and boredom. This means that a kind of *chassé-croisé* took place.[1]

Hungarian

Phonological level		Phonetic level
/e/	→	[i]
/i/	→	[e]

Similarly, in the French recordings, the /y/, the /œ/ were dilabialized in faint anger or contempt, and, in contra-distinction, /i/ and /e/ were pronounced [y] and [œ] in the display of a tender approach: [mœ: sy:] in *Mais si, voyons!*

French

/i/	→	[y]
/e/	→	[oe]

Such phonetic paradoxes are quite current in emotive speech.

2.2 *A model of dual encoding*

2.2.1 *Grammar and Distorter (iconic encoding)*

To account for such phonetic paradoxes I proposed a model of *dual encoding procedure* in a previous paper (1971). In a first stage the GRAMMAR produces a sequence of phonemes, such as Hungarian /e: n/ *n'I'* , /igen/ *Igen*'Yes'; or French /me si vwajõ/ *Mais si, voyons*. In a second phase, the phoneme-sequence has to go through a DISTORTER or MODIFIER which transforms /e/ into [i], /i/ into [e] in the Hungarian utterances; /e/ into [oe] and /i/ into [y] in the French utterance. Since these sounds are unacceptable in the given context, the hearer traces them back to the phonemes generated by the Grammar. Thus, for the French hearer the [oe] in the sequence [mø] *moeut* 'he grinds' would make no sense; no more than would *sut*, past perfect of *savoir*. He automatically re-establishes /e/, comprehending *mais*, and /i/, comprehending *si*, and interprets the distortions as an additional gesture: tender lip-rounding.

SPEAKER		HEARER
[oe]	→	/e/ + tenderness
[y]	→	/i/ + tenderness

The emotive value of the speech sound is due to the act of distortion and not to the produced speech sound as such.

The glottal stop [ʔ] inserted before or after a vowel in English, German, French or Hungarian, expresses anger, emphasis or military discipline.

SPEAKER		DISTORTER		HEARER
/vowel/	→	[ʔ + vowel]	→	vowel + emphasis/anger

This is not the case in languages where /ʔ/ functions as a phoneme, and is already present at the in-put, as in Classical Arabic /ʔata/ 'he loses':

SPEAKER		DISTORTER		HEARER
/ʔ + vowel/	→	off	→	vowel (neutral attitude)

The naive English or Hungarian hearer might, however, be tempted to interpret the output signal in the frame of his own phonological system, and perceive [ʔata] as a distorted /ata/. A four year old Hungarian girl, watching the TV interview of an Arabian diplomat, asked her father, somewhat frightened: "Why is he so angry?"

2.2.2 *Rules of distortion*

Both, GRAMMAR and DISTORTER, are rule-governed. However, the rules governing expressive distortions essentially differ from grammatical rules producing phoneme-sequences. For instance, rules producing phonetic distortions are always motivated, *iconic*. Phonemic encoding is always digital (discrete), the rules of distortion are mostly gradient (Lotz 1950, Sebeok 1952, Scherer 1985). I attempted in a previous paper (1971) to outline the principles governing expressive oral gesturing.

1. **First principle**: Voluntary *reproduction of symptoms* associated with the vocal apparatus:

Pharyngeal contraction in negative emotions such as HATRED or CONTEMPT, may illustrate the first principle. The contraction of pharyngeal muscles accompanies *nausea*; and may express attitudes derived from nausea, such as DISLIKE and CONTEMPT (as shown by Trojan 1952, 1975, and interpreted from a psychoanalytic perspective by Fenichel, 1946). The French metaphoric cliché *Je le vomis* 'I hate this chap' (lit.: 'I vomit him') clearly identifies contempt and vomiting.

Similarly, laryngeal closure, followed by a violent outburst is a sign of discomfort in infants, "a glottal attack of discomfort" (*Unlusteinsatz*) according to Gutzmann (1928 [1926]), and can be considered as a biological metaphor of a cough; a reflex which serves to eliminate under high subglottal pressure harmful corpuscules, preventing them from entering the lungs. By extension the reflex appears as a sign of refusal and rejection. Emphatic glottal plosives could be seen as symbolic performances of ejecting an internal 'bad object' or rejecting an unwanted person.

2. According to a **second principle**, the movements of the speech organs may substitute for bodily gestures. The French poet and phonetician, André Spire, interprets articulation as a "dance of the speech organs" (1986 [1949]).

In the course of language acquisition the movements of the tongue tend to follow the movement of the hand. Thus, the child produces an *i* sound by advancing the tongue, while pointing with his forefinger at an object wanted (as observed by Walpurga Raffler-Engel 1983). A nine month old girl imitates, inversely, the extrusion of the tongue of the adult by raising her forefinger (Werner and Kaplan 1963: 86).

The forward motion of the tongue in joy and tenderness may represent a physical and moral approach to the partner, a friendly attitude (German *entgegenkommend* 'friendly' lit.: 'coming to meet'). The backward motion of the tongue in hostile emotions and in sadness corresponds to a physical and moral withdrawal. In contradistinction, the tongue approaches the alveoles pronouncing /i/ when we are high spirited.

The violent contraction of the tongue muscles may substitute for the contraction of arm muscles. More generally, muscular contraction on glottal and oral level may substitute for a violent global effort of the whole body, e.g., in preparing for a fight.

Lips and tongue may perform symbolic gestures. The increased maxillary angle in anger or the incisors biting the lower lip allude to oral aggression: biting and swallowing. It could be considered as an allusive gesture. The anticipation of a kiss in tender lip rounding is equally allusive. Other gestures could be labeled as *evocative*. Labialization of vowels or palalization of consonants may recall the speech of small children whose articulation is generally more labial and more palatal than those of adults; involuntary mimicking is either symptomatic or symbolic.

3. A **third principle** governing vocal gesturing is quantitative isomorphism of expression and content: different degrees of intensity, height and duration reflect different degrees of excitement or semantic intensity. Speed of utterance corresponds, for instance, to different degrees of excitement (Mahl and Schulze 1964).

The presuppositions underlying vocal gesturing have little in common with conversational maxims (Grice 1975). They are much closer to the way of thinking reflected in magical performances. The speaker, who in anger or hatred speaks with a strangled voice, throttles his own throat, intending to annihilate a person present or absent. This assumption is quite similar to those supporting *sympathetic* or *imitative* magic. The identification of the part with the whole (the speech organs with the body) is a basic principle of contagious magic (Frazer 1964 [1890]: 45, 62 ff.).

2.2.3 *Iconicity and convention*

Edward Stankiewiecz discusses in his paper on emotive language the emotive use of phonetic features. He refers to Huichol (Amerindian) adults, who palatalize ('moisten') the consonants in speaking to children; and to Basque, where dental consonants are moistened in tender speech (1964: 429 ff.). In Spanish, palatalization has a similar connotation (Porras 1978). The moistening of *r* and *l* is perceived in the Russian dialect of Kolyma as 'sweetish' (*parler mielleux, doucereux, sladkoglasye)*. In all these cases, the more palatal pronunciation of small children may account for the affectionate or sweetish connotation of palatalization (little children are so 'sweet').

But how to interpret emotive palatalization in South-Eastern Yiddish dialects, where moistening of dental consonants and *r* carries a pejorative meaning, and reflect scorn and disgust (Stankiewicz 1964: 249)? This time, we could be tempted to consider the value of emotive distortion as quite arbitrary. In fact, there is a simple and close associative link between moistening and disgust or scorn. We know that nausea gives rise to increased salivation. Disgust and scorn are biological transfers of nausea. The emotional value of palatalization is entirely motivated, though it has a quite different motivation of that of 'sweetish' speech.

Nasalization of vowels frequently reflects boredom (Trojan 1952: 158), superciliousness or irony (Fónagy, Han, Simon 1983): "it is not worth the trouble to raise the velum". The same oral gesture may express longing or desire, since sexual arousal regularly lowers the velum (Trojan l.c., Léon 1981).

The two concepts — *arbitrary* and *conventional* — must be kept distinct when discussing iconicity. All signs are conventional by definition, and may be more or less motivated (iconic).[2]

2.3 *Vocal style*

Vocal communication based on voluntary reproduction of symptoms or on allusive partial reproduction of actions are already present in infra-human communication. The main difference between human speech, on the one hand, and animal communication and artificial language, on the other, is the integration of verbal and preverbal messages in natural human language. The two messages, representing two modes of communication separated by some hundred thousand years, are intimately and permanently linked in live speech. The links between phonemic representation, and the two divergent messages are so perfectly integrated that vocal messages are not perceived as messages in their own right.

The 'way of pronouncing' or *vocal style*, can be conceived as an originally independent non-verbal, pre-conceptual message, thoroughly integrated into the (logically) primary verbal message, conveyed by a sequence of phonemes.[3] This definition could be extended to personal vocal and verbal style, conceived as a recurrent (more or les permanent) message emitted involuntarily by the same person.(4) A functional interpretation of vocal style in the frame of a model of dual encoding may facilitate the approach to other levels of verbal style.

2.4 *Prosodic gesturing*

Our perception of speech melody is essentially dynamic. We perceive intonation as a movement. "We could speak of rise and fall, of height and depth", wrote Aristoxenus (first century A.D.) in his *Harmonistic fragments*, and he adds: "The rise is a continuous movement of the voice from a deeper to a higher level, and the fall is a movement of a higher level to a deeper one" (Marquard ed. 1868: 15).[5] A dynamic theory of intonation is implicitly contained in the Hungarian term *hanglejtés* 'intonation', lit.: 'vocal dance'.

We have to distinguish thoroughly between *direct* laryngeal gesturing at the glottal level — changes of the glottal configuration, tension and relaxation of intrinsic laryngeal muscles — on the one hand, and *indirect* and projective tonal gesturing by means of virtual spatial pitch movements, on the other: a first and second degree of symbolization.

Just as in the case of oral and glottal gesturing, there are conspicuous similarities in the expression of ANGRY QUARREL in French and Hungarian.[6] In both cases, the melodic movement is characterized by a fast pace; a rigid metrical pattern with equally distributed heavy stresses, which occasionally fall on a linguistically unstressed syllable, accompanied by sudden rises of a fourth, fifth or a sixth. The peaks form a virtual straight line, falling in the Hungarian and ascending in the French quarrel.

TENDERNESS is reflected, on the contrary, by a *legato* phrasing, weak stresses, a high degree of *melodicity*,[7] and an undulating melodic line with smooth transitions. The pertinence of the melodic ductus could be tested by means of a synthesis of French and Hungarian utterances (Fónagy 1981b).

The dynamic tendencies which characterize the vocal expression of emotions and emotive attitudes transgress the linguistic boundaries. In fact, they go beyond verbal communication: they permeate musical 'language'. We meet with quite similar configurations in European vocal and instrumental music (Fónagy and Magdics 1963a).

2.5 *Oral gesturing in poetry*

Paradoxically, sound shape plays a still more prominent role in poetry than in every-day speech even though poems have no phonetic dimension, as stated by Roman Jakobson (1979 [1923] SW 5: 3–121). This seems to contradict the high aesthetic value attributed to sounds in poetry by poets and literary critics, from Dionysius Halicarnassus (1st century B. C.) to André Spire (1986 [1949]).

Non-verbal phonetic messages are generated by means of articulatory and acoustic deviations as compared to neutral speech. A quite similar effect can be obtained by means of statistical deviances in the frequency distribution of the phonemes in verse-lines, stanzas or cycles of poems. In live speech the hearer's expectation is frustrated by a pronunciation contrasting with the non-marked phonotype. In the case of poetic texts the frequency of vowels or consonants differs significantly from normal distribution. The specific (divergent) distribution-profile is perceived by the reader as a significant and meaningful distortion, and it is evaluated in the same way as are the expressive distortions of pronunciation. Expressive nasalization can be mimicked at the phonological level by increasing the number of nasal vowels and consonants lending the lines the connotation of languorous desire:

> Des *en*lace*ments* *vains* et des désirs *sans* *nom*bre,
> *Mon* *om*bre se *fon*dra à ja*mais* *en* *ton* *om*bre. (Verlaine "Lettre")

The fronting of articulation, imitated by a high number of front vowels, illuminates Dante's line ("Paradiso" XXX v.47):

> Gl*i* sp*i*r*i*t*i* v*i*s*i*v*i* chè s*i* priva...

Tense articulation of angry speech is imitated by an unusually high number of *hard* (tense) consonants: *t*, *k*, *r*.

> Tu fus *dur* et se*c*
> *C*omme un *c*oup *d*e *tr*ique.
> *T*u fus *dur* et se*c*
> *C*omme une bou*rr*ique. (Verlaine, "A Monsieur le Dr.Grandm***")

There are essentially two ways to test the traditional tenet of isomorphism of expression and content, according to the *physei* principle (Plato, *Cratylus* 383a; 426c–e).

PHONETIC LEVEL		PHONOLOGICAL LEVEL
nasalizing vowels	→	more nasal vowels
fronting vowels	→	more front vowels
tense articulation	→	more tense vowels

Dionysius Halicarnasseus (1st century B.C.) uncovered the secret some two thousand years ago: the poet may obtain the suitable effects by "selecting and grouping the words appropriately" (1845: 274).[8]

There are essentially two ways to test the traditional tenet of isomorphism of expression and content, according to the *physei* principle (Plato, *Cratylus* 383a; 426c–e).

The classical procedure consists in comparing the *frequency distribution* of phonemes in two cycles of poems, contrasting in meaning, written by the same author. Basically tender and aggressive cycles of Hungarian, as well as German and French poems show the affinity between 'soft' consonants and tender mood, between 'hard' consonants (k,t,r) and aggressive poems.[9]

Analysis by synthesis is another way to check poetic sound symbolism.

Instead of setting out from the content and looking for differences in frequency distribution, we could also modify the sound distribution and see how the readers will react to the contrasting sound shapes. We cannot modify, however, the sound-distribution of a poem without changing its meaning distribution and see how the readers will react to the contrasting sound shapes, unless we choose a content-free 'poem', such as one of the pseudo-Hungarian poems written by the great Hungarian humorist, Frigyes Karinthy. We modified the frequency distribution in different ways; e.g. by substituting voiced instead of unvoiced consonants, liquids instead of plosives (softening); or on the contrary, substituting unvoiced for voiced consonants (hardening); constrictives for plosives (spirantization), etc. (Fónagy 1980a: 79–80).

3. General principles of dual encoding

The Distorter of the proposed model operates on all linguistic levels. In the above mentioned previous publication (1971), I attempted to sketch the rough outlines of an extended model of expressive distortions. These outlines are essentially based on the tenets of classical rhetorics. I proposed to distinguish two kinds of expressive distortions: (1) *syntagmatic transfers*, i.e. transpositions along the time axis; and (2) *paradigmatic transfers*, i.e. transpositions in semantic space.

3.1 *Transpositions (syntagmatic transfers)*

3.1.1 *Shifts of stress*

Expressive shifts of stress — as observed in French emotive speech at least since the second half of the 19th century — is a good example of syntagmatic transfer. The shift of stress from the last to the first syllable expressed a strong emotion — anger, surprise — or simply emphasis: *impossIBle* — → *IMpossible / imPOssible*, or even with two or three stresses in contiguous syllables: *IM-PO-SSIble*.

The emphatic or emotive displacement of stress in live speech can be mimicked in poetic texts. Rhythmical mismatches — divergence of ictus (metrical accent) and stress (linguistic accent) — may induce the reader either to shift the stress to an unstressed syllable, or to give prominence to both the stressed and the metrically strong syllable. Statistical evidence suggests that metrical conflicts are more frequent in poems reflecting excitement, restlessness and inner struggle (Fónagy 1981a: 139 ff.).

3.1.2 *Shifts of pause*

The frequent separation of words tightly welded together by semantic and syntactic bounds is frequent in angry speech, and may be considered as a verbal equivalent of the tearing to pieces of a sheet of paper.

Similarly, contradictions between prosodic and linguistic articulation of poetic utterances (Fónagy 1981a: 145ff.) — shifts of the *caesura* or *enjambement* — may suggest irregular speech pauses, emphatic breaks. Such divisions are significantly more frequent in Verlaine's aggressive cycle of poems, the cycle *Invectives* than in the peaceful *Sagesse*. (In the *Invectives* there are 16.8 commas per 100 words, but only 8.5 in *Sagesse*.) In the *Invectives* even words might be cut in to two halves by the end of the verse-line:

> Autres que toi que je vais *sac-*
> *cager* de si belle manière [...]
> 'Not you but others whom I'll tear a-
> sunder so nicely' [...] ("Puisque ta photographie", in: *Chair*)

The semantic range of irregular pauses is much larger in poetic texts. In contradistinction to emphatic speech pauses, run-on lines may be, and generally are, descriptive in suggesting movement (passing over, running),

> Saehe ich die maegde an der strâze den *bal*
> *werfen*, so kaeme uns der vogele schal.
> 'If I saw the girls in the street throwing
> the ball, we should hear the warbling of birds.'
> (Walter von der Vogelweide, "Frühlingssehnsucht")

or being hampered, ending and beginning, death and rebirth, spatial or temporal layering (over, below, before, after), halves or pairs (Fónagy 1981a). With the help of run-on lines poetic utterances become self-representations: the utterance describes and at the same time mimes its proper content.

3.1.3 *Changes of word order*

Charles Bally presents in his paper of 1941 'dislocation' as a most characteristic syntactic feature of Modern French: a typical way to decompose verbal or nominal syntagms. The subject or object is pulled out of the syntagm and 'propelled', 'shot forward' into initial position:

> Les enfants, suffit de les comprendre.
> 'The children, just try to understand them'
> (Queneau, *Zazie dans le Métro* p.16)

The propelled noun constitutes a global (monolithic) exclamative utterance, according to Bally, which is developed and made explicit in the subsequent proposition (see also Fónagy 1975, Perrot 1978, Lambrecht 1981, Barnes 1985, Touratier 1993). — In fact, we meet analogous constructions in Greek and Latin, in Germanic, in Finno-Ugric languages, in Biblical Hebrew (*casus pendens*), and other languages.

It is, at the same time, a child language universal. In the speech of the 1.0 year and 1.3 year old, the utterance starts with a still undivided, global utterance, which gradually develops into an articulated utterance. In the speech of the adult, on the other hand, an articulated sentence falls into pieces through the ejection of an essential component, the subject or the object. As a consequence, we meet with apparently similar structures in child language and Modern French (Fónagy 1975a).

A young woman to her neighbour:
Là, ce garçon, regarde ce garçon!
'There, this boy, look at this boy!'

(Peter 1.8 year old:)
'otan 'autoo:t 'nezni 'auto:t
'There, car-ACC look-INF car-ACC'

In an evolutive perspective, we could see in this kind of 'left-shift', dislocation or extraposition, a syntactic regression to an early level of ontogenesis. From a functional synchronic point of view, this type of 'syntactic regression' is an ideal means of topicalization, more generally, of information structuring (Haegeman 1991: 59 ff., Geluykens 1992, Perrot 1978, Lambrecht 1981).

Expressive word order in poetry

This time again, poetic language makes a more extensive use of stylized analogues of sequential disorder. The shooting forward of a sentence kernel reflects genuine excitement in one of Heine's last poems:

...für dich, für dich,
Es hat mein Herz für dich geschlagen!
'...for you, for you,
My heart was beating for you!'
(*Letzte Gedichte*)

Isolation of qualifiers (adjectives, adverbs) by means of left shift allows the poet to represent the gradual elaboration of an idea, elicited by an external stimulus.

Clear and loud
The village clock tolled six. (Wordsworth, "Influence of natural objects")

Dark, deep, and cold, the current flows
Onto the sea where no wind blows, (...) (Eliot, "Plaint")

The embedding of a second proposition into the first one, *hyperbaton*, is considered a figure of sentence in classical rhetorics, i.e. a transformation producing aesthetic value. Double embedding may serve, as has been showen by Leo Spitzer (Drei-Kulissen System, 1928) to depict the horizontal layers of a landscape:

Le château, le soleil couché,
tout blanc, à son flanc,
avec, (Verlaine, "L'allée sans fin")

'The castle, the sun going down,
fully white, at its side,
with,'

In the following, the sequence of words mimicks the character's way of walking in the second part of Virgil's *Aeneid* (vv.156–158): the interruption and restart of the utterance seems to reflect the hero's hesitations, who crosses again the threshold of his house, returning to Troy destroyed by fire, hoping Creusa might have returned to their home:

Inde domum, *si forte pedem, si forte* tulisset,...
'Then I returned to our home, in case she set, in case she might set foot in the house...'

Si forte pedem... the verbal syntagm remains uncompleted, pendent, reflecting an interrupted movement. Somebody who intended to cross the threshold, hesitates to take a step. Aeneas sees Creusa in the door, paralysed by fear, and then she overcomes her fear and crosses the threshold.

In all these cases, we have to use a magnifying lens, to retransform slight verbal irregularities into bodily movements or spatial organization.

Poetic distortions of grammatical word order have nothing in common (at least in a first approach) with 'movements' described in the framework of Generative Grammar. Such virtual movements serve to link S(urface)-structure with the underlying D(eep)-structure. They are necessary in generating grammatical sentences. Consequently, they are, by definition, unable to convey the secondary message due to the distortion of grammatical rules of movement which serve to account for grammatical word order.

Since grammatical (unmarked) word order is inherently motivated (Haiman 1983, 1985: 102–147, 238 ff.), expressive or figurative modifications create an iconicity of the second degree.

3.2 *Movements in semantic space: Paradigmatic transfers*

Free movement in semantic space is a vital condition for all meaningful elements of natural language: lexemes, grammatical morphemes, word-categories, syntactic structures, punctuation marks, and even recurrent bound sentences.

3.2.1 *Melodic metaphors*

(a) Transfer of emotive patterns allow actors to belie their words, making a counterpoint to the text.

(b) A typical case of syntactic melodic transfer consists in assigning the pattern of enumeration to statements that actually do not contain enumeration: such transfers generally reflect a bored attitude and/or imply underlying non-verbalized statements such as, "and so it goes all the day long".

(c) *Modal transfers* play a basic role in the expressive use of melodic patterns. The most typical metaphor consists in lending an assertive melodic pattern to Yes/No questions. It expresses that the speaker knows in fact the answer, and the question is merely formal (a rhetorical question). A modal transfer going in the opposite direction could be observed in the speech of Hungarian youth in the fifties. I encountered the transfer of the *interrogative* pattern to imperative sentences in the speech of my nine year old son in the sentence *Api, ↗figyelj ↗i-↘de!* 'Daddy, listen!' The illegal presence of the interrogative pattern generally corresponded to some unsolved question or problem. *Api, gyere ide!* 'Daddy, please come!' showing a picture he came across in a book, representing a long haired young man in armour: "Is it a girl or a boy?". The semantic structure of modal intonation metaphor does not differ from that of lexical transfers, and could be represented as in Figure 1 (where ? and ! stand for interrogative and imperative modality).

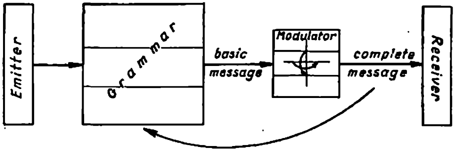

Figure 1.

3.2.2 *Grammatical metaphors*

The *Chanson de Roland* (of the 12th century) offers a highly expressive transfer of tenses in the monologue of the dying Roland:

> Mult larges terres de vos avrai conquises.
> 'I shall have conquered many of your lands.' (Lais 20. v/30)

instead of:

> Mult larges terres de vos ai conquises.
> 'I have conquered many of your lands.'

Movements in time — the irregular use of tenses — always convey secondary messages. The substitution of the present by past or future tenses may suggest evidential distance, since neither the past nor the future may be directly observed, as stated by Augustin.[10]

The negative form substituted for the positive one in *Timeo ne veniat* 'I am afraid he will [not] come' and its French equivalent *Je crains qu'il ne vienne*, is in fact an amalgam: the exclamation *Ne veniat!* or *Qu'il ne vienne!* is enacted into the basic sentence *Timeo ut veniat* or *Je crains qu'il vienne*.

The partner may be indirectly addressed by using any other person, singular or plural. All detour conveys a complementary message. The reverential second person plural originally is a reflection of the *pluralis majestatis*, accepting the speaker's pretension to represent more than his proper person (Foulet 1950–1951, Bakos 1955, Friederike Braun 1988). The use of the singular third person signifies that the speaker respectfully avoids to touch even verbally his honoured interlocutor; either according to the taboo of incestual contact, or to contain his aggressive intents.[11] He creates a distance in addressing apparently a third person, or a hypostasized quality of the person addressed (his Majesty, his Grace). The first person plural, *pluralis inclusivus*, suggests that the speaker feels and identifies (sincerely or ironically) with his fellowman. The substitution of the first person singular with the second person, typical in military style of address, anticipates the subordinate's unconditional obediance (in speaking in his name). Haiman (1997) interprets transfers of personal pronouns as reflections of the divided self.

3.2.3 *Dual encoding of punctuation marks*

Punctuation is an originally quite artificial, recently created semiotic system, developing before our eyes. The thoroughly defined punctuation marks, once integrated into verbal messages at the level of written texts, are soon assimilated to natural linguistic signs, showing all aspects of life: homonymy, synonymy and polysemy.

Punctuation marks may be used metaphorically, i.e. in a way which contrast with their original meaning or function. For instance, quotation marks, starting from a basic meaning, citation, have developed some twenty different shades of meaning. They are frequently used as marks of *irony*. Thus, in the fifties, in Hungarian newspapers the words *theory* or *idea* were systematically put between quotation marks, referring to non-marxist theories or ideas. The highly complex semantic structure of <" "> is due to diverse recurrent transfers.[12]

Punctuation transfers play an increasing role in nineteenth and twentieth century poetic texts. The substitution of small (lower-case) initials by big (upper-case) initials in English and German Baroque poetry puts emphasis on and lends an allegorical character to abstract nouns.

3.3 *Lexical metaphor: a research instrument*

3.3.1 *Metaphors in phonetics*

It is a well known and still bewildering and puzzling fact that in early and even contemporary literature phonetic metaphors are just as frequent and just as startling as in symbolist French poetry. Images such as *dark* and *light* vowels, *hard*, *soft*, *moistened* and *dry* consonants are widely spread both in space and time. All sense organs seem to contribute to the specification of acoustic phenomena: sounds appear as coloured, having a definite shape, taste, smell, temperature, weight, a smooth or rough surface. Greek grammarians opposed aspirated /ph/, /th/, /kh/ as 'hairy' (δασεα) to the 'bold', ' smooth' (ψιλα) i. e. plain /p/ /t/ /k/ voiceless plosives. Sounds may even have a sex on this imaginary level. Mongolian and Hungarian grammar distinguish male and female vowels opposing in that way velar and palatal vowels.

(a) Are such metaphoric terms arbitrary, based on the *thesei* principle, or motivated (iconic), based on the *physei* principle, according to Ancient Greek terminology?
(b) If they prove to be motivated what kind of natural link could exist between speech sounds and visual, tactile or moral qualities?
(c) Finally, what is the reason of this strange habit to assign to phonetic features terms which are quite obviously inadequate?

If these metaphors are based on real analogies between sound features, on the one hand, and visual, tactile percepts on the other, such metaphoric terms would be comprehensible even for those who completely ignore phonetic terminology.

3.3.2 *Evaluation of phonetic metaphors by non-linguists*

Some thirty years ago I chose a subject who could not have been suspected to be influenced by Greek or Mongolian grammarians. I asked my five-year old daughter on one occasion whether she felt the sound /i/ was 'fair haired' or 'black'. She answered without hesitation but somewhat amazed: 'It is fair of course, why do you ask? you didn't know?'. Encouraged by her response, during the following days and weeks I tested with her nearly all traditional phonetic metaphors I was aware of with similar results.

More systematic tests were made with twenty-five Hungarian children under school age, twenty children of a grammar-school, and fifty adults having no linguistic knowledge. These tests showed that other children, even adults, were not less intuitive than my daughter, and that they had quite similar intuitions (Fónagy 1980a, Molnár 1984).

The metaphoric judgements of French children or students (Chastaign 1958), those of Italian children (Dogana 1983), of American (Sapir 1929, Newman 1933, Miron 1961), German (Ertel 1969), Danish (Fischer-Jørgensen 1978), Russian, Polish, Bulgarian, Moldavian, Lithuanian (Žuravlëv 1971, 1977), Japanese (Miron 1961), Vietnamese (Žuravlëv 1977) students do not differ essentially from the reactions of Hungarian children and adults. Eli Fischer-Jørgensen compared the results of the semantic tests made with Danish students with J. Westermann's observations on sound symbolism in West-African languages. She found a striking similarity between them (1978: 82).

In fact, these experiments show convincingly that the assignment of such metaphors as *thin, small, tense, bright, hard, quick, forceful, aggressive, masculine*, to vowels or consonants is, in general, language independent; though in certain cases lexical associations may interfere with phonetic intuition. Thus, for instance, /i/ turned out to be *bitter* for American students but *sweet* for Hungarians (Fónagy 1980a: 32–47). There can be little doubt that American students were influenced by the /i/ of *bitter*.

3.3.3 *Preconscious bases of lexical metaphors*

What kind of analogy could have enabled my five-year old daughter as well as other children and adults to interpret phonetic metaphors in pretty much the same way as they were used by Greek or Japanese grammarians, and what kind of analogy could have induced the grammarians to call front vowels *bright*, close vowels *thin*, palatal consonants *moistened*?

Metaphoric terms can be based in principle either on acoustic (auditory) or on physiological (articulatory, muscular, kinesic) experience. How can we decide which of the two factors has to be considered as the source of phonetic metaphors, since there is no way of filtering out acoustic or kinesic sensations? As a matter of fact, nature is responsible for such a kind of filtering. Children, deaf from birth are deprived of auditory experiences, blind children necessarily miss the visual aspect of speech activity.

If the responses of deaf and normal children coincide: we could infer that the metaphors are based on proprioceptive, tactile, motor excitations. This is what happens in the majority of cases (see Fónagy 1980a: 111–120). This clearly indicates that we have to look for some analogy between e.g. *moisture* and the articulation of palatal consonants. In fact, the surface of contact of tongue and palate, i.e. of two necessarily moistened organs, is significantly greater for palatal than for plain (non-palatal) plosives.

Deaf children like children with normal hearing, declare in complete agreement that *k* and rolled, apical *r* [r] are *harder* than *l*. It is highly probable that the muscular expenditure is greater for [r] than for [l], though there is no experimental proof to confirm this impression. We know at the same time that muscular contraction goes with a hardening of the muscles involved. This could account for the kinesthetic judgement of hardness in the case of [r], and also in that of voiceless stops as opposed to voiced plosives declared as *hard*, by Western-European as well as Arabian or Hungarian grammarians.

Normal hearing and deaf children unanimously declare the Hungarian palatal plosives *ty*, *gy*, *ny*, in contrast to *t*, *d*, *n*: *moistened*. This means that the metaphor originates in kinesic, muscular or proprioceptive sensations. We know indeed that the surface of contact of the two moistened organs, tongue and palate, is significantly larger in the case of the 'moist' palatal plosives.

3.3.4 *Why metaphors?*

The poet replaces the appropriate, usual term by an unusual and inadequate one in order to express his genuine feelings and fantasies elicited by the misnamed object. This is certainly not the aim of a scientist whose main ambition is to be objective, i.e. to present the object of his investigation undistorted, clear of obscuring fantasies.

The poet pretends to discover the external or internal object to which he assigns a new name at that very moment. The scientist, in fact, does not know the object he is supposed to name. The Greek grammarians did not know in fact that the /i/ was a front vowel and the /u/ a back vowel; they had to give a name to the hitherto unrevealed distinctive trait, and assigned to forwardness the term 'light', and to backwardness that of 'dark'. Before the eighteenth century, voice production as a distinctive feature of /p/ /t/ /k/ vs. /b/ /d/ /g/ was quite unknown in European grammar. This lack of knowledge could be circumvented by means of metaphoric attributes such as *hard*, *soft* or *moistened*. These terms are no mere chance products: they presuppose some kind of preconscious analysis of the position of the articulatory organs; in the case of *moistened* plosives a preconscious sensation of a large surface contact of tongue and palate. The metaphoric term, based on preconscious analysis of articulatory and acoustic features, made it possible "to talk about X" (Low 1988: 127), about consciously unknown speech-sounds, essentially about phonemes and phonemic features. A remark of Mephistopheles underlines the fortuitous character of metaphor, presented as a creation ex nihilo:

> Denn eben wo Begriffe fehlen
> Da stellt ein Wort zur rechten Zeit sich ein.
> 'When the thought is vague and fleeting
> Comes the word to give it shape.'
>
> (Goethe, *Faust I*, "Studierzimmer", transl. Randall Jarrell)

4. Levels of iconicity

4.1 *Plurality of levels: preconscious analysis*

In fact, metaphor, in science as well as in poetry, is by no means fortuitous; it is the result of a highly sensitive preconceptual analysis, providing the basis of a subsequent conceptual elaboration. Semantic tests carried out with phonetic metaphors clearly show that a simple sound like the vowel *i* may elicit ten or more diverse metaphors, all reflecting one or the other acoustic aspect of the produced sound or one of the numerous sensations associated with its production — the contraction of the tongue muscles (*strength*), the closeness of tongue and palate (*thinness*), the direction of the tongue pointing upward and forward. All these terms, though totally unrelated in semantic space (*clearness, friendliness*), are equally motivated: iconic. In contrast with terms we consciously assign to some object, the terms produced in the frame of the semantic tests, and during the early stage of phonetic science, are based on a non-conscious, let us say preconscious analysis of acoustic and physiological phenomena.

4.2 *The level of unconscious mental elaboration*

Adults, deaf children and children with normal hearing unanimously conceive the /r/ as a male and the /l/ as female. According to Russian and Hungarian semantic tests (rolled, alveolar) *r* is perceived as the most virile speech sound (Žuravlëv 1977, Molnár 1984). T.H. Pear (1931) qualifies the substitution of uvular [R] or [z] or [w] for the rolled apical [r] as emasculation. Similarly, the German writer Theodor Friedrich Vischer violently condemned "the castration of the most virile German consonant" (1882). Speech sounds that have little or nothing in common, such as the vowel /i/, the liquid /l/ and the bilabial nasal /m/, or palatalisation, are consistently associated with sweet taste.

We have to enlarge the usual domain of iconicity, admitting totally unconscious motivation — 'dynamically unconscious' according to psychoanalytic terminology. Articulatory gestures may have simultanously a preconscious and an unconscious motivation. The sweetness of *i, l* and *m* could be due to unconscious associations relating these articulatory gestures with a largely preverbal oral activity: sucking. Looking at the previously mentioned Hungarian X-ray films of emotive speech, one is really struck by the pantomime of rolled apical [r], especially in simulated anger: the tongue is erected towards the upper teeth ridge, and 'heroically' resists the air-stream trying to depress the blade of the tongue. We are induced to see the rolled [r] as an erectile consonant.[13] Metaphors reveal our secret knowledge of the unconscious meaning of such gestures as virile rotation of the erected tongue-tip, or the highly aggressive fantasies that accompany a strangled voice.

In many cases a sign may qualify as arbitrary symbol or as icon, if we acknowledge an unconscious link, or if we refuse to consider it. Certain vowel-sounds (variants) pronounced with increased lip opening were considered as 'vulgar', 'indecent' in the speech of women by French courtiers of the seventeenth century. Such evaluation of the open variant would appear as merely conventional, arbitrary, if we disregard the symbolic character of excessive lip opening. If we accept, however, the psychoanalytic tenet of a potential displacement from below to above, we understand better why the grammarian Henri Estienne felt that women, pronouncing the diphtong *we*, should avoid excessive lip opening ("il ne faut pas que les dames ouvrent tant la bouche").[14]

4.3 *Parallel evaluation at different mental levels*

Dual encoding implies, from the outset, the simultaneous presence of messages differing in the level of mental elaborations and the degree of consciousness. The distinction of different levels of consciousness is particularly relevant and apparent in the semantic domain collocations. It seems reasonable to distinguish three levels of consciousness in the case of idiomatic expressions such as the German *Ich beiße mir lieber den Finger ab.*

(1) I would never do such a thing. (Conscious)

(2) I would rather bite off my finger. (Preconscious)

(3) I would rather castrate myself. (Unconscious)

or the French *Elle est à croquer*:

(1) She is charming. (Conscious)

(2) She is sweet, appetizing (tempting). (Preconscious)

(3) I wish I could swallow (incorporate) this girl. (Unconscious)

Similarly, *soif de vengeance* could be paraphrased as a 'demand for revenge' or 'to meditate revenge'; it harbours at the same time the fantasy of vampirizing the injurer.[15] The term unconscious icon might be a terminological innovation. The concept of unconscious motivation is a hundred years old. As we know, neurotic symptoms are always motivated; its motivation is, however, unconscious, and has to be uncovered. If there was not such a thing as unconscious iconicity nobody would pay considerable sums for psychoanalytic treatment.

5. Why iconicity?

What I tried to do all through this paper is to answer the question 'Why iconicity?' is so all pervasive in natural languages.

5.1 *Iconicity and synchronic dynamics*

Iconicity is inherent in live speech. We cannot 'realize' or substantiate a sentence, a single word or 'letter' (phoneme) without adding an iconically coded complementary message. These messages are not fortuitous *ad hoc* complements: they allow the adaption of general ideas to a concrete situation (a 'social context').

Distortions of neutral phonotypes, prosodic patterns, syntactic and semantic structures, or punctuation marks allow for the expression of preconceptual and preconscious or unconscious messages.

Language (*langue*) cannot change and evolve by its own means. If language were a closed semiotic system, consisting of well defined arbitrary signs and rules, we could not expect grammar to generate agrammatical expressions transgressing its present rules. We would have to organize round-table meetings to decide on a semantic or syntactic change.

Human language (*langage*), however, possesses besides its Grammar, a Distorter or Modifier, i.e. a system of complementary iconic encoding. The Grammar can incorporate, if convenient, the products generated by the Modifier through a feed-back mechanism. Expressive distortions are intentional, the subsequent linguistic change is independent of the speakers' intentions. Language (*langue*) changes, as it were, behind their backs. Phonetic change is a prototype case. According to neo-grammarian linguists, phonetic change is unobservable, because it is the result of a gradual shift in the position of articulatory organs, which occurs simultaneously in the speech of all members of a linguistic community, in all words where the sound figures in the same phonetic context (Osthoff and Brugman 1878: xiii). Sound change is all the less perceivable, since articulatory features escape attention.

In fact, phonetic variance — the contrast between competing variants — generated by the Distorter, is clearly perceived by the speakers. They react idiosyncratically to the emotive and social value of the variants. The change is masked, in contrast to neo-grammarian theory, by the simultaneous presence and stylistic antagonism of the speech sounds representing the same phoneme. Thus, the phonetic changes of French *oi* (< Vulgar Latin *e*) → *wa* (in *moi*, *roi*) was masked by the conspicuous presence of contrasting variants — *we* ~ *e* ~ *wa*, conceived and described by Paul Lafargue, Karl Marx's son-in-law, as a phonetic class-struggle (1912).

In the same vein, syntactic deviations, lexical and grammatical metaphors could hardly escape attention. They are perceived as complementary messages and not as successive phases of a linguistic change. The co-existence of competing variants offers language (*langue*) an opportunity to make a sensible selection of the phonetic, prosodic, syntactic or lexical material produced by the Distorter or Iconic Encoder.

5.2 *Creative regressions: how to get beyond*

With the help of iconic encoding we recede to modes of mental processing and to modes of communication which probably precede the genesis of language proper (*langue*). Romantically and metaphorically speaking, we go back to the legendary source of eternal youth (*source de jouvence*); live utterance and natural language ('live language' in Hungarian) owe their liveliness to this magic fountain.

How can the evolutionary diversity of the two coding-systems help us in resolving a fundamental paradox?[16] Our concepts and our forms of thinking rely heavily on the vocabulary and syntactic structure of a language. How can we get beyond language with the help of language?

The legendary liar, the German count of Münchhausen (created by Karl Leberecht Immermann, 1839), in the course of one of his numerous adventures, got bogged down in a swamp on horseback. He did not lose his presence of mind: he seized his pigtail, and with one jerk pulled himself and his horse out of the swamp. Münchhausen's adventure has much in common with our paradoxical task.

The dynamic unity of Grammar and Iconic Encoder allows for creative regressions. Let us think of pristine (paleological) confusions underlying phonetic metaphors. We owe the discovery of the phonological system of Ancient Greek to controlled experimental delusions: conceiving the aspirated occlusives as *hairy* *animals* (δασεα 'hairy', 'rough'), the non-aspirated consonants as *bold* ones (ψιλα 'bold', 'smooth').

Lexical and grammatical metaphors show a broad range of pristine misconceptions, reminding us of dream language: animation and personification of inanimate objects, confusion of the whole with a part of it, fusion of local, temporal and logical relations (sequence equals consequence). In possessive constructions the causal relation between sunshine, tree and shadow takes the form of a fairy tale: the shadow of the tree; the tree owns its shadow, or: the shadow is a part (a limb) of the tree.

Demotivation of such forms of paleological thinking (Haiman 1991) constitutes the second phase of progress through regression. The confusion of spatial, temporal and causal relations followed by the recognition of their diversity, considerably enlarged and refined our ancestral conceptual network.

Nominalization, a potential language universal, allows a statement to be condensed in a single word, and thus, to become a component of further statements (Lees 1960). It could be viewed as a basic form of creative regression. A five-year old girl repeatedly expressed her evening-fear in addressing Darkness: "Don't come Darkness!"

Language itself is an accomplice in the creation of allegories. Any sentence can be transformed into an allegorical narrative by a simple change from lower to upper case initials:

> Everyone is taken by Death. Deserted by all except his Good Deeds, standing beside him on Judgment Day (*Everyman*).
>
> Common Sense, Good Will, High Spirit may be unable to prevent the Soul to yield to the temptations of Worldly Pleasures (Prudentius, *Psychomachia*)
>
> The Rose receives with Politeness, and Hearty reception the Young Man, yet he is carried away by Temerity, awaking Proudness, Chastity and Fear (*Roman de la Rose*).

German, requiring capital initials for substantives, seems to indicate that allegory is but a poetic form of a tendency inherent in language: a trend towards hypostasis, the embodiment of qualities, events, or relationships between objects and events, making abundant use of personification and the transfer of word-categories. The lexicon of Standard English, French or German offers a rich variety of abstract nouns competing boldly with the Moralities of the Middle Ages or with nineteenth century symbolist poetry.

Due to such vestiges of mythical thinking, language shows a trend towards hypostasis, allowing for the fixation of qualities, events, transient and highly complex relations, or the embodiment of the lack or absence of objects and properties: *disappearance, lack, absence*.

It would be rewarding to consider the status of expletive pronouns (English *it* or German *es*) from an evolutive angle; thus, in sentences such as 'It surprised Jeeves that the pig had been stolen', cited by Liliane Haegeman (1991: 52), who comments: "In fact, the pronoun *it*...contributes nothing to the meaning of the sentence, being a paraphrase of 'That the pig had been stolen, surprised Jeeve'. *It* is not a referring expression: it does not refer to an entity in the world, a person or an object; it cannot be questioned [...]. We propose that the pronoun *it* ... acts as a mere slot-filler, a dummy pronoun without semantic contribution to the sentence; it is a place-holder for the otherwise unfilled subject position" (Haegeman 1991: 53).

On the other hand, as pointed out by Hugo Schuchardt and Leo Spitzer, the history of impersonal verbs and indefinite personal pronouns could be considered as a typical example of the progressive conquest of the domain of irrational thinking. Leo Spitzer (1926: 202 ff.) compares the German impersonal verbs *es regnet* ('it rains') *es donnert* ('it is thundering') with the corresponding Latin *Jupiter tonat* ('J. is thundering') or with Spanish *Dios amanece* ('God is dawning'). *Es* is but a paraphrase for God, a euphemism, [...] the expression of our negativity, our *ignorabimus*, of our abandonment of knowledge [...]. This is not a simple grammatical variant, but originates in our obscure intuition, there must be some originator, though we have no precise knowledge of its/his nature" (203). Wilhelm Havers cites the verbs he calls *Witterungsimpersonalia* 'weather-impersonals' as remnants of a mythical interpretation of natural phenomena (1931: 100).

In few languages is the use of the indefinite personal pronoun as frequent and varied as in German. In poetic language *es* may transform any verb into an impersonal:

> Da winkt's von des Spielmanns Leichenstein.
> 'It beckons from the tomb-stone of the bard.'
> (Heine, "Ich kam von meiner Herrin Haus")

The fuzzy syntactic structure creates a gloomy atmosphere. The German enclitic *es* is most appropriate to direct the eye towards something invisible, non-identifiable, something unknown, creating a feeling of strangeness.

Such impersonal constructions imply the psychoanalytic theory of the *Id*, the unconscious part of the Self. In the *Theory of Dreams* ([1900] GW 2/3), Freud had already pointed to our implicit verbal knowledge, long before writing his study 'The Ego and the Id' [*Das Ich und das Es*].[17] Twenty three years later Freud, following Georg Groddeck, transformed the impersonal pronoun *es* into a new concept in changing the initial lower case letter into an upper case letter, *es* into *Es*, acknowledging the contribution of language.[18]

This does not mean, of course, that the expletive *it* always or even mostly implies the hidden presence of the Id. It appears, in fact, to follow a syntactic constraint. Each time, however, if it can be paraphrased by a sentence starting with an explicit noun-phrase, we are justified to ask why the speaker preferred the empty expletive pronominal subject.

* * * * *

Iconicity plays a fundamental role in verbal and mental evolution, in transforming antiquated beliefs into verbal categories; it is most adequate to convey with precision mental contents of high complexity.

Notes

1. Phoneme sequences are put between bars / /; phonetic sound-sequences figure in brackets [ ].
2. I attempted in a previous paper (1956) to show the importance of this distinction, and the omnipresence of motivated (iconic) conventional signs at the phonetic, prosodic, lexical and syntactic level.
3. According to certain authors (Fodor and Garret 1966; Watt 1970) phonation lends an occasional sensual shape to a sign or sign-element, simply adding some noise to the linguistic message, due to a deficient output. The distortion is, indeed, felt as such, if it does not convey a (preverbal) message; thus in the case of speech defects, e.g. substitution of [š] with [s], in contrast to occasional tender lisping.
4. In previous papers I discussed the theoretical bases, methods and techniques for the foundations of vocal characterology (1991 [1983]: 155–187; 1993).
5. Punctuation marks / and \ for the acute and the grave accent, *accentus acutus*, *accentus gravis*, as proposed by the Alexandrian school.
6. For a more detailed phonetic analysis see Fónagy (1981). The vocal expression of emotions was analysed in detail and depth by Klaus R. Scherer (1985). For the recognizability of the

expression of different emotions see Renee van Bezooyen (1984).

7. *Melodicity* is a measure of the intrasyllabic regularity of the fundamental frequency curve. Melodicity constitues a third dimension (depth) of melodic movement (Fónagy and Magdics 1963 b: 39–41). The term of *stylized intonation*, proposed by Robert Ladd (1980 [1978]), refers to a high degree of intrasyllabic regularity.

8. This basic principle of poetic aesthetics has been echoed and developed during and following the Renaissance by Scaliger ([1540] 1586: 268), Hieronymus Vida ([1527] v. 365–369, 402–410), Opitz ([1624] 1796: 25), by Diderot (*Salons 1767*, 1913: 87 ff.), and many others.

9. For details see Fónagy 1961, 1980a: 65–77.

10. *Confessions*, book 11 — See Suzanne Fleishman's study of the expressive use of tenses, one of the central topics of historical syntax (1989).

11. Freud, *Totem und Tabu* (1913) *Gesammelte Werke* 9, *Standard Edition* 13: 1–164.

12. I attempted to show the dynamics and change of meaning of punctuation marks in previous publications (e.g. Fónagy 1980b).

13. In Central-Australia, the continuous rolling of apical *rrrr* was an essential part of the fertility ceremony (Hanika 1952). In certain linguistic communities girls are not supposed to pronounce a rolled [r]. A Chuckchee girl blushed and refused to read words containing an *r*-sound (Jakobson and Waugh 1979: 210).

14. *Deux dialogues* [1587] 1885, vol.2: 252, see also Fónagy 1991 [1983]: 84–88.

15. Donald P. Spence (1977) in a computer aided analysis measured the frequency of words occurring in the speech of 82 patients waiting for the results of a biopsy of cerebral carcinomy. Neither the patients nor the doctor new the results of the biopsy. It appeared that in the speech of the patients whose results proved to be positive the words *distress, illness, cancer, death, dark* were significantly more frequent than in the speech of the patients whose results proved to be negative. This indicates that the unconscious knowledge of being endangered is reflected in the higher frequency of words directly or indirectly related with the illness.

16. This question brings to mind *Meno's paradox*: it is impossible for man to do sensible research: either he already knows, and then further research is unnecessary; or he does not know what he is looking for, and then he cannot know where to start his search (Plato, *Meno or the Virtue* 81).

17. The finished dream strikes us as something alien to us. We feel so little obliged to acknowledge our responsibility for it that we are just as ready to say '*mir hat es geträumt*' ['I had a dream', lit: 'it dreamt me'], as *ich habe getrumt* 'I dreamt'. What is the origin of this feelings that dreams are extraneous to our mind? ([1900] *GW* 2/3: 50; *SE* 4: 50).

18. "The impersonal 'it' (Das unpersönliche Es) is immediately connected with certain forms of expression generally used. 'It shot through me', people say; there was something in me at that moment that was stronger than me.' *c'etait plus fort que moi*" (Freud, *Die Frage der Laienanalyse* [1926] *GW* 14: 222; *SE* 20: 195).

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Action, Speech, and Grammar

The Sublimation Trajectory*

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1. Introduction

Except for purely instrumental actions such as eating in privacy, everything we do is at least in part symbolic: that is, it is a sign of something else. The question of whether anything 'is iconic' relates 'only' to signs, which, however, in the case of human beings who think they are being observed, is almost everything we control in our speech, behaviour, and appearance. In particular, we expend tremendous energy and enthusiasm in broadcasting all kinds of advertisements for ourselves. The class of signs I want to consider in this essay is a particular subset of the signs which people use to advertise themselves: to wit, those which communicate one of the following closely connected self-deprecating messages:

I am small
You are great
Don't take me seriously
I am helpless
I am a child
I agree with you
I serve you
I follow you
I seek your approval

All of these messages (whether they are performed or simply uttered in so many words) constitute what I will call acts of *self-abasement*. This is conceptually close to but distinct from both politeness (roughly, 'I respect you') and modesty ('I am smaller than you say I am'). We can communicate messages such as these in how we act, how we speak, and what we say. For example, to grovel, kneel, bow, or nod is to say 'I am smaller than you' in our actions; to say something 'in a small voice' is to utter the same message in how we speak; and to say any of the messages listed here 'in so many words' is to utter the message in what we say.

In any of these communicative media (action, style, and language content), sublimation may occur, not only as a result of repression, but through laziness and by force of habit. Through repetition, any communicative act may become conventionalized and reduced to the point where the message is so reduced as to be almost undetectable. In the realm of action: a nod is a highly reduced and conventionalized act of prostration (for a more nuanced analysis, cf. Wierzbicka 1995: 230–4; 238–44); in the realm of style, a high pitched falsetto (which conventionally signals politeness in languages like Tzeltal, Tamil, and Japanese) is a not-so-highly conventionalized 'small voice'; in the realm of pure propositional language, to refer to oneself as a 'slave', and to one's interlocutor as a 'lord', is conventionalized when words with these etymologies become the routine way of expressing the pronouns 'I' and 'you' (cf. Lehmann 1982). None of these kinds of sublimation is at all controversial, and there is a large literature in anthropology and ethology on the conventionalization of action (ritualization), and in linguistics on the conventionalization of both style and content in language (grammaticalization). A student of anthropology who looks at the literature on grammaticalization (e.g. Givón 1979 for 'content' or segmental morphology, Léon 1993 for 'style' or suprasegmentals), just like a student of language who looks at ethological and ethnographic studies of ritualization (e.g. Berger and Luckmann 1966), will probably see that these two terms describe essentially the same phenomenon. The reason I am proposing yet another term here, that of sublimation, for the very same phenomenon, is that I want to make another, essentially unprovable claim: that the passage from action to manner of speaking, and from manner of speaking to content of speech, are *also* examples of the very same process. This claim is effectively smuggled into my argument if you grant me the label 'sublimation' (this one borrowed from Freudian jargon) as a cover term for both the linguistic and ethological terms grammaticalization and ritualization.

Now, it is particularly clear that this combination of formal reduction and stylization is what the word 'sublimation' has come to mean for us when action is 'sublimated' and replaced by manners of speaking and propositional messages. An example is the performance of aggression: the sublimation trajectory in this case is from hitting your interlocutor (action), to threat gestures (imitations of the aggressive action), to merely screaming at him (style), to finally merely saying wounding things in a normal tone of voice (language). A putative chronological progression from 'sticks and stones' to all the varieties of verbal abuse is untestable, as is the parallel progression from cringing to purely grammatical phenomena such as the use of the Khmer pronoun *knom* 'I' (< 'slave'): as we know, they coexist in all societies and at all times. My claim is therefore effectively (yet another) speculation about the necessarily undocumented origin of language. One reason why I think the claim is plausible is this: in each case, the posited transition

X > sublimated X

involves the same loss of iconicity. The uncontroversial kinds of sublimation subsumed under ritualization and grammaticalization can be understood as repetition effects (cf. Haiman 1994, 1998). Perhaps the transition from actions (via re-enactments) to language can be imagined in the same way. (I am aware of following Nietzsche in making this proposal, cf. Danto 1981.)

A more testable (and perhaps no less controversial seeming) claim is that some of the linguistic behaviours or speech acts listed as self-abasing in Haiman 1997a (including standard 'giving face' politeness, banter, agreement, contrived inarticulateness, completions, and linguistic accommodation) do indeed belong together under any label at all. While it is intuitively obvious that all of the *messages* I have listed as self-abasing are in fact related, it is not so evident that the linguistic *behaviours* just given above do in fact communicate these messages. One of the best demonstrations of the correctness of this claim, it seems to me, is that they are observed to co-occur. A case in point is one of Dostoevsky's famous scandal scenes, 'The Old Buffoon', which occurs near the beginning (Volume 1, Book 2, Chapter 2) of *The Brothers Karamazov*. I propose to examine this scene in the following pages, because it is virtually a study (in the musical sense) in self-abasement in action, style, and language, and presents a kind of catalogue raisonné of almost all the behaviours I listed in my earlier article (1997a), as well as of a couple of others that I hadn't thought of. (Only 'contrived inarticulateness' is lacking.) In it, we will see also a surprising answer to an often posed question: what is the difference between a performance and a parody? The answer to this question, I hope, will provide some indirect evidence for my larger, speculative claim that the transition from action to style, and the transition from style to speech is an example of the same kind of sublimation as ritualization (the transition from 'raw' to 'ritual' action), or grammaticalization (the transition from words to grammatical morphemes). In fact, I want to show that in each case, the transition

X > sublimated X

involves a loss of *sincerity*, as well as a loss of iconicity. My sole data-base will be the passage from Karamazov, because it offers such a rich and compact source of data.

2. The old buffoon

'The old buffoon' scene occurs in Father Zossima's cell, where, as the author underlines, all visitors are supposed to do some pretty serious grovelling:

> For forty or fifty years past, from the times of former elders, no visitors had entered that cell without feelings of the profoundest veneration. Almost everyone admitted to the cell felt that a great favour was being shown him. Many remained kneeling during the whole visit. Of those visitors, many had been men of high rank and learning, even freethinkers, attracted by curiosity, but all without exception had shown the profoundest veneration and delicacy, for here there was no question of money, but only, on the one side love and kindness, and on the other penitence and eager desire to decide some spiritual problem or crisis. (all English versions are taken from the Constance Garnett translation).

Father Zossima has granted an audience to Peter Pavlovich Miussov (a 'free-thinking...man of learning') and to Fyodor Karamazov and his two sons Ivan and Dmitri. (The ostensible purpose of the audience is to provide some family counselling for Fyodor and Dmitri.) The youngest son, Alyosha, is present, but only as one of several silent acolytes of the priest. At the time of the audience, Dmitri has not arrived. Ivan maintains a watchful silence throughout. The only significant speakers in this audience are therefore the saintly Zossima, the dignified fathead Miussov, and the depraved sensualist Fyodor Karamazov, the self-described 'old buffoon'.

As an enlightened intellectual, Miussov attempts to assert his independence and integrity of the clerical goings-on in Zossima's cell by not 'doing as the

Romans do'. In this cell, where the customary form of greeting is to bow deeply and kiss the elder's hand and await his blessing, he resists imitating the monks and makes a deep conventional bow instead, thereby saying in effect 'I do not follow you'. Karamazov, on the other hand, subverts the expectation of veneration and reverence, not by dignified resistance, but by insolent subordination. By egregiously exaggerating and grotesquely caricaturing every one of the self-abasing messages I have listed in my little catalogue on page 37, he makes a fool of both Miussov (whom he explicitly attacks later on), and (though I am not sure this was the author's intention) the saintly Zossima as well (whom he heaps with ostensible adulation). This performance of unremitting self-abasement begins with an act of accommodation ("I follow you"), his imitating (surprisingly) "... Miussov, like an ape" in the manner of his greeting Zossima. But he really gets started when the clock strikes twelve, signalling the beginning of the audience:

> "Precisely to our time," cried Fyodor Pavlovitch, "but no sign of my son, Dmitri. I apologize for him, sacred elder!" (Alyosha shuddered all over at "sacred elder.") "I am always punctual myself, minute for minute, remembering that punctuality is the courtesy of kings..."
>
> "But you yourself are not a king, anyway," Miussov muttered, losing his self-restraint at once.
>
> "Yes, that's true. I'm not a king, and, would you believe it, Pyotr Alexandrovitch, I was aware of that myself. But there! I always say the wrong thing. Your reverence," he cried, with sudden pathos, "you behold before you a buffoon in earnest! I introduce myself as such. It's an old habit, alas! And if I sometimes talk nonsense out of place, it's with an object, with the object of amusing people. One must be agreeable, mustn't one?"

Karamazov thereupon launches into two irrelevant anecdotes of which he is the goat, both stories illustrating his fatal propensity to injure himself through his desire to make himself agreeable by 'just kidding'. His telling of the anecdotes is of course another example of the same propensity, as Miussov mutters, "with disgust". Karamazov responds:

> Would you believe it, I was aware of that, too, Pyotr Alexandrovitch.... I am an inveterate buffoon, and have been from my birth up, your reverence, it's as though it were a craze in me. I daresay it's a devil within me. But only a little one. A more serious one would have chosen another lodging... But I do believe — I believe in God, though I have had doubts of late. But now I sit and await words of wisdom. I'm like the philosopher Diderot, your reverence.

There promptly follows a THIRD equally lame and pointless anecdote, this time about Diderot, who

> went to see the Metropolitan Platon, in the time of the Empress Catherine. He went in and said straight out, 'There is no God.' To which the great Bishop lifted his finger and answered, 'The fool has said in his heart there is no God.' And he fell down at his feet on the spot. 'I believe', he cried, and will be christened'. And so he was ...

Miussov, reliably, rises to the bait:

> "Fyodor Pavlovitch, this is unbearable! You know you're telling lies and that stupid anecdote isn't true. Why are you playing the fool?" cried Miussov in a shaking voice.
>
> "I suspected all my life that it wasn't true," Fyodor Pavlovitch cried with conviction. "But I'll tell you the whole truth, gentlemen. Great elder! Forgive me, the last thing about Diderot's christening I made up just now ... I made it up to add piquancy ..."

Miussov makes a great show of distancing himself from this disgracefully disrespectful behaviour, and is about to leave, but is prevailed upon by Zossima to sit down and relax.

> "Great elder, speak! Do I annoy you by my vivacity?" Fyodor Pavlovitch cried suddenly, clutching the arms of his chair in both hands, as though ready to leap from it if the answer were unfavorable.

And so forth. Some of this stuff is perfectly straightforward: when he imitates Miussov, when he clutches the arms of his chair, ready to leap out of them in response to Zossima's wishes, later, when he drops down on his knees, and when he "skips" up to father Zossima to kiss his hand, Karamazov is pantomiming the messages , 'I follow you', 'I obey you', and 'You are great', and 'I am a child' (adults don't skip). Similar messages are conveyed by his discourse genres. When he tells the pointless stories in which he simultaneously describes and engages in the speech act of 'just kidding', he is saying through his speech acts, more than through his individual words 'Don't take me seriously'. Later on, he asks Zossima a question about a saint's life:

> "Great elder, by the way, I was forgetting, though I had been meaning for the last two years to come here on purpose to ask and find out something. Only tell Pyotr Alexandrovitch not to interrupt me. Here is my question: Is it true, great father, that the story is told somewhere in the 'Lives of the Saints' of a

> holy saint, martyred for his faith, who, when his head was cut off at last, stood up, and 'courteously kissing it' walked a long way carrying it in his hands. Is that true or not, honoured father?"
>
> "No, it is untrue," said the elder.
>
> "There is nothing of that kind in all the lives of the saints. What saint do you say the story is told of?" asked the Father Librarian.
>
> "I do not know what saint. I do not know, and can't tell. I was deceived. I was told the story. I had heard it, and do you know who told me? Pyotr Alexandrovitch Miussov, here, who was so angry just now about Diderot. He it was who told the story." (...)
>
> Fyodor Pavlovitch got excited and pathetic, though it was perfectly obvious to every one by now that he was playing a part. Yet Miussov was stung by his words.
>
> "What nonsense, and it is all nonsense," he muttered. "I may really have told it, some time or other ... but not to you. I was told it myself. I heard it in Paris from a Frenchman. He told me it was read at our mass from the 'Lives of the Saints'. ... he was a very learned man who had made a special study of Russian statistics and had lived a long time in Russia ... I have not read the 'Lives of the Saints' myself, and I am not going to read them ... all sorts of things are said at dinner. — we were dining then."
>
> "Yes, you were dining then, and so I lost my faith!" said Fyodor Pavlovitch, mimicking him.

When he asks Zossima "only tell Pyotr Alexandrovitch not to interrupt me", tattles on the man ("He it was who told the story") and taunts him: "Yes, you were dining then, and so I lost my faith", he is saying through his speech acts 'I am a child' (adults don't turn to adults to act as arbiters and restrain other adults from interrupting them; they do not 'tell tales on' people; nor do they go 'nyaa nyaa').

The same or similar messages are also conveyed in so many words: the suspiciously exaggerated honorifics ("your reverence" four times; "great elder" three; "elder great" twice; "blessed man" twice; "sacred elder", "most holy father", "blessed father", "most holy being", and "great father" once each) explicitly say 'you are great'. The explicit and repeated self-put-downs "I am an inveterate buffoon", "I am inhabited by a small demon" and "I was a parasite in the homes of the nobility" — all say: 'I am small (and worthless)'.

There is also yes-man behaviour, not only the mockery of it, the latter already exemplified in Karamazov's 'agreements' with Miussov. When Zossima says to him "above all, don't be so ashamed of yourself, for that is at the root of it all", Karamazov "brimming over with ecstasy" responds, "you pierced right through me with that remark, and read me to the core... that's why I am a buffoon. It is from shame, great elder, from shame ...". When Zossima tells him not to tell lies, because a man who lies to himself "will be the first to take offence, and will revel in his resentment till he feels great pleasure in it", Karamazov "skips up", kisses the elder's hand, and sycophantically agrees:

> It is, it is pleasant to take offence. You said that so well, as I have never heard it before. Yes, I have been taking offence all my life, to please myself, taking offence on aesthetic grounds ...

There is even a sort of servile , if belated, 'completion' behaviour (wherein the speaker furnishes his interlocutor with the word the latter was looking for, and so performs the action 'I serve you', cf. Wilkes-Gibbs 1995), when Karamazov continues,

> ... for it is not so much pleasant as distinguished sometimes to be insulted — that you have forgotten, great elder, it is distinguished! I shall make a note of that.

Some of the same messages are communicated subliminally, by grammaticized particles that resist translation almost completely, and I shall have to pass to the original here.

Take the message 'I am small'. In a number of languages (among them Japanese and Malagasy: for a fuller survey of languages and references, see Jurafsky 1996: 556–58) there is a discourse particle (Japanese *chotto*, Malagasy *kely* both literally 'small'), whose pragmatic function is to 'soften the harshness of the speech act' within which they occur. Japanese *chotto* functions as an apologetic introduction to requests, as if to say 'I feel small making this request'. In Russian, it seems to me that perhaps the same function is performed by diminutive suffixes in Fyodor Karamazov's speech. His very first word *rovnoshen'ko* 'precisely' is actually a diminutive of *rovno*. The second (extended) example of this same device occurs in the beginning of his first self-deprecatory anecdote:

V odin gorod —ISHK-o, byli tam del —ISHK -i, a ja koj s kakimi
in a town DIM were there matter DIM-s and I with-some
kupch -ISHK -ami zavjazal bylo kompanj -ISHK — u
merchant DIM –s arranged was company DIM
'...in a little town where I had business, and I made friends with some merchants there'.

Constance Garnett wisely did not try to translate all the diminutives (one might argue that even her attempt to keep "little" once may have been a mistake), and in general, such passages are notoriously difficult to get the flavour of. I note that the diminutive "precisely" of "precisely to our time" has been translated with a reduplication in translations into Italian (*in punto in punto*) and Hebrew (*bdiuk bdiuk*). (For the diminutive effect of reduplication, cf. Moravcsik 1978). As for the 'little town' passage, the only attempts at translation of the cascade of diminutives here that seem to work are the Italian, where a number of pejorative suffixes (as well as the entire phrase "narrow gauge") have been pressed into service:

in una citta-DUZZ -a, dove avevo certi a ar -UCC -i e io, con certi
in a city PEJ where I-had certain aFFair PEJ - s and I, with certain
piccoli commercianti avevo formato una società A SCARTAMENTO RIDOTTO
little merchants had formed a company narrow-gauge;

and the German, where the diminutive suffix *-chen* occurs on two words, and the pejorative phrase "so to speak" is appended to another:

...In ein Städt- CHEN, ich hatte dort Geschäft-CHEN und wollte
In a town DIM I Had there business DIM and wanted
mit irgendwelchen Kaufleuten SOZUSAGEN eine Gesellschaft gründen.
with some merchants So-to-speak a company establish

The message 'you are great' shows up not only in the explicit honorifics, but also in the familiar reduced honorific *-s* (< *sudar* 'lord'), which is appended as a virtually random-seeming suffix. From Karamazov's second anecdote:

Vasha supruga shchekotlivaja zhenshchina —s
your wife ticklish woman HON
'Your wife (sir) is a ticklish woman'.

Da, govorju shchekotal —s
yes I-say tickled HON
'"Yes", I said, "I did tickle her, sir"'.

From his response to Zossima's invitation to make himself at home and be himself:

Nu -s, a prochee vse eshche podverzheno mraku neizvesnosti
well HON but rest all still beneath gloom of-uncertainty
'Well, the rest is still plunged in the mists of uncertainty.'

From his taunting Miussov:

> *Da, Pyotr Aleksandrovich, vy velikogo padenija byli prichinoj!*
> Yes, Pyotr Aleksandrovich, you of-great fall were cause
> *Eto uzh ne Diderot - s*
> that already not Diderot — HON
> 'Yes, Pyotr Alexandrovitch, you were the cause of a great fall. That was not a Diderot!'

None of the translators, including the English one, attempt to capture the sycophancy of this suffix, but the message is still present, if only subliminally, in the Russian.

The message 'I follow you' is most characteristic in linguistic accommodation: people adapt to the rhythms and accents of their interlocutors. This is how they learn a language. In spite of the considerable literature on linguistic accommodation, there is no claim that I have seen at least in the technical literature that such accommodation should be construed as any kind of self-abasement. Yet, Karamazov's performance here, so consistently coherent with all the rest of his behaviour, leaves no doubt in my mind that his constant use of scriptural passages and of Old Church Slavonic archaisms in these passages and elsewhere, is an advertisement of egregiously accommodating self-abasement. In a cell with a holy elder and a bevy of monks, he speaks the liturgical language with a vengeance. Some of his quotes are obviously Biblical, and recognizable even in translation: thus

> The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God"
> Blessed be the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck!
> Teacher! What must I do to inherit eternal life?
> Of a truth, I am a lie, and the father of lies!

But the extent of accommodation is far greater than these translations can indicate because a great deal of the language in which these and other phrases are uttered is Old Russian, or Old Church Slavonic. Compare our use of archaisms like 'saith', 'thy', and so on. In the following examples, the archaisms are capitalized:

> *zhdu velikix slov - ES*
> I-await great word -s
> 'I await words of wisdom'

RECHE bzumets v serdtse svojem NEST' Bog
saith fool in heart his there-is-no God

IZREKITE. oskorbljaju ja vas mojeju zhivost'ju ili net?
SPEAK insult I you with-my vivacity or not

...na vsjak — den' i cas
on every (ACC..) day and hour
'(I lie) every day. every hour'.

voistinu lozh' ESM' i otets lzhi
truly lie I-am and father of-lie
'Truly I am a lie and the father of lies.'

Finally, the message 'I agree with you', is communicated not only by explicit speech acts of sycophantic agreement, but by a promiscuous use of the particle *-to* 'indeed, precisely', which appears with roughly its dictionary meaning (or at least, in an act of explicit agreement) in Karamazov's first act of 'yesmanship' with Miussov:

Da. eto tak, ne korol'. I predstav'te. Petr Aleksandrovich, ved' ė
Yes. that so not king and imagine Petr Aleksandrovich after-all that

ja i sam znal, jej bogu!
I and self knew by god

I vot vsegda-TO ja tak nekstati skazhu!
And lo always-TO I thus out-of-place say
'Yes, I'm not a king, and would you believe, Pyotr Alaxandrovitch, I knew that myself! But there! I (just exactly) always say the wrong thing!'

But after that 'paradigm' demonstration, old Karamazov sprinkles the suffix through his discourse like pepper: in the first example below (from Karamazov's first pointless anecdote), the cascade of *-to*'s could still perhaps be viewed as a kind of after-effect of his original act of agreement with Miussov, a sort of frenzied spastic paroxysm of assent.

i predstav'te, ved' delo-TO nashe rasstroilos'! I vse-TO ja tak,
and imagine after-all matter-TO our went-awry and all-TO I thus,

vsegda-TO ja tak. Nepremenno-TO ja svojej ljubeznost'ju sebe navrezhu!
always-TO I thus invariably-TO I with-my politeness self injure
'And, would you believe it, it ruined our [??exactly] business! And I'm [?exactly] always like that, [?exactly] always like that. [?Exactly] invariably injuring myself with my politeness.'

But even this motivation disappears (to the point where native speakers are unwilling to ascribe more to the suffix than some 'colloquial' flavour) in the following:

he sporju chto i dux nechistyj, mozhet, vo mne zakljuchaets'a,
not dispute that also spirit unclean perhaps in me resides-in
nebol'shogo, vprochem, kalibra, povazhnee-TO druguju by
small by-the-way calibre more-important-TO another would
kvartiru vybral
apartment chose
'I daresay it's a devil that lives in me. But only a little one. A [*precisely] more serious one would have chosen another lodging.'

Ja poslednee, o kreshchenii—TO Diderota, sam sejchas
I last About christening-TO of-Diderot myself right-now
prisochinil
made-up
'The last one, about the [*exact] christening of Diderot, I made up myself just now.'

Znaete, blagoslovennyj otets, vy menja na natural'nyj-TO vid
Know, blessed Father you me on natural-TO aspect
ne vyzyvajte...
not call-out
'Do you know, blessed father, you'd better not invite me to be my [*exactly] natural self...'

Imenno, imenno, ja-TO vsju zhizn' i obizhals'a do prijatnosti
exactly exactly I-TO all life also took-offence till pleasure
'Yes, all my life I [*exactly] have been taking offence, to please myself...'

Da, vy togda obedali a ja vot veru-TO i poterjal!
Yes you then dined and I lo faith-TO also lost
'Yes, you were dining, and I lost my [*exact] faith!'

Mojemu -TO smireniju est'li pri vashej gordosti mesto?
My-TO humility is-there by your pride place
'Is there room for [*exactly] my humility beside your pride?'

3. The gradual loss of iconicity

As we consider the various expressive devices by which Karamazov presents himself as a grovelling sycophant, it is clear that they differ in their degree of iconicity. Some are such transparent pantomimes of self-abasement that they might be deciphered by almost any human being, while others are more coded and hence opaque. Within the realm of actions: raw actions are more iconic than conventionalized routines; within the realm of manners of speaking, again, spontaneous pre-grammatical tones of voice and gestures are more iconic than grammaticalized structures; and words are more iconic than grammatical formatives.

In the last section, I tried to sort out the various self-abasing messages that Karamazov uttered. In this section, I will sort the same messages out, this time on the basis of whether they are communicated as physical actions, manners of speaking, illocutionary speech acts, and lexico-grammatical formatives. My hypothesis, once again, is that just as there are degrees of iconicity within each of these categories, there is a monotonic diminution of iconicity as we pass from actions through manners of speaking to lexico-grammatical formatives. And this parallelism will lend some plausibility to my contention that the same label "sublimation" may be justified for this common passage.

First, actions. Here are some of the things that Karamazov does with his body in Zossima's cell: he imitates Miussov "[l]ike an ape" in bowing to Zossima at the very beginning of the audience. When he asks Zossima whether his "vivacity" causes offence, he "clutches the arms of his chair with both hands, as though ready to leap up from it if the answer were not favorable". He "throws up his hands" as he declaims "Blessed be the womb that bare thee". He "falls suddenly to his knees" when he addresses Zossima as "Teacher" and asks him what he must do to gain eternal life. He "skips up and implants a rapid kiss on the elder's thin hand" after the latter tells him not to lie to himself. And, when Zossima leaves to attend to some other clients, he stops him at the door of the cell and kisses his hand once more. Leaving aside for the moment the appropriateness of any of these acts, it is clear that all of them are intended as lavishly iconic signs of self-abasement. But some are more conventional than others: thus kneeling and kissing the elder's hand. All of the others are original, and, I would submit, they are therefore more vivid icons of self-abasement than the conventional gestures (which hardly count since, it will be recalled, they are expected of, and performed by, most of the visitors to the cell). In fact, Miussov has agonized over whether to perform these actions himself, and comes within a hair's breadth of doing likewise:

> He ought — he had reflected the evening before — from simple politeness, since it was the custom here, to have gone up to receive the elder's blessing, even if he did not kiss the elder's hand. But when he saw all this bowing and kissing on the part of the monks, he instantly changed his mind.

What turns him away from his earlier intention is precisely that "the whole ceremony was performed very seriously, and with an appearance of feeling, not like an everyday rite." Miussov's issues over the sincerity or trumpery of the kneeling and kissing are not our concern here: what is important is simply that the issue of whether to perform these acts is one that he can entertain. And he can, because in one sense, kneeling and kissing may be viewed as simply being polite, "an everyday rite".

In other words: kneeling is an icon of submission (actually, it is an attenuated form of prostration), but it is a somewhat *more* attenuated icon because it is dictated by convention. Skipping (*podskochil*), on the other hand, is entirely Fyodor Karamazov's idea: it immediately and powerfully evokes the image of a child, and there is no intervening convention between the act and the thing it imitates and represents. (And, we should note, Karamazov does not simply 'kiss' (**potseloval*) the elder's hand: he 'gives it a smacking kiss' (*chmoknul*), which again evokes the same image of a child. Kissing Zossima's hand is an attenuated icon of reverence; kissing it as a child would is an unmediated icon of childishness.

Next, manner of speaking. Here are some of the things that Karamazov does with his voice. He 'cries out': *vskrichal* (twice); *voskliknul* (twice); *krichu* (self-description, in the first anecdote) — all of this 'exclaiming' iconically expressing, as he well summarizes, his eager hyperkinetic 'vivacity'. We can assume that every utterance which is marked with an "!" is uttered with the same vivacity. He 'declaims' scripture: *proiznes*. And he exclaims once with 'a sudden pathos' — as if to say 'poor little me'. We do not see different degrees of iconicity in the manner of speaking: Russian is not a language which exhibits such things as a conventionalized falsetto, nor does Dostoevsky indicate that Karamazov uses stylized intonation for his taunt of Miussov, for example. But we can compare the iconicity of his manner of speaking with the way he moves his body. Let us assume that both are icons of vivacity or Karamazov's eagerness to please. But it is also possible to think of one as being an icon of the other, as well.

Now, which of the two following statements is the more plausible:

1. Karamazov' s vivacious voice is an icon of his physical hyperactivity.
2. Karamazov's physical hyperactivity is an icon of his vivacious voice.

In other words, which do we think of as 'the original', 'the real thing', and which as the 'paler imitation', 'the copy'? The reason that the answer is so uncontroversial, I believe, is because we naturally regard manner of speaking as a reduced, sublimated form of physical activity: we do not ever regard action as a reduced form of speaking. Here is yet another demonstration of the dictum that in our humdrum universe, talk is cheap. (It would take a fantasist of the stature of a Douglas Q. Adams or a Kurt Vonnegut, I think, to imagine a world in which (2) might be plausible.)

Next, speech acts. Here are some of the speech acts that Karamazov performs: he apologizes (for Dmitiri's non-arrival); he tells anecdotes; he agrees (with Miussov, sarcastically, with Zossima enthusiastically); he confesses (to having made up the Diderot anecdote); he solicits agreement ("One must be agreeable, mustn't one?"); he fawns on Zossima (the egregious praise, the suspiciously overdone honorifics); he mimics and taunts (Miussov's "we were dining then"); he play-acts ' "(Master!" he fell suddenly to his knees, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" '; he begs ("Only.. My angel.. I may sometimes talk about Diderot! Diderot will do no harm..."); he tattles on Miussov; he "exclaims" and "declaims"; and he makes a number of statements about himself which are strictly factual assertions: "I am an inveterate buffoon", and so forth.

J. M. Austin distinguished between 'performative verbs' like *apologize* and 'constative verbs' like *say*, but it is now commonly accepted that so-called 'constative verbs' are also performative: they perform acts of assertion and narration, and so forth. I would like to argue, however, in the spirit of Austin's original observations, that there is an important distinction between performing and talking about it. To tell pointless anecdotes is to act like a buffoon; to taunt and tattle is to act like a kid; to wheedle and beg is to act like a beggar; however, to say 'I am a buffoon/kid/beggar' is not to act like anything. So, I see a major split between all the fawning, posturing, taunting, and tattling — all the buffoonish acting, on the one hand; and saying 'I am a buffoon' on the other. To wit, while we may legitimately debate the degree of iconicity in each of the *performances*, there is no iconicity in the *assertions*. None at all. The sublimation of 'I am an inveterate buffoon' is as complete as that of the statement 'I am angry' (compared to hitting, screaming, and insults). The performance is like a more or less attenuated picture: the constative assertion, however, is like the title of that picture.

I find it suggestive, for example, that performatives not only suggest the notion of 'performance', but that each of the common performatives, not to mention the ones that I have described briefly here (taunting, tattling, apologizing) are readily connected with, and in some cases absolutely synonymous with, nothing more than a particular manner of speaking. This is of course most highly grammaticalized in the speech act of interrogation, which is typically associated with a rising intonation, but it is totally familiar — for example, the contrast between promises, threats and warnings is usually conveyed in the voice in which they are uttered. In some cases, the name of the speech act is nothing more than a label for the manner of speaking in which it is uttered: thus, for example, exclaiming, whining, and intoning. And of course, all manners of speaking are iconic. Nevertheless, there is a difference between uttering something in a threatening voice and uttering a threat — which one can do, of course, in a non-threatening voice. That is, although a performative verb is closely related to a manner of speaking, it can be (sometimes rather artificially) separated from it and evaluated in isolation.

Now, how iconic are the performatives we have listed here, compared to the manners of speaking we have just finished discussing? I would submit: much less so. So much, that (for example) I am somewhat pleased to have discerned kid-like behaviour in the mere fact of Karamazov's tattling and taunting. (Not everyone, I fondly tell myself, would get it.) The icon, although it is one whose presence *I* firmly believe in here, is sufficiently attenuated that some people may argue that it is not really there at all. And the issue (and my point) is not whether they are right, but whether such disagreement would arise with a less attenuated, less sublimated icon (like, for example, skipping).

Finally, the propositional content of what is said. Here, the distinction is between words and bound morphemes: between the honorifics which Karamazov lavishes on Zossima, and the suffix *-s*, between "You are right", and the suffix *-to*, between "a demon inhabits me, but a little one", and the suffix *-ishk-*. It would seem that the concept of iconicity is entirely beside the point here, since, as I wish to claim, words like 'small' are not iconic to begin with. Here, I want to introduce the notion of a difference between two kinds of iconicity, which I have elsewhere called motivation and isomorphism. Motivation is the kind of iconicity which most of us are familiar with: the sound is like the sense (onomatopoeia, the iconicity of the image), the map is like the territory (the iconicity of the diagram). Isomorphism is a sharply impoverished form of iconicity: it exists whenever there is at least some kind of one-to-one relationship between a sign and its meaning. It exists in the case of words. It tends to blur in the case of morphemes, whose *Gesamtbedeutung* is harder and harder to pin down. It is so blurred in the case of the bound morphemes *-s*, *-to*, and *-ishk-*, that I am even prouder of having identified the possible pragmatic function of the latter two than I am of having found kid-like behaviour in Karamazov's tattling on Miussov. And I look forward to even more objections from other readers. The force of these particles, in other words, is so 'sublimated' that it is hard to tell what they are doing in the text at all (until a great and wise linguist makes it all come clear).

In any case, I hope to have established that just as there is a decrease of iconicity within each of the communicative media of action, style, illocutionary force, and propositional language, so too there is a comparable decrease of iconicity as we proceed from the first of these media to the last. This lends some initial plausibility, I hope, to my contention that a common label 'sublimation' is justified for all of them, and that it subsumes ritualization and grammaticalization as well.

4. Parody and performance

In fact, Karamazov's performance in Zossima's cell is a scandal scene: from the very first move he makes, it is clear (to the mortified Alyosha, and to the reader also) that the old man is producing a grotesque caricature of self-abasement, rather than a conventional (ostensibly sincere) performance. How do we know?

One of the conventional indices of any caricature is of course exaggeration. And certainly old Fyodor's over-the-top lavishing of honorifics on the pious father Zossima is suspicious from the very beginning ("Alyosha shuddered all over at 'sacred elder'"). But, as a number of students have pointed out, exaggeration is also the characteristic index of any non-parodistic performance as well (cf. Haiman 1997a for some literary examples and references). What else is Karamazov doing to make it clear that he is engaged in a parody?

The answer, I suggest, can be summed up in one word: frame-breaking (cf. Goffman 1974). Over and over, Karamazov lets his audience know that 'this (grovelling) is play'. The first means for establishing this is his artful mangling of some of the Biblical texts he cites (as if to say 'I know these are texts'). It is most evident in :

> ...*Ne otets lzhi, eto ja vse v* ***tekstax*** *sbivajus'*
> Not father of-lie that I always in texts get-mixed-up
> '—not the father of lies. I am getting mixed up in my texts.'

And in: "Blessed be the womb that bare thee and the paps that gave thee suck – the paps especially", where a Biblical quotation is converted into locker-room humor. It is somewhat more subtle in his confession about the Diderot anecdote: "I heard as far as 'the fool has said in his heart' twenty times from the gentry about here when I was young".

Here is a case where one of the translations — in my opinion — actually improves on the original, by explicitly adding the pejorative 'repetitive' morpheme *etc*. (cf. Haiman 1997b, for the argument that the repetitive signals the contempt bred of familiarity):

> ... *So habe ich eben jenes 'Die Toren reden* ***usw.****'*
> so have I just that the fools say etc.
> *gerade von hiesigen Gutsbesitzer gehört*
> exactly from local gentry heard.

In other words: I know this is a text. I know it so well (and I know you know it so well) that I don't even have to cite it in full. (More compactly: ***Blah blah blah***.)

Another case of frame-breaking is his sarcastic 'agreements' with Miussov's interjections.

> "Yes; that's true. I'm not a king, and, would you believe it, Pyotr Aleksandrovitch, I was aware of that myself." [More compactly: *Duh!*]
>
> "Am I? Would you believe it, I was aware of that, too, Pyotr Aleksandrovitch, and let me tell you, indeed, I foresaw I should as soon as I began to remark on it. And, do you know, I foresaw, too, that you'd be the first to remark on it." [Again: Duh. Who else would be such a dummy?]

One would have to be even denser than Miussov not to sense that Karamazov is 'agreeing' with self-evident banalities that only a fool would have uttered in the first place. To agree is an act of self-abasement, perhaps, but the act is heavily framed or mocked in these examples.

But the final kind of frame-breaking that Karamazov indulges in is precisely in his pre-emptive self-recognition. To say 'I am a buffoon' etc. is to transcend being one. It is to step off-stage and regard oneself with detachment, and it invests all buffoon-like behaviour with a cool penumbra of doubt. (Maybe he's just pretending to be a buffoon. Maybe he's making a fool of us instead.) Bottom line: it makes us question the speaker's engrossment when he performs any behaviour, if he also describes or imputes it to himself.

But now, note how the transformation of actions into linguistic descriptions effects the same change as ritualization. A conventional gesture is one that is insincere: it is regarded as a hollow or empty formality, something one may do without subscribing to any emotions at all. Recall that Miussov was prepared to go along with the bowing and kissing as long as he could be assured that it was *only* a matter of custom. And note that it effects the same change as grammaticalization. An honorific word or phrase like 'great elder' may not be sincerely intended. The 'honorific'-*s* on the other hand is so far from being an expression of respect that Karamazov uses it in addressing Miussov.

To conclude: I submit that the sublimation trajectory is a single track, whose starting point is physical action, and whose end-point is a sublexical formative. Portions of this track have been labelled ritualization and grammaticalization. At every station, as we proceed to our final destination, iconicity and sincerity decline. A model of the track is laid out below. Underneath are some of the standard surveys of the process viewed at different points along (what I think is) the same continuum.

Physical Actions >	Linguistic Style >	Speech Acts >	Propositional Language
[action > ritual]	[Emotion > attitude]	[performance > constation]	[words > morphemes]
↑	↑		↑
"Ritualization"	"Conventionalization"		"Grammaticalization"
(Berger & Luckmann 1966)	(Léon 1993)		(Givón 1979)

Figure 1. The Sublimation trajectory

The only 'novelty' I seem to be adding is in positing a developmental sequence from performatives to neutral assertions — but this is no novelty at all. It has been described over and over in the abundant literature on language acquisition: see for example Bates et al. 1979.

Between the act and its description, between the picture and its title, there seems to lie an unbridgeable gulf, but it is mediated by a fairly densely populated succession of moderate transitions. From the act to an imitation of the act is but a step; from the accurate imitation to a conventionalized diagram is but another; from the diagram to a label, yet another. Each of these transitions is motivated by a number of considerations which are counter-iconic: economy of effort, the need for standardization and replicability in any efficient system of intersubjective communication, have been discussed in the recent literature on ritualization and grammaticalization (cf. Haiman 1994). They are joined here, and subsumed under, the notion of sublimation, the obvious advantages of which were clear even to that untutored amateur linguist Winston Churchill, who pointed out that "jaw jaw jaw is better than war war war."

Note

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This essay is dedicated to my undergraduate Russian tutor Adrian Toffolo, who wrote a master's thesis on Dostoevsky's scandal scenes shortly before taking his life in 1966. He had many friends, and the gift of making all of us think we were a lot more interesting and intelligent than we really were, as we discovered after he was gone. I wish I'd told him this while he was alive.

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Creating the World in Our Image

A New Theory of Love of Symmetry and Iconicist Desire

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1. Inversion — the route to paradise

In Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* there is a famous passage in which the protagonist, Billy Pilgrim, sees a late night movie backwards. Billy is prone to 'time travelling', and time's arrow for him can point in either direction:

> He came slightly unstuck in time, saw the late movie backwards, then forwards again. It was a movie about American bombers in the Second World War and the gallant men who flew them. Seen backwards by Billy, the story went like this:
>
> American planes, full of holes and wounded men and corpses took off backwards from an airfield in England. Over France, a few German fighter planes flew at them backwards, sucked bullets and shell fragments from some of the planes and crewmen. They did the same for wrecked American bombers on the ground, and those planes flew up backwards to join the formation.
>
> The formation flew backwards over a German city that was in flames. The bombers opened their bomb bay doors, exerted a miraculous magnetism which shrunk the fires, gathered them into cylindrical steel containers, and lifted the containers into the bellies of the planes. The containers were stored neatly in racks. The Germans below had miraculous devices of their own, which were long steel tubes. They used them to suck more fragments from the crewmen and planes. But there were still a few wounded Americans, though, and some of the bombers were in bad repair. Over France, though, German fighters came up again, made everything and everybody as good as new.

> When the bombers got back to their base, the steel cylinders were taken from the racks and shipped back to the United States of America, where factories were operating night and day, dismantling the cylinders, separating the dangerous contents into minerals. Touchingly, it was mainly women who did this work. The minerals were then shipped to specialists in remote areas. It was their business to put them into the ground, to hide them cleverly, so they would never hurt anybody ever again.
>
> The American fliers turned in their uniforms, became high school kids. And Hitler turned into a baby, Billy Pilgrim supposed. That wasn't in the movie. Billy was extrapolating. Everybody turned into a baby, and all humanity, without exception, conspired biologically to produce two perfect people named Adam and Eve, he supposed (Vonnegut 1991: 73–75).

I have chosen this example as a starting-point to illustrate my overall thesis, which is *that love of symmetry is an important shaping force in thought, language and literature*.[1] In the passage quoted Billy follows a time sequence "backwards". In what way is an episode like this shaped by the appeal of symmetry? We may find an answer to this question if we regard achieved symmetry as a 'neutralization' or 'taming' of asymmetry. If we assume that the longing for symmetry entails a longing to be liberated from asymmetry, then we can further assume that the stronger and more aggressively inevitable an asymmetry is, the stronger will be the symmetricist desire to tame it.

Now time is a most inexorably asymmetric phenomenon; it goes only one way. In the passage quoted, however, this staunch unidirectionalism of time has been overcome, and ambidirectionalism achieved, with the aid of the conceit of a film seen 'backwards'. Of all ambidirectionalist desires, which our innate love of symmetry gives rise to, the desire to go back in time is one of the strongest.

The desire for 'regress', when 'progress' has not lived up to its connotations, is strong in Vonnegut's world. But this desire is also universal — it is panhuman. The theme of one of Vonnegut's last major novels, *Galápagos* (1985), is retrogressive evolution. Retrogression is what we would perhaps all of us sometimes wish for; and with some of us, and at some times, such a desire can be very strong. Sometimes, like Billy "extrapolating" at the end of the passage quoted, we dream of a 'conspiracy' which would return us to a state of perfection, as Billy dreams of all of mankind conspiring to produce "two *perfect* people named Adam and Eve" (my emphasis).

2. Inversion restores wholeness

In his book *City of Words* Tony Tanner made a very perceptive and suggestive comment on the passage now under consideration:

> At one point when he slips a bit in time he sees a war movie backwards. The planes have a magnetic power which shrinks the fires from the burning city and wraps them up in steel containers which are then lifted into the planes; the men on the ground have long tubes which suck the damaging fragments from wounded planes. It is a magic vision of restored wholeness — "everything and everybody as good as new" — and as such it is the best possible justification for wanting to escape from linear time so that events can be read in any direction, and the tragedy of "before and after" transcended (Tanner 1971: 199)

The Vonnegut passage is, indeed, "a magic vision of restored wholeness". But the import of Tanner's comment goes far beyond its application to Tanner's immediate topic, his discussion of the 'Tralfamadorian' concept of time in *Slaughterhouse-Five*. (The Tralfamadorians are beings from space, and their concept of time is entirely different from that of Earthlings). Tanner's comments are applicable not only to the case in hand, the tragic asymmetry of time, of "before and after", but of any asymmetry. *What symmetry offers to humans is a magic vision of restored wholeness.*

How, then, is 'wholeness' achieved in symmetry? The answer is: through *inversion*. There are two constituent principles in bilateral symmetry. These are: *repetition* and *inversion*. A bilaterally symmetric whole is made up of two halves which are each other's mirror-images, each other's inversions, each other's *enantiomorphs*.[2] Thus, in bilateral symmetry there is repetition, in that the two halves are the same (except inverted), and there is also inversion, in that the order of the elements in each half is the opposite of the order of the elements in the other half.

Wholeness is achieved when you add, to an existing half, by means of repetition and inversion, another half; *the* other half; *its* other half. This is how the wholeness of symmetry is achieved, and such is the magic power of inversion. By seeing the film backwards Billy does not only witness wholeness restored to wounded crewmen and planes (Tanner: "wounded" planes), his experience is also an example of the panhuman longing for perfection which love of symmetry entails. From crewmen and planes made *perfect* again, in the sense of hale and whole, we go on, "extrapolating" with Billy, to mankind made *perfect* again through a return to paradise, to an unfallen state, in which to the concepts of *hale* and *whole* we may now add *holy*. Through asymmetry paradise was lost; through the magic of symmetry wholeness might be restored, and paradise regained.

3. The longing for paradise is imbued with symmetricist desire

The time travelling episode offers us restored wholeness of many kinds, ranging from physical (the 'unwounding' of wounded men) to spiritual and metaphysical (our transcending the tragedy of before and after). Maybe the human desire for restored emotional, spiritual and metaphysical wholeness can most easily be represented — as in the time travelling episode — by means of literalizing analogies of restored *physical* wholeness: wrecked planes unwrecked, destroyed cities resurrected and wounded crewmen made hale again.

From the physical, however, we proceed to the emotional, the moral, the spiritual and the metaphysical. The planes, flying backwards, take off, we are told, "full of holes and wounded men and corpses". If everything, including the corpses, is made "as good as new", then the restoration of wholeness entails the negation of mortality. The obligatory asymmetric sequence life-to-death is overcome.

Reversing time works many other wonders. Hitler turns into a baby, regaining the innocence of the infant. And all human beings return to the Garden, i.e. to the infancy of the race, and to the perfection of the unfallen original state. Thus we proceed here from the 'unwounding' of bodies to the unwounding of far more. We proceed to a magic vision of the healing of a primal wound — asymmetry.

The satisfaction which symmetry causes in humans is of many kinds. One kind, for instance, could be termed 'aesthetic' satisfaction. But it is difficult to distinguish different kinds of appeal from one another, and difficult to give them names. Isolating the varieties, describing them and labelling them must remain an activity the value of which is primarily heuristic.

With these reservations it can, however, be argued that one important variety of symmetric longing for which there is evidence in human culture is a 'metaphysical' variety. Man and life are in such cases perceived as 'not-whole', and a state before the beginning of time and after the end of time is seen as a state of perfection, which is in various ways linked to symmetry. The longing for a perfect state, situated before the beginning of, or after the end of, time, is imbued with symmetricist desire. This desire is iconicist in character, and my contention is that it ultimately originates in the symmetry of the human body (cf. *infra*, Section 9).

4. Human pilgrimage to paradise by way of inversion

Billy's family name is "Pilgrim". What kind of pilgrimage does he undertake in the passage quoted? It is a pilgrimage in which by means of inversion he goes back in time to a state of perfection, ending up with "two perfect people named Adam and Eve". (Adam and Eve are perfect because they are prelapsarian).

Is Billy the only individual to have embarked on such a pilgrimage? The short answer is "No", but in order to illuminate the question of human pilgrimage to symmetry by way of inversion let us turn to an example. An interesting case, from the point of view of the present inquiry, is the Peyote Hunt of the Huichol Indians, as investigated and depicted by Barbara G. Myerhoff.

Myerhoff did fieldwork in the mid-sixties and later published her findings in several studies. For reasons of space the summary of her findings will have to be kept to an absolute minimum here. A brief account, with further references, is found in Myerhoff's article "Return to Wirikuta: Ritual Reversal and Symbolic Continuity on the Peyote Hunt of the Huichol Indians",[3] published in *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, edited by Barbara Babcock.

The Huichol Indians live in north-central Mexico, in the Sierra Madre Occidentál (Myerhoff 1978: 225). They are now sedentary maize-growing agriculturalists, but were formerly nomadic deer-hunters (226). The pilgrimage to Wirikuta, which is annually undertaken by small groups of Huichols, is led by a shaman-priest or *mara'akáme* (225). The mara'akáme of the Peyote Hunt in 1966 (in which Myerhoff participated), Ramón Medina Silva, was one of Myerhoff's informants (226–27), and a text dictated by him is included as an appendix (236–39) in Myerhoff's article.

At this point, before I go on to quote some examples of ritual inversion and opposition from Myerhoff's account of the Peyote Hunt, I would like to state, in advance, what the points are that I wish to make, and thus what the purpose of my paper is. I wish to make three important points:

1. The first is that *inversion always implies symmetry*. The very concept of 'inversion' is relativistic in nature, since an inversion has to be an inversion *of something* to *be* an inversion. There is therefore a very strong bond between any inversion and its enantiomorphic target, i.e. the order that the inversion is an inversion *of*. It follows that any inversion which is definitely perceived *as* an inversion is directly connected with symmetry, and that the appeal of inversion is largely the same as the appeal of symmetry.

2. The second point I wish to make is that the rhetorical figure of *chiasmus*, which one regularly comes across in inversionistic contexts, is a direct manifestation in language (at the sentence level) of love of symmetry.

3. My third point is that five other rhetorical figures, namely *paradox, oxymoron, antithesis, irony and ambiguity* are also, indirectly, manifestations — in thought and language — of love of symmetry. It is my contention that humans experience opposition — which is the principle that gives rise to these five rhetorical figures — as a 'surrogate' variety of symmetry.

These three points constitute the basis for my overall claim, which is that love of symmetry (co-existent with fear of symmetry) is a very important shaping force in thought, language and literature, and that much human culture arises out of a wish to replicate in the world the problematic co-existence of symmetry and asymmetry in our own human bodies.

5. A new taxonomy of Huichol rituals: the crucial difference between (1) enantiomorphic inversion (symmetry proper), and (2) opposition (quasi-symmetry)

Wirikuta, where the Huichol pilgrims go to "hunt" the peyote, is a high desert several hundred miles from where the Huichols live at present (Myerhoff 1978: 225).

> Mythically and in all likelihood historically, it is their original homeland, the place once inhabited by the First People, the quasi-deified ancestors. But Wirikuta is much more than a geographical location: it is *illud tempus*, the paradisical condition that existed before the creation of the world and mankind, and the condition that will prevail at the end of time (ibid.).

This condition is characterized by the obliteration of differences and hierarchies:

> In Wirikuta, as in the paradise envisioned in many creation myths, all is unity, a cosmic totality without barriers of any kind, without the differentations that characterize the mundane mortal world. In Wirikuta, separations are obliterated — between sexes, between leader and led, young and old, animals and man, plants and animals, and man and the deities. The social order and the natural and supernatural realms are rejoined into their original state of seamless continuity. Wirikuta is the center of the four directions where, as the Huichol describe it, "All is unity, all is one, all is ourselves" (Myerhoff 1978: 226).

The obliteration of differences and hierarchies is achieved through "rituals of opposition and reversal" (225). These are not the only features of the peyote hunt, as Myerhoff reminds her readers, but they are her object of study:

> The entire peyote hunt is very complex, consisting of many rituals and symbols; here I will only concentrate on one set of rituals, those which concern reversal and opposition, and the part they play in enabling the pilgrims to experience the sense of totality and cosmic unity that is their overarching religious goal (226).

The use of inversion (and opposition) as a means of reaching a sense of wholeness or unity is thus Myerhoff's object of investigation. That is also my own object of investigation. The difference between Myerhoff's approach and my own is that Myerhoff does not take into account the connection between inversion and symmetry; however, to draw attention to that connection is in my opinion absolutely essential. Another difference between Myerhoff's approach and my own is that Myerhoff does not maintain terminological precision in her account of inversion and opposition — she tends to confuse and equate the two. *They should, however, be kept strictly distinct, if we wish to understand the true import and the ultimate meaning of the Huichol rituals.*[4]

Reversals during the peyote hunt are of many kinds. Myerhoff (1978: 227) lists "four distinct levels: naming, interpersonal behaviour, ritual behaviour and emotional states". In fact the aim seems to be to invert as much as possible (cf. 229) — preferably everything.

> "In Wirikuta, we change the names of everything ... everything is backwards." Ramón Medina Silva, the officiating mara'akáme, who led the Peyote Hunt of 1966 in which I participated, thus explained the reversals that obtain during the pilgrimage. "The mara'akáme tells [the pilgrims], 'Now we will change everything, all the meanings, because that is the way it must be with the *hikuritámete* [peyote pilgrims]. As it was in Ancient Times, so that all can be united'" (226–27).

Some reversals are straightforward enantiomorphs — in a strict sense of the word — of normal behaviour. Some ritual actions, for instance, are clearly enantiomorphs of normal behaviour:

> In terms of ritual actions, reversals are quite clear. The cardinal directions, and up and down, are switched in behaviors which involve offering sacred water and food to the four corners and the center of the world. The fire is circled in a counterclockwise direction instead of clockwise as on normal ceremonial occasions. In Wirikuta, the mara'akáme's assistant sits to the latter's left instead of to his right (228).

These 'pure' cases of reversals, which are enantiomorphic in a strict definition of the term, are, in my opinion, to be seen as *primary*. Myerhoff, however, does not restrict her interest to these, nor does she accord them any privileged status as tell-tale, 'key'-varieties of inversion, the way I wish to do here. For Myerhoff's purposes, describing and analysing the rituals of opposition and reversal, there is no reason to sort out what is primary — neither is there any such reason for the participants themselves, the Huichols. But for my purpose, which is to show that the underlying pattern is symmetry, the classification of reversals into primary, secondary and tertiary is necessary and essential.

In my opinion, love of symmetry gives rise *directly* to such enantiomorphic inversions as circling the camp-fire anti-clockwise, instead of clockwise as one normally would. The enantiomorphic target (clockwise), together with the inversionary complement (anti-clockwise) together create authentic or 'proper', i.e. *definitional* symmetry, which according to my theory is what is aimed for. Such 'pure' cases of symmetry achieved through reversal are to be assumed to be primary. When the Huichols, like other humans, then wish to extend the activity of enantiomorphistic inversionism beyond its limits of 'pure' application, they (like other human beings) make do with less pure varieties, which nevertheless *to them* count as inversions — although they are technically and definitionally only oppositions or antitheticalities.

In my view, then, opposition is a 'watering down' of enantiomorphism, of symmetry proper. Enantiomorphism is the master matrix, and as we move away from this to opposition and antitheticality it becomes increasingly more difficult to make material fit, but the continuing strong *urge* to make phenomena fit remains evidence of love of symmetry at work.

From opposition, which is watered-down enantiomorphism, the Huichols take a further step down when they — failing to find opposites for various phenomena — in turn water down the concept of opposition and make do with mere *substitution* (cf. Myerhoff 1978: 227). Thus enantiomorphism is *primary*, opposition *secondary* and substitution *tertiary*, each step representing a degeneration of enantiomorphism proper, in the desperate appropriation for symmetricism of increasingly 'resistant' material.

Let me now quote examples of 'good' cases of clear *opposition* in Myerhoff's material:

> On the interpersonal-behavioral level, direct oppositions are more straightforward. One says yes when he or she means no. A person proffers a foot instead of a hand. Conversations are conducted with conversants standing back to back, and so forth. Behavior is also altered to correspond with the ritual identity of the participant. Thus the oldest man, transformed into a *nunutsi* or little child for the journey, is not permitted to gather firewood because "this work is too heavy and strenuous for one so young" (227).

These are good examples of opposition. One of them can in fact be counted as symmetry proper. In the case of conversations conducted back to back a plane of symmetry at the joining of backs (or between the backs) divides this double-creature into two halves which are roughly enantiomorphs, if we discount minor things like physical differences between the two individuals.

Saying 'yes' instead of 'no' is obvious and pure opposition, since 'yes' and 'no' are conventionally accepted antonyms. 'Old' and 'young' are also clear conventionally accepted antonyms, presumably everywhere, and therefore the opposition inherent in an old man being referred to as a child is unproblematic.

But the proffering of a foot instead of a hand is less clear. We are approaching a grey zone where opposition passes into mere substitution. Myerhoff comments on this:

> The reversals in naming are very specific. Ideally, everything is its opposite and everything is newly named each year. *But in fact, for many things there are often no clear opposites*, and substitutions are made, chosen for reasons that are not always clear (227, my emphasis).

The Huichols have made the same discovery as many other inversionists. "Ideally, everything is its opposite...", but that is only *ideally*. Reality is not always ideal. For some things there does not seem to be any clear opposites. The solution is to make do with substitutions, and regard them as opposites — opposites again being, according to my thesis, surrogates for enantiomorphs.

The tertiary category, substitution, is not relevant to my investigation. It is the interrelationship between the primary category, *inversionism* (=enantiomorphism), and the secondary category, *opposition*, which is interesting.

The union or sameness of opposites, *coincidentia oppositorum*, is a typical feature both of visions of a return to paradise, and of eschatological visions. The Peyote Hunt of the Huichol symbolizes a return to paradise, but the same features also characterize the eschatological expectations of the Huichol.

The mara'akáme describes the end of the world:

> When the world ends it will be like when the names of things are changed during the Peyote Hunt. All will be different, the opposite of what it is now. Now there are two eyes in the heavens, the Sun and the Moon. Then, the Moon will open his eye and become brighter. The sun will become dimmer. There will be no more difference between them. Then, no more men and no more women. No more child and no more adult. All will change places. Even the mara'akáme will no longer be separate. That is why there must always be a *nunutsi* when we go to Wirikuta. Because the old man and the tiny baby, they are the same (Myerhoff 1978: 232–33).

The mara'akáme asserts that "the old man and the tiny baby, they are the same" (233). How *could* they be the same? They are manifestly *not* the same! Far from being the same they are so different as to be counted as opposites. How is the view that they are the same to be explained?

Myerhoff, seeking a solution to this problem, suggests that "polarity reaffirms continuity", and quotes Alan Watts's *The Two Hands of God: The Myths of Polarity*, and his views on polarity as opposites that are joined:

> Polarity reaffirms continuity. The baby and the adult ultimately are joined, ends of a single continuum. Watts states it as follows: "What exactly is polarity? It is something much more than simple duality or opposition. For to say that opposites are polar is to say much more than that they are joined..., that they are the terms, ends, or extremities of a single whole. Polar opposites are therefore inseparable opposites, like the poles of the earth or of a magnet, or the ends of a stick or the faces of a coin" (1970: 45). (Myerhoff 1978: 233).

I am not at all convinced by this argument. It is *not* because of contiguity, or because of their being the "ends of a single continuum", that opposites are perceived as the same in the visions of mysticism. I wish to propose an entirely different explanation, one that will demonstrate that the co-presence of opposition and reversal in the same ritual is natural and logical. Let us listen carefully to what the mara'akáme is saying:

> There will be no more difference between them [the sun and the moon]. Then no more men and no more women. No more child and no more adult. *All will change places*.... That is why there must always be a *nunutsi* [a small child] when we go to Wirikuta. Because the old man and the tiny baby, they are the same (Myerhoff 1978: 232–33, my emphasis)

The mara'akáme states explicitly that at the end of the world, when differences are obliterated so that there is "no more child and no more adult", "*all will change places*" (my emphasis).

Is this not then how the obliteration of distinctions is effected? If two entities can *change places*, does it not suggest that they are the same? The old man among the pilgrims changes symbolically into a *nunutsi*, a child.

We will understand the connection between *changing places* and *sameness of opposites*, if we consider the nature of lexical chiasmus. In language, chiasmus is one of the most important manifestations of symmetry on the sentence level. In particular we need to consider a special variety of lexical chiasmus, namely chiasmus which makes use of the existential verb, the verb *to be*. Consider the following example from the beginning of *Macbeth*:

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair."

We have here two concepts, 'fair' and 'foul', which are each other's opposites, quite as clearly as 'child' and 'adult' are opposites. In the chiasmus "fair" and "foul" *exchange places*. In

"*fair* is *foul* and *foul* is *fair*"

the order of "fair" and "foul" is inverted so that in each half the order is the opposite of what it is in the other half. The concepts *change places*.

When this is combined with the existential verb, the verb *to be*, the result is that "fair" and "foul" *become the same*. The difference between them is obliterated.

The old man's change of role to a *nunutsi* is half of a picture of which we would see the whole if there was also a child adopting a role as adult. And, sure enough, if we turn to the transcript of the mara'akáme's dictation, there the symmetric pattern is fully explicit:

> So all is changed. Our companion who is old, he is called the child. Our companion who is young, he is the old one (Myerhoff 1978: 238).

Young is old and old is young. Children are adults and adults children. One crucial method by which distinctions are obliterated is *exchange of roles*, expressed through symmetry, for instance in the variety of lexical chiasmus making use of the existential verb. This, I submit, is the mechanism whereby opposites are seen as *the same*. This mechanism bridges the gap between symmetry proper and opposition.

It is important to note that there is no real difference in meaning between "fair is foul" and "fair is foul and foul is fair". If fair is foul, then fair and foul are *the same*, and then it follows that foul is fair.

The difference between "fair is foul" and "fair is foul and foul is fair" is not semantic. It is stylistic; it is a difference in the degree of explicitness and redundancy. In "fair is foul and foul is fair" we have full-fledged symmetry. Through the repetition of 'fair' and 'foul', and through the inversion of their order, symmetry has been created. The two conditions for the coming into existence of symmetry, the presence of repetition and the presence of inversion, have been fulfilled.

But the statement "fair is foul", in which 'fair' through the use of the existential verb *to be*, has been claimed to *be* ("is") its opposite, i.e. 'foul', *has paved the way for chiasmus*. If fair is foul, then they are the same, and in that case foul can equally well be said to be fair.

We now realize that there is a special and significant triangular relationship between 1) opposites, 2) 'existential' chiasmus, and 3) symmetry. Existential chiasmus is the missing link between opposition and symmetry.

We have seen that the real object of the reversals during the Peyote Hunt pilgrimage is to create symmetry. Inversion presupposes, and therefore also creates, symmetry. But the purpose of the *oppositions* of the ritual is also the same (as that of the *reversals*), and if we understand the character and function of existential chiasmus, then all the pieces of the puzzle fall into place.

6. A new theory of rhetorical figures of opposition

But in fact much more falls into place! Once we understand the connection between opposition and symmetry many more things become clear. We are actually confronting nothing less than *a unified, comprehensive theory of paradox, oxymoron, antithesis, ambiguity and irony*. These phenomena have a common denominator. They are all related to symmetry, and their appeal is of the same kind as the appeal of symmetry.

What are paradox, oxymoron, antithesis, ambiguity and irony if not verbal attempts to make the lion and the lamb lie down peacefully together? If you ask the man in the street for a definition of irony, the answer is likely to be that "Irony is saying the opposite of what you mean". In the rhetorical figure of oxymoron, as in antithesis, you bring opposites next to one another. In paradox contradictory meanings are left to contend, and in ambiguity you wish to preserve a state of vacillation or ambivalence. All of these phenomena partake of the same character. Their appeal is of the same kind as the appeal of symmetry; they belong with symmetry; and can in fact be seen as ancillary to symmetry. If we accept the view that the appeal of paradox (as well as of oxymoron, antithesis, ambiguity and irony) is kin to the appeal of symmetry, then we can see paradox and *coincidentia oppositorum* as harbingers of symmetry.

Let us take a closer look at *coincidentia oppositorum*, the mysterious sameness of opposites, which is characteristic of initial stages of mankind, and also the eschatological symbol *par excellence*. For a prestigious and influential summary of the commonly accepted view of the phenomena involved we may turn to the following passage from Mircea Eliade's classic work *The Two and the One*:

> Once again, in fact, we are dealing with a transcendental situation which, being inconceivable, is expressed by contradictory or paradoxical metaphors. This is why the formula of the *coincidentia oppositorum* is always applied when it is necessary to describe an unimaginable situation either in the Cosmos or in History. The eschatological symbol, *par excellence*, which denotes that Time and History have come to an end — is the lion lying down with the lamb, and the child playing with the snake. Conflicts, that is to say opposites, are abolished; Paradise is regained. This eschatological image makes it quite clear that the *coincidentia oppositorum* does not always imply "totalisation" in the concrete sense of the term; it may equally signify the paradoxical return of the World to the paradisiacal state. The fact that the lamb, the lion, the child and the snake *exist* means that the *World is there*, that there is a Cosmos and not Chaos. But the fact that the lion lies down with the lamb and the child sleeps beside the snake implies at the same time that this is no longer *our* world, but that of Paradise. In fact we are presented with a World that is paradoxical, because free of the tensions and conflicts which are the attributes of every Universe. Furthermore, certain apocryphal texts (the *Acts of Peter*, the *Acts of Philip*, the *Gospel of Thomas*, etc.) use paradoxical images to describe the Kingdom or the overturning of the Cosmos occasioned by the coming of the Saviour. "To make the outside like the inside", "what is above as below", "to make the first last", "to make the right as the left" (see Doresse, *op.cit.*, vol. II, 158ff., 207ff.) are so many paradoxical expressions which signify the

> total reversal of values and directions occasioned by Christ. It is to be noted that these images are used side by side with those of androgyny and of a return to the state of a child. Each one of these images denotes that the "profane" Universe has been mysteriously replaced by Another World free of laws and conditions, by a World purely spiritual in nature (Eliade 1965: 121).

Even though we accept the substance of this passage, in which Eliade sums up the case so succinctly, we nevertheless need to keep in mind the question of the continued existence of the target half in inversion. In one sense perhaps our profane world might be seen as 'replaced' by another, spiritual, world. But in another sense it is perhaps rather *complemented* by such a world.

When Eliade refers to the *Acts of Peter*, the *Gospel of Thomas* etc., he quotes only inversionary statements, for example "to make the outside like the inside". But if we turn to the texts themselves, we shall find that alongside such inversionary statements we also get fully explicit chiasmus, i.e. symmetry.

Cf. the *Gospel according to Thomas*:

> They said to Him: Shall we then, being children enter the Kingdom? Jesus said to them: When you make the two one, and when you make the inner as the outer and the outer as the inner and the above as the below, and when you make the male and the female into a single one, so that the male will not be male and the female [not] be female, when you make eyes in the place of an eye, a hand in the place of a hand, and a foot in the place of a foot, an image in the place of an image, then shall you enter [the Kingdom] (Myerhoff 1978: 234).

In the quotation from the Gospel according to Thomas we have a lexical chiasmus:

> ... [W]hen you make the *inner* as the *outer* and the *outer* as the *inner*.... (ibid., my emphasis).

In the chiasmus "inner" and "outer" mutually *change places*, which shows that the distinction between these two opposites is obliterated. This is, accordingly, one of the ways in which "you make the two one".

Although the chiasmus in this text is followed by several non-chiastic injunctions, I suggest that it is a tell-tale element, and the key to an understanding of the injunctions that follow. Making "the above as the below" can be seen as half a chiasmus. As such it is sufficient — after all if you make the above as the below, then they will be *the same*. The other half of the chiasmus, which in this case would have been "and the below as the above", is optional.

The title of Eliade's book *The Two and the One* is presumably an allusion to the passage in *The Gospel according to Thomas* and other similar (mainly apocryphal) passages. Gnostic thought does not represent mainstream Christian tradition, nor do analogous schools of thought in secular culture represent a mainstream tradition. But such passages as the one quoted from *The Gospel according to Thomas* are interesting because they reveal features of human reactions which we may nevertheless all of us be at least occasionally prone to, although in varying degree, and varying manifestations. The explicit co-presence of opposites and symmetry (in the form of chiasmus and/or inversion) reveals the essence of the method of making the two one favoured by mysticism. *The method is symmetrification*. Once we have identified this crucial shaping force of mysticist (gnostic) thought, it is easy to recognize its recurrence in other places, other periods, other genres and other (including profane) contexts.

7. Love of (quasi-) symmetry gives rise to the mysticist notion of the oneness of the two

In the history of Western thought, as in the history of philosophy elsewhere in the world, for instance in the Orient, we find examples of the idea of opposites being the same from the very beginning — in Europe from about 2500 years ago. Heraclitus is fond of paradox and other forms of opposition. In his book *The Two Hands of God*, Alan Watts quotes "a set of aphorisms which, if the polarity of opposites is overlooked, seem to be shocking paradoxes" (Watts 1970: 50).

One of the aphorisms quoted expresses the widespread idea that things acquire meaning through their relation to opposites (a relativistic semantic theory, which emphasizes the value of contrast):

> 99. It is by disease that health is pleasant; by evil that good is pleasant; by hunger, satiety; by weariness, rest (Watts 1970: 51)

Other aphorisms simply claim that opposites are the same:

> 114. Hesiod, whom so many accept as their wise teacher, did not even understand the nature of day and night: for they are one (ibid.)
>
> 108. The way up and the way down are one and the same (ibid.)

That day and night should be the same ("one"), is a claim over the truthfulness of which the mystic and the non-mystic must differ. The non-mystic will side with Hesiod, because in our normal perception day and night are different; they are separate; and they are even opposites. They are *two*.

But on the question of the way up and the way down being one and the same even the non-mystic will begin to waver. In a sense they *are* one and the same, and the reason is that they can be seen as enantiomorphs. "Up" and "down" are *not* the same, but "the way up" and "the way down" might in a sense really be the same.

The most important feature of texts like these is, however, the recurring co-presence (which signals co-variance) of opposition and symmetry (the latter usually manifested in chiasmus). Consider the following aphorisms:

> 112. The bones connected by joints are at once a unitary whole and not a unitary whole. To be in agreement is to differ; the concordant is the discordant. From out of all the many particulars comes oneness, and out of oneness comes all the many particulars.
>
> 113. It is one and the same thing to be living or dead, awake or asleep, young or old. The former aspect in each case becomes the latter, and the latter again the former, by sudden unexpected reversal (ibid.).

In these aphorisms we find, once again, an explicit co-presence of our familiar three elements: opposites, inversion and symmetry (— symmetry manifested as chiasmus).

In his comments Watts attempts to solve the mystery of the alleged sameness of differents (opposites) by arguing that they are "extremities of a single whole". As I already stated I do not find Watts' explanation convincing.

In my opinion Watts' own material suggests a different explanation which is far more convincing. Even the title of Watts' book, *The Two Hands of God*, points the way to an unravelling of the mystery of the sameness of the different, and the oneness of the two, through a totally different explanation.

8. The bilateral symmetry of the human body and the asymmetry of lateralization

The human body is bilaterally symmetric (apart from some inner organs, and some other minor exceptions). Thus we have two hands, and they are each other's repetitions and each other's inversions (three-dimensional enantiomorphs). Insofar as they are each other's repetitions, they are the *same* (similar; i.e. *one*).

Insofar as they are each other's inversions, they are *different* (i.e. *two*). Hence the idea of the mysterious sameness of opposites.

Because of the bodily symmetry (such as that of our hands) of humans, it is inevitable that we should be fascinated by symmetry. But at the same time, even in the human body, symmetry coexists with asymmetry. Our bodies are bilaterally symmetric (a vertical plane of symmetry dividing our bodies into two three-dimensional enantiomorphs), but at the same time *asymmetry* is a very important feature of our existence as bodied creatures as well. We are *handed* (usually right-handed), eyed, footed and brained. *Asymmetry* coexists with *symmetry* even in our bodies, because of lateralization.

The fact that we are handed, and a majority of us right-handed, must have helped considerably, or perhaps even have been the cause, when humans first invented the distinction between 'left' and 'right'. Would these concepts even have any meaning to us if we were not handed? A squid cannot learn to distinguish between left and right, but for a squid there is no need to. What would be the point?

Though our symmetric bodies are very good for many kinds of activities (like swimming, for instance), human beings have also acquired habits in which asymmetry in the form of e.g. handedness is advantageous. The division of our hands into a manipulative and an ancillary hand is an important human characteristic.

In human culture asymmetry and symmetry coexist in countless ways. Hierarchical (asymmetric) relations coexist with reciprocal (symmetric) relations. But the human being who participates in this culture is herself (himself) a living mixture of bodily symmetry and asymmetry.

As adult individuals we are, however, more aware of the distinction between left and right than we were as children. Thus as individuals we have gone through a development from less emphasis on the difference between left and right to more. This pattern is analogous with the idea of symmetry as initial or primordial, expressed for instance in the idea that Adam was ambidextrous.

Children are more ambilateralist than adults. Before the age of about seven children often have problems distinguishing between enantiomorphs, such as lower case letters b and d, and they will often write letters the wrong way around (which has therefore become a conventional symbol of childishness). A longing for ambilateralism in adults can be seen as atavistic regression. Our lives as children were less dominated by asymmetry and therefore more paradisiacal. Analogically, in some visions of the beginning of the human race, the first individual is thought to have been ambidextrous. Caroline Moore, in an excellent article, "Milton's St. Michael and Holy Ambidexterity", reviews the cultural encoding of ambidexterity. One important feature of this is the tradition which sees ambidexterity as a manifestation of perfection. Ambidexterity is in one development of the tradition a quality of the perfect military fighter, and in another development a quality of the righteous individual, the spiritual ambidexter.

> To be ambidextrous, then, is to be physically perfect, with an unfallen perfection, for "such some conceive our Father Adam to haue been, as being perfectly framed, and in a constitution admitting least defect." From here, it is an easy step to seeing ambidexterity as an emblem of spiritual perfection, of holiness; and when Cornelius à Lapide writes that "vir sanctus est ambidexter" ('a holy man is an ambidexter'), his comment is only part of a long tradition associating the two (Moore 1992: 40).

Ambidexterity as "unfallen perfection" naturally fits the widespread tendency among humans to see lateralization and asymmetry as a fallen state. Symmetry (ambilateralism, including ambidexterity) is in these cases thought of as paradisiacal. Asymmetry is then the fallen state. It seems that the fruit of the forbidden tree was lateralization.

Moore traces (40–41) the tradition of holy ambidexterity through Cassian and Origen, the two main sources. In dealing with "ways of fortitude" Cassian emphasizes "the better fortitude/Of Patience" (41). "For Cassian, the perfect spiritual ambidexter is Job..." (ibid.).

> Passing, like St. Paul, "by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report" (2 Cor. vi, 7), the true Christian ambidexter is neither elated by good fortune nor cast down by bad, obtaining "gloriosissimum constantiae triumphum" ("the most glorious triumph of steadfastness"). Job, who steadfastly underwent extremes of prosperity and adversity, is the pattern of those [who in the holy Scriptures are figuratively called ἀμφοτεροδέξιοι, that is, ambidextrous ...]

In *The Two and the One* Eliade, in reviewing inversionary and symmetric phenomena which occur as symbols of an initial or primordial (or else eschatological) state, comments on the tradition that Adam was an *arsenothelys*, i.e. androgynous (Eliade 1965: 104–105).

It is obvious that the idea of Adam as an androgyne, and of Adam as an *ambidexter* are similar ideas, since both represent a state of undifferentiation. In my opinion, however, the idea of Adam as ambidexter is to be seen as more basic and fundamental; it brings us closer, I think, to the essence of mysticism, and to the essence of the whole complex of the mysterious sameness of differents, and the oneness of the two, which ultimately underlies the appeal of, for instance, such linguistic phenomena as the rhetorical figures of chiasmus, paradox, oxymoron, antithesis, irony and ambiguity.

In a state before the beginning of time, and/or after the end of time, distinctions disappear. A very basic distinction to all of us is the coexistence in our bodies of symmetry and asymmetry. Thus it is not surprising that the disappearance of the distinction between opposite concepts should be connected to the disappearance of the distinction between asymmetry and symmetry, and in fact often directly and explicitly associated with symmetry.

Consider the following example from the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, quoted by Watts in his fifth chapter, which is titled "Dismemberment Remembered":

> "Unless ye make the things of the right hand as those of the left, and those of the left as those of the right, and those that are above as those below, and those that are behind as those that are before, ye shall not have knowledge of the kingdom" (Watts 1970: 211)

"Right-left" (left-right), "above-below", "behind-before" are all antonyms (opposites). If one of either pair is made 'as' the other, then they become *the same*; *become one*. The way to do this is in the first of the three examples shown to be symmetrification through chiastification. We begin with a chiasmus:

> ... make the things of the *right* hand as those of the *left*, and those of the *left* as those of the *right* ... (my emphasis).

We then continue with the two remaining ones (above-below; behind-before), but these are no longer explicitly symmetrified (chiasticized). Nevertheless it is obvious that what was done to the first should be done to the second and third. In fact opposition in the second and third example turns into a kind of stenographic notation for chiasmus. Opposition becomes shorthand for symmetry.

It is important to note that in this passage, as so often before, inversion (reversal) is introduced in connection with the idea of making opposites the same. Actually, as we have seen, these injunctions, e.g. "to make the outside like the inside" which are here quoted on their own (as it were in their 'shorter' version), may in the sources be expressed in the optional 'longer' or 'complete' variety of chiasmus: "make the inner as the outer and the outer as the inner". This suggests that reversal as such is not the end; the end is symmetry.

9. Two incompatible forms of iconicist desire

In dealing with the texts of authors or periods which are to an obsessive extent characterized by love of symmetry — often manifested in an excessive predilection for chiasmus, paradox, oxymoron, antithesis, irony and ambiguity — and in trying to understand their curious method of making the two one, we have to adjust to an entirely foreign mentality — the mentality of mysticism. We have to understand an entirely different approach to opposition, to *choice*, and to the interrelation between asymmetry and symmetry. The way we make two one in practical life, and the way two is made one in mystic thought, are entirely different.

In practical life we do, in a sense, 'make two one' in countless separate instances every day, and nothing could be more trivial. Faced with a choice of two alternatives, when we need to make a decision, we 'make the two one' by settling for one of the alternatives. We *choose*; we establish preferences, differences, hierarchy and asymmetry. If we did not do this we would be paralysed, like Buridan's ass, who starved to death between two equal bundles of hay. There is an attraction in symmetry, but it might be fatal, and for us the exigencies of practical life have to take precedence.

But if we wish to understand the curious way of making two one which is the subject of this paper, we have to adjust to a completely different mentality, the mentality of the mystic. When the two are made one in mysticism, it is not through choice (and rejection of either half of the duality), but through the continued existence of both: through the interchangeability of each of the two opposite terms with its antonym; through the imputation of sameness to differents; and above all through an extension of the concept of symmetry from its proper application (enantiomorphic symmetry) to the quasi-'symmetry' of opposition.

Whatever way it is expressed, the idea which associates asymmetry with a 'life'-stage, and symmetry with a 'pre-life'-stage or 'post-life'-stage, represents a truly profound — however vaguely articulated — insight on the part of human beings, because in various ways life really *is* dependent on asymmetry.

In literature and in myths the longing for symmetry is often seen as fatal or dangerous — in fact as a longing for death. Thus the task of the Huichol mara'akáme is not only to lead the pilgrims *to* Wirikuta, but equally to lead them *out of* this paradise. Paradise tends to be a place which one has to get out of.

Thus *love* of symmetry coexists with *fear* of symmetry. The uneasy relationship, in human thought and culture, between a persistent longing for symmetry, and an equally persistent instinct towards assertion of asymmetry, arises out of the conflict between two incompatible forms of iconicist desire. As humans we wish to create the world in our image in two irreconcilable ways: on the one hand to create symmetry, and thereby to see reflected in the world our own, bilaterally symmetric, human bodies; but on the other hand also to uphold asymmetry, and thereby to see reflected in the world another major characteristic feature of ourselves, namely lateralization, i.e. the fact that although the two halves of our bodies are similar (the same except inverted), they are also different, one half being dominant, because we are handed (usually right-handed), footed, eyed, and brained (usually left-brained).

There is nothing revolutionary as such in the idea of our human body as the ultimate origin of certain elements of our human culture. *Measurements* (ell, foot, fathom etc.), for instance, came into existence this way. Similarly *metaphors* (the *head* of state etc.) are often corporeal. My argument (that love of symmetry may have an origin in the symmetry of the human body and the asymmetry of lateralization) is a new argument, but it is analogous to the measurements- and metaphor-explanations.

It is my belief that the role of love of symmetry as a shaping force in thought, language and literature is pervasive. This unacknowledged phenomenon (love of symmetry) guides our thoughts and actions to an extent which we are not at all aware of. But love of symmetry is not only a pervasive phenomenon but also a very complex one. Because of the co-existence of symmetry and asymmetry in our human bodies, our wish for self-replication, i.e. our iconicist desire to create the world in our image, is a complex phenomenon, and this is reflected in the complex character of those elements in human culture which it inspires.

10. Conclusion: the two and the one

The interrelationship of the two and the one is a perennial concern in the history of human thought. It is against the background of the *coincidentia oppositorum* complex, and such intellectual traditions as mysticism, that the rhetorical devices of paradox, oxymoron, antithesis, ambiguity and irony should be studied. The nature and function of these five rhetorical devices can be understood if we regard opposition as quasi-symmetry, and explain the appeal of opposition as the borrowed appeal of symmetry.

The connection between dual opposites and symmetry lies in the interrelationship of the two and the one. In bilateral symmetry the enantiomorphs are *two*, because they are each other's *inversions*, hence *different*. But they are also *one*, because they are each other's *repetitions*, hence *similar* (or *the same*). The meaning of symmetry is thus the meaning of enantiomorphs, and the meaning of enantiomorphs is the mysterious relationship of the different and the same, of the two and the one.

Notes

1. This article is based on a book-length study just finished: "Wholeness Restored: Love of Symmetry as a Shaping Force in the Writings of Henry James, Kurt Vonnegut, Samuel Butler and Raymond Chandler" (Norrman 1998). I am grateful to the Finnish Academy for a grant which made my research on symmetry possible.

   For my earlier work on symmetry, enantiomorphism and chiasmus see Norrman 1982, chapter five, pp. 137–92; Norrman 1986a and b.

2. Bilateral symmetry is defined as a whole which is made up of two halves which are each other's repetitions and each other's inversions (minimal variant a b — b a). Repetition and inversion are thus the two (obligatory) constituent elements of bilateral symmetry.

   Using the term bilateral symmetry in a vague and imprecise way to refer to features such as *balance*, *parallelism* etc. is *not* legitimate for an investigator who wishes to find out what the nature and function of bilateral symmetry really is.

3. See this article for further references. See also Myerhoff 1974.

4. In the same way as it is essential to insist on a strict definition of the term bilateral symmetry (cf. footnote 2, *supra*), it is also essential to adopt a precise and accurate definition of the term inversion (and its synonym reversal).

   Exchanging 'yes' for 'no' (cf. Section 5) is *not* in my definition reversal. To have inversion (reversal) you have to have sequentiality or some other form of hierarchical ordering. Only sequentially (hierarchically) ordered things can be inverted. Replacing a term with its opposite (antonym) is thus *not*, in my definition, inversion (reversal).

   I classify the Huichol rituals into categories. The first two are: (1) a primary category (*enantiomorphism*, i.e. symmetry proper), (2) a secondary category (*opposition*, or *antonymy*, which in the confused thinking of the pilgrims and their shaman-priest is falsely accepted as symmetry. I call it 'quasi'- or 'pseudo'-symmetry).

   What I am interested in is the question why the Huichol pilgrims confuse categories (1) and (2). The pilgrims are, however, not the only people to do this: their shaman-priest confuses the categories too, so does Myerhoff, the anthropologist who records the rituals, so does Alan Watts, the author whose work on 'polarity' she cites as an explanation, but which does not in fact explain anything at all.

The widespread human tendency to confuse symmetry and antonymy is what I am studying. Without that confusion I would not have a topic. But naturally I cannot study the confusion *from within the confusion*! I have to stick to the proper definition of bilateral symmetry, which is that bilateral symmetry is a whole which is made up of two halves which are each other's repetitions and each other's inversions (minimal variant a b — b a), and I also have to insist on a proper definition of the term inversion, i.e. a definition which recognizes that inversion presupposes sequential (hierarchical) ordering.

I perfectly realize that other scholars may have many interesting things to say even if they work with less exact and precise definitions. But for my purposes I have to insist on strict definitions, because it is only by means of such definitions that I can make my readers aware of the phenomena that I am investigating. The points I wish to make can be made only through the very definitions of the concepts bilateral symmetry and inversion.

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On Semiotic Interplay

Forms of Creative Interaction Between Iconicity and Indexicality in Twentieth-Century Literature

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1. Sign vs. sign-function. Some preliminary observations

Recent literary criticism has demonstrated that it is quite possible to appropriate C. S. Peirce's concept of the iconic sign and fruitfully utilize it within a framework where the operative contrast amounts to little more than one between 'motivated' and 'arbitrary' modes of *linguistic* sign, although admittedly one expressed using ostensibly Peircean terminology. Indeed, it is possible to be indebted to Peirce's concept of 'abduction' and to recognize the importance of processes of abduction for an understanding of semiosis, while still working with the concept within an essentially non-Peircean framework, when it comes to the matter of sign-typology employed.[1] Moreover, a point even more pertinent to the present context, one can construct viable interpretive models on the basis of Peirce's second trichotomy of signs while paying virtually no attention to the indexical sign, the Cinderella of the family threesome, let alone addressing notions of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness on which his seminal distinction between 'icons', 'indices' and 'symbols' is based. It has even become acceptable practice to make token gestures towards Charles Morris's concept of 'iconicity' — i.e. of likeness *as a matter of degree* — without thereby necessarily committing oneself to his overall methodological assumptions.[2] What is more, the majority of semiotically oriented literary critics would be prepared to concede that, even when extracted from its conceptual context in *Foundations of a Theory of Signs*, Morris's qualitative term can only help facilitate recognition of the fact that most signs possess heterogeneous constituents and that deceptive nouns like 'icon', 'index' and 'symbol' are, as Peirce had already pointed out in *Elements of Logic* (Peirce 1960: 2, 312), at best no more than "abstractions". Christian Metz is right to draw our attention to the fact that "not everything is iconic in the icon, and there is the iconic outside the icon",[3] a point which could without difficulty be rephrased to apply to the other two component sign-types in Peirce's major trichotomy. Signs, in other words, usually occur in hybrid rather than pure form.[4] Or, to be more accurate, our chosen reading of them (given that semiosis involves attributing certain sign-*functions* rather than positing innate semiotic *properties* or attributing objective sign-status),[5] is on the whole likely to involve a complex, sophisticated response to various elements of iconic, indexical and symbolic *potential*.

Given this state of affairs, we should not be surprised to find that Thomas A. Sebeok's mixed classification of the photograph as an "iconic index" (1976: 1443) has important methodological implications for many of the literary examples of semiotic interplay that will be considered below. What is more, the terms of Sebeok's argument, like those of Umberto Eco's demonstration (published in the same year) of the Gestaltist role played by graphic conventions in various seemingly iconic modes of visual sign-production (Eco 1976: 193ff.), help draw attention to the fact that, in importing Peircean semiotic terms like 'icon', 'index' and 'symbol' — or, more appropriately, their cognate adjectival forms — into literary analysis, one is not positing autonomous sign-types, but rather operating with a convenient set of contrast-terms which reflect (to borrow James Jakób Liszka's expression) the way in which "a sign can be abstracted, emphasized or perspectivized for certain purposes" (Liszka 1996: 47). Or, to cite another contributor to the mammoth *Festschrift* for Thomas A. Sebeok, "there are no 'pure' [...] signs. All their uses are mixed. To call something an 'icon' [simply means that] the iconic element predominates over others" (Pelc 1986: 14). For reasons outlined above, I would prefer to substitute the word 'readings' for 'uses', since "nothing is a sign in itself" (Short 1981: 202), or as C. S. Peirce himself already succinctly put it: "nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign" (2.308). Literature is arguably above all *the* domain where, by comparison with, say, the medical diagnosis of symptoms or the decoding of metereological signs, a greater latitude of interpretative scope or of reader-participation in the construction of meaning is likely to come into play. Which is why Eco (Eco 1983a: 212) suggests that "a criminal novel is usually more intriguing than the detection of pneumonia".

The discussion which follows is intended to do little more than identify some ways in which hybrid signs and super-signs and patterns of interplay between iconicity and indexicality have been creatively exploited in the literature of our own century. This will be attempted using material taken from three main areas: (i) narratives which consciously thematize heterogeneous forms of sign-production; (ii) selected non-'symbolic' techniques in experimental poetry; and (iii) certain iconic-cum-indexical aspects of film. In concentrating primarily on forms of literary interplay between iconicity and indexicality, one inevitably finds oneself obliged to take for granted the *de facto* preponderance of a certain category of printed 'symbolic' signs (sometimes known as 'words') in virtually all of one's chosen examples. Thus, what I shall be focusing on most often are situations in which language's symbolic properties have been found to be in need of either iconic or iconic-cum-indexical supplementation. However, lest the present inquiry seem unduly predisposed towards the avant-garde and experimentalism, it is worth bearing in mind that there have always existed distinct aesthetic contexts in which a meaningful interplay between the iconic and the indexical is more likely to be prominent. For while "some signs" are, according to Eco, "better adapted to the expression of abstract relations [...], others [viz. *icons* and *indices*] appear to be more useful in direct reference to the status of the world" and are, *eo ipso*, "more immediately involved in the direct mentioning of actual objects" (Eco 1976: 157).

2. Elements of iconicity and indexicality in the interpretation of literary footprints

Since footprints played such a key role in the early history of Peircean semiotics in explaining *indices*, and have retained their importance especially in those branches of semiotics which have correctly viewed the discipline's subject as more than merely the linguistic sign, I should like to start by looking at three sets of (im)prints. In each instance, my main concern is to ascertain just what indexical and iconic elements are actually at play, even in such blatantly obvious paradigms of indexicality. Let us start with world literature's most famous footprint: that of Man Friday in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *The Discovery of Man Friday's Footprint in Defoe's* Robinson Crusoe

Inevitably, it is some time after its discovery before the mark in the sand can be unequivocally attributed to a specific agent. At first all the shipwrecked Crusoe can do is register "the Print of a Man's naked Foot on the Shore" (Defoe 1975: 112). But this is only an initial, spontaneous reaction; later he is less sure whether the print is simply that of a fellow human being. "'I was so embarrass'd with my own frightful Ideas of *the Thing*, that I formed nothing but dismal Imaginations to myself. [...] Sometimes I fancy'd it must be the Devil" (112, my emphasis), a thought which haunts him for some considerable time, until he lights upon the more rational explanation that the assumed evidence of the Devil was "a meer Chimera of my own and that this Foot might be the Print of my own Foot, when I came on Shore from my Boat" (115).

As was suggested above, it has become a stock feature of Peircean explanations of the *indexical* sign to offer the footprint as a standard illustration.[6] But the example in *Robinson Crusoe* not only remains synecdochically interpretable as an indexical sign for the person whose foot made the impression, it also functions indexically as a reflection of Crusoe's state of mind. In fact, the mark in the sand immediately triggers off "wild ideas" and "strange unaccountable whimsies", with Crusoe soon "mistaking every bush and tree, and fancying every stump at a distance to be a man" (112). Clearly, various elements of iconicity must play a role in informing such "wild ideas". For example, we are confronted with Crusoe's preliminary hypothesis that the unshod foot might belong to a savage or a cannibal or even be a sign of the Devil in disguise and that a threateningly large foot implies a person of superior strength. The later moment when Crusoe returns to place his own foot alongside the foot-print in the sand to test whether it is his own is based on a principle of potentially iconic isomorphism (now tactile, rather than just visual). In Crusoe's words, there can be no peace

> till I should go down to the Shore again, and see this Print of a Foot, and measure it by my own, and see if there was any Similitude or Fitness that I might be assur'd it was my own Foot. But when I came to the Place, *First*, It appear'd evidently to me, that when I laid up my Boat, I could not possibly be on Shore any where there about. *Secondly*, When I came to measure the Mark with my own Foot, I found my Foot not so large by a great deal; both these Things fill'd my Head with new Imaginations, and gave me the Vapours again, to the highest Degree; so that I shook with cold, like one in an Ague: And I went Home again, fill'd with the Belief that some Man or Men had been on the Shore there; or in short, that the Island was inhabited .... (115).

However, his consternation at the lack of fit is a response relying less on rigorously 'abductive' procedures regarding where he came ashore or concerning the owner of the foot in question: people with big feet do not always possess correspondingly large bodies and those with big bodies will not necessarily all be stronger than Crusoe or inevitably turn out to be hostile. Such timorous flights of fantasy are as much *indices* of Crusoe's new state of mind (evoked in the last part of the above quotation) as tokens of its catalyst. As with some of my later illustrations, the relationship between iconicity and indexicality is a far from simple one.

My other two examples come near the start of their respective works and hence establish what kind of semiotic fiction the reader is in the process of entering. According to its epigraph, Chapter One of *The Name of the Rose* gives William of Baskerville an opportunity to "*demonstrate his great acumen*" (Eco 1983b: 21). The "Prime" section of the First Day of Brother William's visit to the abbey, the closed community where the detective plot is shortly to unfold, has him and his companion Adso of Melk (whose youthful attention is focused on the Aedificium above and not on the details visible on the snow-covered path leading up to it) engage in their respective acts of responding to what meets their gaze. Since they encountered no horse during their ascent, Adso is in due course perplexed to hear William assure his new hosts that the animal they are seeking " 'came this way and took the path to the right. He will not get far, because he will have to stop when he reaches the dungheap. He is too intelligent to plunge down that precipitous slope ...' " (23). Adso's perplexity is compounded when William even refers to the creature by name as Brunellus, describing it as " 'the abbot's favourite horse, fifteen hands, the fastest in your stables, with a dark coat, a full tail, small round hoofs, but a very steady gait; small head, sharp ears, big eyes' " (*ibid.*). Once the animal has been retrieved, Adso cannot contain his curiosity and, playing Dr Watson to William's Sherlock Holmes, asks how his master could possibly know so much about an animal that he had not even seen.

Brother William's reply is suitably patronizing:

> "I am almost embarrassed to repeat to you what you should know. At the cross-roads, on the still-fresh snow, a horse's hoofprints stood out very neatly, heading for the path to our left. Neatly spaced, those marks said that the hoof was small and round, and the gallop quite regular — and so I deduced the nature of the horse, and the fact that it was not running wildly like a crazed animal. At the point where the pines formed a natural roof, some twigs had been freshly broken off at a height of five feet. One of the blackberry bushes

where the animal must have turned to take the path to his right, proudly switching his handsome tail, still held some long black horsehairs in its brambles....You will not say, finally, that you do not know that path leads to the dungheap, because as we passed the lower curve we saw the spill of waste down the sheer cliff below the great south tower, staining the snow; and from the situation of the crossroads, the path could only lead in that direction."

"Yes," I said, "but what about the small head, the sharp ears, the big eyes...?"

"I am not sure he has those features, but no doubt the monks firmly believe he does. As Isidore of Seville said, the beauty of a horse requires 'that the head be small, siccum prope pelle ossibus adhaerente, short and pointed ears, big eyes, flaring nostrils, erect neck, thick mane and tail, round and solid hoofs.' If the horse whose passing I inferred had not really been the finest of the stables, stableboys would have been out chasing him, but instead, the cellarer in person had undertaken the search. And a monk who considers a horse excellent, whatever his natural forms, can only see him as the auctoritates have described him, especially if" — and here he smiled slyly in my direction — "the describer is a learned Benedictine."

"All right," I said, "but why Brunellus?"

"May the Holy Ghost sharpen your mind, son!" my master exclaimed. "What other name could he possibly have? Why even the great Buridan, who is about to become rector in Paris, when he wants to use a horse in one of his logical examples, always calls it Brunellus." (24)

The largely abductive interpretation of visual signs and contextual factors which Brother William offers depends on elements of both iconicity and indexicality. The height of certain traces is decoded as iconically significant when it comes to the question of the horse's size. The hoofmarks are regular (i.e. an iconic index of the horse's 'nature'), while other features — the shape of its head and ears, its large eyes — are offered as an hypothesis, less on account of specific evidence encountered on the route up to the abbey than because such features would be prized in this community; a hypothetical horse with such qualities could thus be read as an index of the reigning criteria of equestrian beauty. Here, as elsewhere in *The Name of the Rose*, elements of indexicality and iconicity each play their interacting parts in the process of reasoning and we are continually reminded of "the truth of signs [and of the fact that] they are the only things man has to orient himself in the world" (492). And by that token, the detective novel paradigm confronts us with the proposition that the abbey, with its labyrinths, false trails, plots and mysteries, is to be interpreted as a *speculum* *mundi* (120). Hence, the initial lesson in applied semiotics, echoed in the later claim that "snow [...] is an admirable parchment on which men's bodies leave very legible writing" (105), serves to establish Eco's dominant textual paradigm.

I do not know whether my third fictive sign-reader, Smilla Jespersen, is acquainted with the writings of Peirce or Eco, or even whether her author Peter Høeg was when he wrote the work in which she appears, but in any case she reads the footprints in the snow primarily as a Greenlandic hunter, not as a theoretical semiotician would. Frøken Smilla is the heroine of Peter Høeg's *Smilla's Sense of Snow* (*Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne*, 1992), a Danish bestseller which exhibits virtually every conceivable mode of semiosis and avenue of semiotic interpretation: from the examination of a corpse during autopsy to the analysis of X-ray photographs, from examples of indexically significant acoustic information to the interpretation of clothing, body-language and the Northern environment, from clues in the unearthing of a largescale conspiracy to the semiotic processing of scientific information of various kinds, including especially the ecological. In the following extract, the protagonist is not deciphering actual foot-prints in the snow, but photographs of them, hence there is an element of duplication to the indexicality. Smilla brings to bear on her incriminating material the kind of abductive 'acumen' that was also William of Baskerville's forte, though in this case with a somewhat different agenda.

> "There were tracks in the snow."
>
> Very few people know how to listen. Their haste pulls them out of the conversation, or they try internally to improve their situation, or they're preparing what their next speech will be when you shut up and it's their turn to take the stage.
>
> With one man standing in front of me it's different. When I talk, he listens without distraction to what I say, and only to what I say.
>
> "I read the report and looked at the pictures..."
>
> "Something else, something more."
>
> Now we're on our way into something which has to be said but can't be explained.
>
> "They were acceleration tracks. When you jump from snow or ice, there is a pronation in the ankle joint. As there is when you walk barefoot in the sand."
>
> I try to demonstrate the slight inward rotation with my wrist.
>
> "If the movement is too fast, not firm enough, there will be a little slip backwards."
>
> "As with every child who is playing..."

> "When you're used to playing in snow, you don't leave that kind of track, because that movement is not efficient, like faulty distribution of your weight going uphill cross-country skiing." [...]
>
> "Interesting", he says at last. "But also rather...insubstantial. It would be difficult to present this to a layman. Difficult to *base* anything on it."
>
> He is right. Reading snow is like listening to music. To describe what you've read is to try to explain music in writing (Høeg 1997: 44f.).

However, this is no mere duplicating illustration of the interplay between iconicity and indexicality in detective fiction, for running through Høeg's novel we find not just the clues-as-iconic/indexical-signs paradigm so popular in recent fiction, but also a cultural code which makes Smilla Jespersen's entire behaviour indexical of her Greenlandic origins, and as such forms a crucial part of a critique of things Danish and of Denmark's policy towards Greenland. One suspects that this level of indexicality is more vital to the novel Høeg hopes to have written than any trail of indexical clues could ever be.

One thing that is clear from the outset about these various indexical prints is that their full interpretation requires an awareness of the iconic and encoded (symbolic) principles of semiosis, not just the ability to register surface indexicality. Moreover, signs of this kind reveal much about the person deciphering them and in that respect acquire a further indexical function (which is in its turn not devoid of iconic elements). All this is a matter of semiotic interplay *thematized*, a literary phenomenon which I should like to continue looking at in my next section.

3. The literary thematization of the interplay between iconicity and indexicality

My first more elaborate illustration of the interplay between indexicality and iconicity in a literary context, Vladimir Nabokov's story "Signs and Symbols", has as its absent centre an unnamed young man, presented as "incurably deranged in his mind". "Man-made objects", we are told, "were to him either hives of evil, vibrant with a malignant activity that he alone could perceive, or gross comforts for which no use could be found in his abstract world" (Nabokov 1995: 598). His parents' problem, one which need not detain us here any more than it does the story's narrator, is the question of what can be safely given to such a disturbed soul as a present and how to handle the birthday visit to his nursing home. What interests me more than the ensuing emplotment is the pattern of multiple indexicality running through the narrative. First of all, there is the psychoanalytical evidence, doubly indexical in that symptoms are indices of a psychological state, and their recording functions as a further general indexical sign for a figure whom we never meet. The suicide-prone son's so-called "system of [...] delusions" (diagnosed by the fictive psychoanalyst Herman Brink as "referential mania" [599]) manifests itself in the following way: "the patient imagines that everything around him is a veiled reference to his personality and existence", the stress being specifically on every *thing*, since he "excludes real people from the conspiracy — because he considers himself to be so much more intelligent than other men" (599). What we are offered is a picture of someone suffering from a megalomaniacal sense of persecution, convinced that "he must be always on his guard and devote every minute and module of life to the decoding of the undulation of things" (600). While the reader is invited to ponder the significance of these various symptoms as indices of the patient's referential mania, the character himself decodes phenomena in another, far more idiosyncratic way: as evidence that "phenomenal nature shadows him wherever he goes". (As Eco [1976: 16] points out, within Peirce's scheme, non-intentional signs without a human sender can still be read indexically, and this is what we have a warped variant on in the case of such mental aberration.) Moreover, the patient's paranoid obsession typically displays a markedly iconic component, for the shape, movement and size of such wrongly posited indexical signs iconically governs their deranged interpretation.

> Clouds in the staring sky transmit to one another, by means of slow signs, incredibly detailed information regarding him. His inmost thoughts are discussed at nightfall, in manual alphabet, by darkly gesticulating trees. Pebbles or stains or sun flecks form patterns representing in some awful way messages which he must intercept. Everything is a cipher and of everything he is the theme. Some of the spies are detached observers, such as glass surfaces and still pools; others again (running water, storms) are hysterical to the point of insanity, have a distorted opinion of him, and grotesquely misinterpret his actions (599f.).

Nabokov then gives his material a further twist — and an indexically oriented one, at that — by having the figure's mother, after his latest birthday suicide-attempt, take out her photos of him and work through a series of snapshots chronologically documenting the way his "little phobias" have gradually "hardened [...] into a dense tangle of logically interacting illusions, making him totally inaccessible to normal minds" (601). This last remark is a dig at Herman Brink the analyst who (assumed by Nabokov to be professionally as abnormal as his patient) cannot see what the photographs tell the average reader: namely, that the couple's offspring is suffering from a paranoia that is fundamentally the result of the very real historical crises and threats he has lived through. The mother's collection of photos thus assumes a hybrid iconic-indexical status within the narrative, not just in Sebeok's generic sense, but because they can be said to both *iconically* represent moments from the disturbed son's past and, as *indices*, furnish a new aetiology for the patient's progressive delusions. It is not easy to tell from Nabokov's title which are the work's *signs* and which its *symbols*; but it is clear that two indexical-cum-iconic systems, the one abnormal, the other a familiar part of our own turbulent world, are being played off against each other.

This deployment of extreme examples of what might be called 'dysfunctional semiosis' (either explicitly or by implication juxtaposed with our normal semiotic behaviour) can also be seen to characterize my next example. However, before turning to it, I should like to point out that the features under discussion here relate to aspects of the semiotic significance of schizophrenia to which Charles Morris had drawn attention in 1938. At one point in *Foundations of the Theory of Signs* he writes:

> A particularly interesting aberration of the semiotical processes takes place in certain phenomena studied by psychopathology. Signs normally take the place of objects they designate only to a limited extent: but if for various reasons interests cannot be satisfied in the objects themselves, the signs come more and more to take the place of the object. In the aesthetic sign this development is already evident, but the interpreter does not actually confuse the sign with the object it designates: the described or painted man is called a man, to be sure, but with more or less clear recognition of the sign status — it is only a painted or described man. In the magical use of signs, the distinction is less clearly made: operations on the sign vehicle take the place of operations on the more elusive object. In certain forms of insanity [...] the troublesome world of existences is pushed aside, and the frustrated interests *get what satisfaction they can* in the domain of signs, oblivious in varying degrees to the restrictions of consistency and verifiability imposed by the syntactical and semantical dimensions. *The field of psychopathology offers great opportunities for applications of, and contributions to, semiotic* (Morris 1938: 42, my emphasis).

Eco (1997: 4) makes a comparable point when he declares that "semiotics can study rules as well as processes — including those processes which do not follow rules". What I have termed 'dysfunctional semiosis' is just one such process that does not follow the normal rules.

4. Dysfunctional semiosis

While the kind of 'referential mania' we have just been considering in the case of Nabokov's "Signs and Symbols" hardly looks like a gratificatory strategy, in Morris's sense, we are at least dealing with the same — now often frightening — disjunction between sign and meaning that he talks about. And from Kafka onwards, such disjunctions have played a major role in the twentieth century's literature of angst. In fact, one of the most thorough-going cases of dysfunctional semiosis in recent European literature is a figure called Josef Bloch, the protagonist of a 1970 novel by the Austrian writer Peter Handke, a disturbing work with, tellingly, the word 'Angst' in its title: *Die Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter* (translated into English as *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*).

Bloch is a schizophrenic who, having committed a murder near the beginning of the novel, becomes the object of a police hunt. However, his real semiotic attraction lies in the complex nature of his medical condition. Indeed, its various symptoms are guaranteed to quicken any semiotician's pulse-rate, for Bloch's relation to the world around him, one which operates according to familiar socially established semiotic conventions, can best be described as severely *dislocated*. Verbal communication becomes progressively more aggravated and Bloch even finds it difficult to distinguish between signs and non-signs *of any kind*. The very first sentence of the novel has him arriving at work one day to be "told that he was fired", or rather that "that was at least how *he* interpreted the fact that no one except the foreman looked up from his coffee break" when he arrived that morning.[7] As a result, having misinterpreted a non-signal as a sign, he simply leaves. As the novel puts it of his next mishandling of a semiotic situation:

> Auf der Straße hob er den Arm, aber das Auto, das an ihm vorbeifuhr, war — wenn Bloch den Arm gar nicht um ein Taxi gehoben hatte — kein Taxi gewesen. Schließlich hörte er vor sich ein Bremsgeräusch: Bloch drehte sich um: hinter ihm stand ein Taxi, der Taxifahrer schimpfte: Bloch drehte sich wieder um, stieg ein ... (7).

> When he was on the street, he raised his arm, but the car that passed him —

> even though Bloch had not been hailing a taxi — was not a taxi. Finally, he heard the sound of brakes in front of him. Bloch turned around: behind him there was a taxi; the driver was swearing; Bloch turned around, got in ...

Now, someone who makes the gesture of hailing a cab when he does not want one, or who gets into a taxi which he didn't hail, even when the cab-driver is cursing him, would seem — to put it mildly — to be dispensing with the conventionalized signs necessary for effective social exchange. Yet such a person is not necessarily mad. When it comes to *symbolic* signs of this kind, much of Josef Bloch's behaviour appears merely eccentric rather than downright deranged. When someone in an empty pub takes down an upturned seat from a table for him to sit on, he promptly takes down a second one and proceeds to sit on it. Bloch even confesses to having an idiosyncratic method of counting. Thus, he asks someone:

> bei welcher Zahl denn sie zu zählen anfange. [...] Bloch sagte, seit kurzem beobachtete er an sich die Gewohnheit, mit dem Zählen erst bei zwei anzufangen: heute morgen zum Beispiel sei er beim Überqueren der Straße beinahe unter ein Auto gekommen, weil er gemeint habe, bis zum zweiten Auto noch genug Zeit zu haben: das erste Auto habe er einfach nicht mitgezählt (50).

> what number she started counting at. [...] Bloch said that recently he had noticed that he was in the habit of starting to count only at the number two; this morning, for instance, he had almost been run over by a car while crossing the road because he thought he had sufficient time until the second car; he'd simply not counted in the first one.

Strange as such a habit may seem, Bloch's schizophrenia only really begins to assume semiotically intriguing dimensions less in the area of mishandled *symbolic signs* than when it comes to his *iconic* and *indexical* interaction with his environment. Here are just two typical sequences, the first involving indexical speculations about a non-sign, the second an iconic reading of a sign which is normally, at best, a token of hospitality.

> Der Deckel der Kohlenkiste im Schulzimmer war aufgeklappt, in der Kiste konnte man (ein Aprilscherz!) den Stiel der Kohlenschaufel sehen, dazu den Fußboden mit den breiten Brettern, der in den Ritzen vom Aufwaschen noch feucht war, nicht zu vergessen die Landkarte an der Wand, das Waschbecken neben der Tafel [...]; eine einzige schlechte Nachahmung! Auf diese Aprilscherze würde er nicht hineinfallen (98).

> In the classroom the lid of the coal-box was open, and in the box the handle of the shovel could be seen (an April Fool's trick!), and the floor with the wide boards, the cracks still wet from mopping, not forgetting the map on the wall, the basin next to the blackboard [...] *one single cheap imitation. No, he would not let himself be tricked by foolish pranks like these* (my italics).

To misinterpret items of everyday reality as playful strategems in an April Fool's practical joke being played on one is — again, to put no finer point on it — essentially misguided semiotic behaviour; the observed details ostensibly form the indexical 'evidence' (the novel even refers to reality as a set of "Indizien" [83]) that some malevolent agent is playing games with one; but the distorting paranoia with which an *open* coal bucket or a *protruding* shovel are read as 'tricks' also contains a warped iconic component, for the openness might bear associations of a gaping hostile mouth or an unknown space, and the shovel may be suggestive of an offensive weapon.

In my second example the iconicity of the assumed signals has become more pronounced, but again elements of iconicity and indexicality are interacting, the signals assumed once more being interpreted as both intentional and qualitatively motivated:

> Was sollte er an dem Blitzableiter ablesen? 'Blitzableiter'? Das war wieder ein Wortspiel? Hieß es, daß ihm nichts passieren konnte? Oder wurde angedeutet, daß er der Pächterin alles erzählen sollte? Und warum hatten die Kekse dort auf dem Holzteller die Form von Fischen? Auf was spielten sie an? Sollte er 'stumm wie ein Fisch' sein? Durfte er nicht weiterreden? Sollten ihm die Kekse auf dem Holzteller das andeuten? Es war, als ob er das alles nicht sah, sondern es irgendwo, von einem Plakat mit Verhaltensmaßregeln, ablas (109).

> How should he interpret the lightning rod? 'Lightning rod'? Was that another word-game? Did it mean that nothing could happen to him? Or did it indicate that he should tell the landlady everything? And why were the biscuits on the wooden plate fish-shaped? What were they trying to tell him? Should he be 'silent as a fish'? Was he not allowed to talk? Was that what the biscuits on the wooden plate were trying to communicate to him? It was as if he did not see any of this, but was reading it off a poster containing a list of regulations.

Handke's eerie evocation of dysfunctional semiosis, involving a widespread confusion of elements of surface reality with iconic, indexical and symbolic information and the inability to distinguish between sign and non-sign can, of course, be viewed as a defamiliarizing version of our shared codes and systems of social intercourse. Given the semiotic thrust of much of Handke's novel, one might see it as an exploration — by means of a deviant example — of the regulative function of signs in society and of the price paid, when the symbolic is confused with the iconic or when some non-existent indexical pattern is imagined.

Handke once wrote the following about the method employed in this particular novel:

> das Prinzip war, zu zeigen, wie sich jemandem die Gegenstände, die er wahrnimmt, infolge eines Ereignisses (eines Mordes) immer mehr versprachlichen und, indem die Bilder versprachlicht werden, auch zu Geboten und Verboten werden. Beispiel aus einer Abhandlung über *Die beginnende Schizophrenie*: ein 'Schizophrener' sieht ein Stück Käse unter einer Käseglocke liegen (ein Bild), und aus diesem Käse treten Tropfen hervor (ein Bild): statt nun aber es beim Sehen der Bilder zu lassen, sieht der Schizophrene gar nicht die Bilder allein, sondern nimmt sofort deren Übersetzung in Sprache wahr: 'Der Käse schwitzt!': d.h. er, der etwas sieht, *soll* schwitzen, das wird ihm dadurch angedeutet (Norm), d.h. er soll sich mehr anstrengen, mehr konzentrieren, mehr arbeiten. Der Schizophrene nimmt also die Gegenstände als Anspielung auf sich, als 'Wortspiele' wahr, metaphorisch. Das ist das Prinzip der Erzählung ... (Handke 1969: 3).[8]

> the principle was to show how, as a result of an event (a murder), objects which he perceives become more and more verbalized for someone and, as the visual images are translated into language, they even assume the role of commands or prohibitions. To give an example from a treatise on *Incipient Schizophrenia*: a 'schizophrenic' sees a piece of cheese lying under a glass bell (a visual image) and from this cheese drops of moisture emerge (a visual image): but instead of leaving it at the registering of visual images the schizophrenic not only sees the images, he immediately also perceives them as translated into words. 'The cheese is sweating!', i.e. he, seeing something, *should* himself sweat, this is what is being indicated to him (a norm), i.e. he should exert himself more, concentrate more, work more. The schizophrenic thus perceives objects as references to himself, as 'word-plays' or metaphors. That is the principle of the narrative ...

At the meta-fictional level, two extended sign-dependent patterns inform the narrative: the paradigm of the detective novel (again, as was the case in *The Name of the Rose*, being used as a metaphor for the subject's relationship to the world) and that of a case-history of deteriorating schizophrenia. The psychiatric text-books he had studied in preparation for writing *The Goalie's Anxiety* had made Handke well aware of the iconic element at the root of many schizophrenic delusions. Hence, his hero considers the defensive ploy of referring to people synecdochically by one of their features or accessories: using an earring as a "signal for the entire person" ("ein Signal für die ganze Person", as he puts it, 84) he feels he can dominate her. Elsewhere, simply by saying to her "you handbag!" ("Du Handtasche!", 85), he can keep threatening reality at bay. His general confusion of objects with their prices, his compulsion to think semiotically of things as "advertisements for themselves" ("Reklame für sich selber", 56) and his debilitating assumption that reality is significant "only in a figurative sense" ("nur im übertragenen Sinn", 72) and that it hence wilfully eludes his comprehension or functions as a joke or a word-play that is beyond him — all such symptoms have a pronounced iconic ingredient to their dysfunctionalism. In other words, because iconicity is being *falsely* imputed to phenomena, Bloch's act of misreading itself becomes cumulatively indexical: as the extended symptomology of a mental derangement which brings about the collapse of normal semiosis.

Although Bloch inflicts the repercussions of his referential mania on various people around him, Handke's main focus is on the disease as experienced by his protagonist. For an example of a comparable case of dysfunctional semiosis, this time presented from the victim's perspective, one would have to turn to Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* (1997). McEwan's novel is a powerful evocation of what it feels like to be on the receiving end of another person's obsession, a homoerotic fixation strengthened by the messianic conviction that the involvement is all part of God's purpose. As the following passage from one of his letters suggests, Jed Parry's delusions concerning the hero Joe Rose are less linguistic in character than was the case with Handke's Bloch:

> When you came out of your house yesterday evening and you brushed the top of the hedge with your hand — I didn't understand at first. I went down the path and put out my own hand and fingered the leaves that you had touched. I felt each one and it was a shock when I realised it was different from the ones you handn't touched. There was a glow, a kind of burning on my fingers along the edges of those wet leaves. Then I got it. You had touched them in a certain way, in a pattern that spelled out a simple message. Did you really think I would miss it, Joe! (McEwan 1997: 96).

As in Nabokov's depiction of referential mania, nature, gestures, innocent activities all assume iconical status — but are also interpreted indexically, this time as indices of a misconstrued "enduring love". In fact, despite the iconic component to McEwan's depiction of dysfunctional semiosis, the stress is much more centrally on the symptoms' indexicality as signs of a mental derangement. Jed Parry is presented as suffering from de Clérambault's Syndrome and the work repeatedly juxtaposes Parry's manic reading of what he takes to be the protagonist's secret signs to him with Joe Rose's own amateur decoding of the medical symptoms. And the reader is also invited to engage in an act of diagnosis, for the novel concludes with a quasi-academic appendix using an article on the condition from the *British Review of Psychiatry*, reinforced by a bibliography and a case study. Again, medical diagnosis and the false sign-systems of referential mania are juxtaposed as two forms of semiosis.

5. Extending the repertoire: Futurism's exploitation of the interplay between iconicity and indexicality

The second category of material relating to the interplay between iconicity and indexicality does not entail any explicit thematizing of the difference between various sign-types. What we can observe in this case is more a matter of their use to extend a work's stylistic repertoire. My sole illustration, a collage-poem by the Italian Futurist F. T. Marinetti cumbersomely entitled *Le soir, couchée dans son lit, elle relisait la lettre de son artilleur au front* (Marinetti 1919: 103), is one of the classic visual literary experiments of the early avant-garde. It is not difficult to identify a variety of iconic elements in what is above all a poem in praise of war: iconicity is evidently present not only in the work's explosive shape and in the way individual letters of the alphabet fragment, but also in the use of thickness of typography and of size to signify the volume of bombardment experienced and in the presence of various onomatopoeic sequences (some being acoustic neologisms).

Semiotic studies of Futurist typographical experiments have tended to dwell on the *shape*-aspect, often concentrating on the iconicity of outline alone. But Marinetti's *Le soir* (Figure 2) is more richly iconic than such a visual approach would suggest. Positioning, for instance, plays an iconic role here, with the various bold images of battle being valorized by their place at the centre of the work, while the much smaller figure of the woman reader is confined to the periphery. An equally significant feature is the interplay between not just iconic and symbolic sign-elements, but — more innovatively — between iconicity and

Figure 2. *Marinetti's* Le soir

indexicality. The deictic aspect of the poem's full title[9] already draws attention to such an interaction: *Le soir, couchée dans son lit, elle relisait la lettre de son artilleur au front*. As this at once suggests, we actually need other signs to alert us to the possibility of indexicality. The letter mentioned in Marinetti's title is not depicted in the bottom righthand corner, but *is* evoked indexically by the reading posture the outline figure has adopted. This 'letter' — absent in the bottom righthand corner, but present as a *symbol* in the work's title — has two distinct plot-functions: as an index of the soldier's affection (it is no doubt meant as a token of the fact that the writer is still "*her* artilleryman") and, of great ideological importance to the Italian Futurists, as an index of his presence "at the front". (Moreover, one could even read the title's stress on her re-reading the letter as an indication of her function: if the first reading earlier in the day merely served to reassure that he was still alive, the *re*-reading gives her the opportunity to savour the content of his communication from the front.) The central part of the collage contains iconically explosive images of battle, but also complete slogan-like non-motivated words such as "simultaneità", "esplosione" and the phrase "guerra ai tedescofili!". Even if the word "futurista" had not been included, the other words would have sufficed to communicate (once more, indexically) something not stated in the title: i.e. the unmistakable fact that the author of the letter is a Futurist. That the artilleryman is not actually depicted puts the stress very much on the way the letter serves as an indexical sign for him. All three sign functions (the symbolic, the iconic and the indexical) combine here to communicate the Futurist experience of combat.

But there are also central ambiguities to Marinetti's collage. The main body of the centre-text can be read in a number of ways: as sign of the experiences which he had had *before* he wrote his letter, or as a replica of the letter itself (literally a letter-poem, and perhaps, read punningly, one largely composed of fragmented letters of the alphabet), or conceivably as a likeness of what is conjured up in the mind's eye by what is currently being read. If one assumes that the soldier has actually sent a Futurist shaped letter-poem, then this configuration could even be interpreted — indexically — as a sign of the fact that battle has made conventional *symbolic* language an anachronism and that poetry of a new kind is required to do justice to the experience of modern warfare. If, on the other hand, we are being offered an iconic representation of what the letter conjures up in the reader's imagination, then the collage functions as an indexical sign (part-iconic, part-symbolic and in further ways working with indices) for the letter's representamen. Whichever way we opt to interpret the centre of the work, we are still dealing with some combination of iconic super-sign and an indexical indication of its optimal reception. That is to say: the emblem of 'her' lying face downwards on her bed (either an erotic pose or an indication that she is deliberately blocking out any other interfering signals) indicates, through body-language, much about her attitude to both the letter-writer and the subject of his letter. And since we are not at the front, we are being offered an emblematic indication of what our attitude to both letter and collage (signed by Marinetti, as if he were signing his own letter from the front) should ideally be!

Now, Futurist experiments of this kind are usually interpreted as *prima facie* evidence of one of the key assumptions of early modernism: that an increase in iconicity axiomatically enriches literature (the Futurists talked of making language "more expressive"). But here we have seen a repertoire being enhanced, not just by means of a powerful injection of iconicity, but by the complex possibilities of interplay between all three sign-categories and ambiguities of status. Marinetti was clearly interested in exploiting forms of interaction between the iconic potential of shaped printed language and other forms of visual and acoustic iconicity; and there are grounds to assume he had an intuitive sense of how expressive experiments were at least partly a matter of indexical play. In his manifesto "Geometric and Mechanical Splendour and the Numerical Sensibility" (1914), Marinetti makes the following comment about what is evidently an indexically construed function for Futurist onomatopoeia: "In my 'Contraband of War', in *Zang tumb tumb*, the strident onomatopoeia *ssiiiiii* presents the whistle of a tug on the River Meuse and is followed by the muted onomatopoeia *ffiiiii ffiiiii*, an echo from the opposite bank. The two onomatopoeias save me from having to describe the width of the river, which is defined by the contrast between the two consonants *s* and *f*" (translated from Marinetti 1968: 90). Yet to equate iconicity — or even icon-index interplay — with an inevitable gain in expressive potential would seem to perpetuate a fallacy, one which can only continue to impede research into *which kinds* of iconicity are effective and in what contexts of semiotic interplay. As a corrective, my final perspective concerns an aesthetic context where pronounced iconicity is the norm and hence one would hardly be tempted automatically to over-value the iconic component. I am referring to drama and film.

6. Indexical iconic elements in film

David Hare's 1988 film *Paris by Night* ends melodramatically with the shooting of the negatively presented Thatcherite politician Clara Paige by her aggrieved MP husband Gerald. A complex amalgam of political satire, emotional drama at the family level, a triangular relationship and an improbable murder-plot, *Paris by Night* reaches its logical climax in all four respects with this one act, for here the "good-guy" politician who loves his son revenges himself (and society) on the selfish, hypocritical Conservative careerist-wife who has betrayed him. The published screenplay's account of the final sequence leaves little doubt about what genre is being quoted:

> [Gerald] *lifts the gun, points it at his own head. But then he turns towards* [Clara] *and fires. A tremendous blast* [it's an old army revolver], *which hits her in the chest and throws her against the wall. He fires four more times at her. Blood and bones against the wall. She reels like a puppet with each shot* (Hare 1988: 82).

Yet for all its stylistic pastiche, *Paris by Night* is essentially a film in a dominantly realist mode: it contains as much closely observed documentation as that other devastating chronicle of the Thatcher Years, John Mortimer's *Paradise Postponed*. If one were to analyse even this one concluding sequence using the thirteen sign-systems in Tadeuz Kowzan's *Littérature et spectacle*,[10] one would detect a high iconicity quotient in all respects. (And not just in the sense that virtually all film and drama deals with real actors standing as signs for *dramatis personae* in three-dimensional settings and engaged in replicas of human activity.) But what the now extensive body of writing on the semiotics of theatre and film — only some of it Peircean in persuasion — tends to underestimate is the vital indexical component of even such highly iconic presentations. I will therefore conclude with one or two examples from the end of *Paris by Night* in support of my contention that it may help to see aesthetic iconicity within the further context of indexicality.

When the figure of Clara Paige (played by Charlotte Rampling) slumps, shot, to the floor what we see (film and screenplay diverge in this respect) is not in fact "*blood and bones*", but the half-lit picture of her neglected son Simon behind her on the wall. The framed photograph serves as a reminder of the son's (as well as the father's) having been betrayed during Clara Paige's affair in Paris. A portrait-picture hanging in a home always signifies a relationship, but which of the two parents put it there — or still treasures it, even if it once meant much to both of them — in this case generates different indexical readings: if the father did, then it is a mark of affection, if the mother was responsible for its being there, then this surely becomes just one further token of her hypocrisy (like the presents she earlier brings back from her guilt-laden Paris trip, a trip that develops into an amorous adventure that deflects her attentions from her sick child, as previously her political career had done). The five loud shots are doubly iconic: for their number and volume are an iconic token of the passion that lurks, hitherto largely unexpressed, beneath the impassive exterior of Michael Gambon's Gerald Paige. But as its final symptomatic expression, they can also be viewed as indices. They, and my concluding illustration from the film, the final image of the son Simon (played by Jonathan White) waking up startled as if telepathically sensing what has happened (a classic example of Birdwhistell's kinesics as indexicality, this time reinforced by freezing the shot and holding it for some time before the credits roll), show that in the performing arts it is even possible to have an interplay between iconicity and indexicality with no language component intervening at all.

Notes

1. Peirce's concept of 'abduction' and the relevance of his second trichotomy of signs to an understanding of categories of clues have remained more distinct branches of semiotics than one might have expected, given the surge of interest in both the semiotics of detection and Eco's indebtedness to Peirce in the wake of *The Name of the Rose* and his *Theory of Semiotics*. Instructive in this respect are the majority of approaches in Eco and Sebeok 1983. This volume contains, *inter alia*, a number of essays with a close bearing on semiotic features of Eco's first novel. Carlo Ginzburg's "Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes. Clues and Scientific Method" explores examples of the abductive interpretation of tracks to establish what kind of animal made them. And Eco himself, with his commentary on the role of hoof-prints in Voltaire's *Zadig* ("Horns, Hooves, Insteps: Some Hypotheses on Three Types of Abduction") analyses much material that will appear, in fictionalized form, in the early part of *The Name of the Rose*. But as Eco's sub-title suggests, his focus is also primarily on abductive procedures, not on considering the types of sign being thus decoded. For a detailed account of the Peircean conception of 'abduction', see Fann (1970)
2. On the principal differences between Peirce and Morris, even when they are employing the same terminology, see Sebeok (1991: 75f. and 119–38).

3. Quoted from Rector 1986: 447. While a large body of semiotic literary critics of a Peircean persuasion do pay lip-service to notions of sign-function (rather than sign) and to the hybrid nature of all forms of semiosis, in practice they tend to operate with the simplifying nouns 'icon', 'index' and 'symbol'.

4. Cf. Liszka's so-called "dominance rule" (1996: 46), i.e. the tendency for each sign to be equated in shorthand fashion with its dominant constituent. Thus, "in ordinary discussion of the sign, one of the three aspects may come to represent the entire sign. For example, Peirce argues that the most fundamental trichotomy of signs is the division into icon, index, and symbol [...], and often many use these aspects to represent the entire sign" (Liszka 1996: 46). By contrast, Morris (1946: 7.2) argues that "iconicity is a matter of degree".

5. Although, as Liszka puts it, strictly speaking "a sign can only become a sign if it is interpreted as such" (1996: 116), differences about whether one is dealing with actual properties of the sign, the sign's intended meaning or *ways of reading* potential signs are nevertheless something which appears to bedevil interdisciplinary discussions between semioticians proper, linguisticians and literary scholars. Eco (1976: 216, 158) argues that "*it is the very notion of the sign which is untenable*", the sign is a "linguistic fiction whose place should be taken by that of sign-function".

6. The following remark by Peirce in *The Simplest Mathematics* set the ball rolling, of course: "That footprint that Robinson Crusoe found in the sand, and which has been stamped in the granite of fame, was an Index to him that some creature was on the island, and at the same time, as a Symbol, called up the idea of a man" (4.531). Cf. also Peirce's more general remark that "insofar as the Index is affected by the Object, it necessarily has some quality in common with the Object [...], it does, therefore, involve a sort of Icon, although an Icon of a peculiar kind; and it is not the mere resemblance of its Object, even in these respects which makes it a sign, but it is the actual modification of it by the Object" (2.248). These points about the indexical print are developed and presented more clearly in Eco (1976: 221–24). Cf. Eco's remarks (1983a: 211) concerning the synecdochic nature of imprints: "a hoof mark reproduces the form of the bottom of the hoof and can be correlated to the class of horses only by a further link. [...] the code can list imprints at different levels of pertinence, that is, an imprint can be correlated either to a genus or to a species. Zadig, for instance, does not only recognize 'dog' but also 'spaniel', and not only 'horse' but also (due to an inference about the distance between the marks) 'stallion'". This is echoed in a passage in *The Name of the Rose* where Brother William declares in his account of the abductive process: "I found myself halfway between the perception of the concept 'horse' and the knowledge of an individual horse" (Eco 1983b: 28). This remark is based on Peirce's contention (4.56) that whereas icons signify types, indices are concerned with specific objects. See Goudge (1965) on the implications of this.

7. "Dem Monteur Josef Bloch [...] wurde, als er sich am Vormittag zur Arbeit meldete, mitgeteilt, daß er entlassen sei. Jedenfalls legte Bloch die Tatsache, daß bei seinem Erscheinen in der Tür der Bauhütte, wo sich die Arbeiter gerade aufhielten, nur der Polier von der Jause aufschaute, als eine solche Mitteilung aus" (Handke 1970: 7). English translations of quotations from *Die Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter* are my own.

8. The source-passage referred to here (Conrad 1958: 12) reads: "Als es Käse gab, an dem man die Fettropfen sah, zeigte man ihm dadurch, daß in dem Käse ein 'Schwitzmittel' sei: der Käse

schwitzte. Das bedeutete: auch er müsse sich einmal 'einsetzen'. Er wollte einen Kampf herbeiführen, um sich auch körperlich zu bewähren". In his paraphrase of Conrad's illustration, Handke has, with the introduction of a more pronounced linguistic dimension ("der Schizophrene [sieht] gar nicht die Bilder allein, sondern nimmt sofort auch deren Übersetzung in Sprache wahr"), moved one step closer to the obsessive verbalization of various non-verbal putative signs which is the principal semiotic strategy of the entire novel.

9. For a consideration of the variant titles to this work and the significance of the one used in the version currently under discussion, see White (1990: 61–64).

10. The sign-systems listed (Kowzan 1975: 182ff.) are: words, tone, music, gesture, movement, make-up, hairstyle, costume, accessories, scenery, lighting, music and noise. De Marinis (1993) offers a survey of recent semiotic approaches to theatrical semiosis, but with a greater emphasis on the element of codification.

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Iconicity in Literature

Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Prose Writing

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1. Defining iconicity historically

Saussure grudgingly allowed onomatopoeia to be a minimal case of iconicity in language, an example of a similarity relation operating between the linguistic sign and some entity lying outside the linguistic arena (Saussure 1974: 69–70). Structuralist linguistics, however, proceeded on the assumption that the linguistic sign was arbitrary; and it has not been until the more recent expansion of cognitive linguistics that the role of iconicity in language has become clearer. Linguists have loosened their definitions of what might legitimately constitute a similarity relation, and become more sophisticated in defining types of 'meaning'. Work by John Haiman in the 1980s on iconic syntax (Haiman 1985a, 1985b), and more recent studies of sound symbolism (Hinton et al. 1994), illustrate the importance of iconicity for understanding basic impulses behind language formation and language change.

Haiman characterised iconicity in 1992 as a set of "signs whose meaning in some crucial way resembles their form" (Haiman 1992: 2.191). The looseness of this definition is perhaps one of its virtues, allowing as it does creative imagination to suggest a range of forms, meanings, and potential resemblance relationships between them. This means types of iconicity may be identified that range from basic onomatopoeia to complex relations between syntax and mental concept-structures.

Because the linguistic exploration of iconicity has resulted in a relatively unified concept amenable to a series of quite different realisations, literary critics and stylisticians interested in literary iconicity have been able to draw on the same flexibility of definition. Katie Wales's definition of iconicity in her *Dictionary of Stylistics* achieves the same open-endedness as Haiman's more strictly linguistic one: literature "can be regarded as iconic in the broad sense that its FORM may strive to IMITATE in various ways the reality it presents" (Wales 1989: 226). The "various ways" are made available without restrictions; and although this will always prompt sceptics to claim iconicity-tracking in literature is a game without rules, its merit is that it helps open up the age-old literary ideal of form/function correspondence to serious linguistic investigation at a number of different levels.

This investigation needs to proceed carefully, however. Simply to define 'iconicity' and then to locate examples in literary texts and gloss their internal literary function is, in my opinion, insufficient. Such an approach lacks a *historical* awareness that might allow us to get a sense of what that iconic usage means to an author, an audience, a period; what functions it may or may not perform; whether it is normal or abnormal, unusual or even impossible in texts of a period, and why. What is more, placing examples of iconicity into a historical context means engaging with the beliefs about language and reality circulating at the time. Do examples of iconicity spotted by the modern critic match up with *contemporary* expectations about what could count as a match between 'sound and sense', 'form and meaning'? Do contemporary theories of sound/sense relations include or exclude certain kinds of connections that we would now label iconic? How close is the link between critical ideas about sound/sense relations and actual iconic practices of a period? Where did contemporary critical ideas about such relations (and the terminology used to characterise them) come from? All these are issues which complicate the unsophisticated game of literary iconicity-spotting and force a historical perspective into our work.

Gérard Genette (1976) provides a very useful general survey of the history of ideas about form/meaning relations in linguistic thought across the centuries. But this historical perspective has only fitfully been applied to the literary study of iconicity. I have attempted this kind of approach in some earlier work (Alderson 1996); other writers whose work seems to me to be a model of the historical frameworking of iconicity in literature include Bernhart (1986) and, further back, Mace (1951). Both writers turn their attention to historical iconic practices to show what these practices meant to the culture in which they were used — their extra-literary function, as it were — and how and why they changed. Bernhart, for example, shows how the relation between poetic rhythm and meaning was continually rethought and relabelled over time, so that the form/meaning relationship at work was in fact historically variable, and very different modes of iconicity were invoked and privileged in different periods.

The present paper restricts its range to a few examples of iconicity in some eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prose texts. It thus makes no claims to being a genuine historical survey, but merely pulls out a few sample texts as a way of making a series of points on the relation between iconic theory and practice, the connection between iconicity in poetry and in prose, and the kinds of changes in thought and practice that occurred between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These are points designed to emphasise the importance of using a historical approach when locating and analysing iconicity in literary texts.

2. Eighteenth-century prose iconicity: theory

A basic point about eighteenth-century literary theorising on iconicity is that the model of iconicity and the terminology and the definitions used by critics were all significantly limited. The precedent of Pope had established some sort of critical vocabulary for talking about literary iconicity; specifically the dictum: "The *Sound* must seem an *Eccho* to the *Sense*" (Pope 1963: 155). But just what these terms meant and how the relation between them was to be imagined was far from clear, particularly when it came to applying the principle to prose writing. For John Lawson, sound echoing sense meant a kind of verisimilitude when it came to representing 'the passions' in first-person writing:

> 'The Sound should be conformable to the Sense'. Every Passion hath its peculiar Stile: Grief speaketh in broken disjointed Accents: Anger bursteth out impetuously in a Torrent of words, ready, quick, rapid, redundant. Joy expresseth itself in Numbers light and flowing, full of Chearfulness and Vivacity... (Lawson 1758: 240).

If the 'sense' involved indicating the emotional state of a speaker through his or her utterances, 'sound' involved certain rhythmical speech habits naturally associated with the emotions.

Despite appropriating Popeian vocabulary, though, Lawson's discussion does not take us very far. His focus here is in fact on the Peircean concept of the indexical sign, and falls outside true iconicity. Eighteenth-century concepts of sound echoing sense tended to include indexical signs, even in Pope's own usage, and this is itself an interesting historical fact: the modern notion of iconicity demands more rigorous distinctions between iconic, indexical and symbolic signs than eighteenth-century critics were able to make. A side effect of this eighteenth-century inclusiveness was the focus (even in critics of prose writing) on accurately representing the passions in apt language, and a consequent neglect of other kinds of sound/sense relations which are more truly iconic but were largely unrepresented within the available critical models of sound and sense.

The interest in the passions did take on an iconic dimension, however, when critics shifted attention from representing the passions of fictional characters to describing the general emotional impact of a piece of text (the 'sense') and correlating this with rhythmic features of the prose writing (the 'sound'). Here is an example from the critic John Mason:

> You should endeavour not only to introduce the best Numbers, but those that best suit the Subject they describe; and vary them as that varies, e.g. Grave and solemn Subjects should move in slow and stately Spondees; Passions run off quick in Pyrrhic; what is strong and alarming is best expressed in Iambic, and what is soft and tender in Trochaic Measure: ... This is no less true in Prosaic than Poetic Composition (Mason 1749: 69).

Once form is conceived as appropriate to "Subject" rather than to individual first-person utterances, we are dealing with one perceived type of iconicity. In fact, Mason here retains an indexical example ("Passions run off quick in *Pyrrhic*"); but otherwise he refers either to generic expectations ("Grave and solemn Subjects") or to generalised emotive values attached to specific subject material ("what is strong and alarming ... what is soft and tender"). If the text sets up a narrative *mood*, in other words — of foreboding, or horror, or pleasure in the reader — then that mood should be mirrored in the textual form also; or, as Mason himself puts it, "And be the Sense what it will, the Words should in some Degree be an Eccho to it, in Prose as well as Verse" (ibid. p.18).

Overall, Mason's use of the term 'sense' proves variable, while 'sound' is limited to prose rhythm. His critical model is designed to locate only a very restricted type of iconicity — so restricted, in fact, that it is doubtful whether he actually found any examples in English, a language in which 'prose rhythm' as it occurs in Greek or Latin texts is a dubious phenomenon. Mason took his examples either from English *poets*, or from classical prose writers of Greece and Rome. In other words, eighteenth-century critical perception of iconicity was more (nostalgically) prescriptive than descriptive. While we should perhaps not dismiss these eighteenth-century critical interests wholly, it is important to recognise that the mode of iconicity focused on was not one that had any apparent realisation in actual English prose texts of the period. And because of the critics' determined classical self-modelling, their iconicity agenda was largely set from the beginning, meaning that other kinds of iconic practices — however new, experimental, and striking they may have been — were not recognised as such and were accorded neither the critical vocabulary of 'sound and sense' nor the space for critical analysis and discussion. As a result, it is my impression that eighteenth-century prose iconicity remained experimental and piecemeal in its execution.

This is not to say, however, that iconic practices exhibit a randomness or arbitrariness about them because they are not firmly anchored in a critical recognition and sanctioned vocabulary. Though they are experiments ungrounded in conventional literary theory, without conventionalised and prescriptive rationales, omitted by the dominant contemporary historical model for form/meaning relations, they do suggest certain types of typically eighteenth-century concerns and preoccupations.

3. Eighteenth-century prose iconicity: practices

One type of eighteenth-century prose iconicity derives from rhetoric, and is firmly syntactic in nature. We should at the outset note a problem about the relation of rhetoric to iconicity, one brought to the fore by Haiman. He included in his range of examples of iconicity at work the relation between ordered mental concepts and ordered verbal expression thereof: "Conceptual symmetry is one of the most easily and generally diagrammable ideas in language: devices for expressing balance, parallelism, and antithesis are among the standard tools of rhetoric in all languages" (Haiman 1985a: 73). This definition is perhaps stretching the concept of iconicity to its limits: some might argue that "conceptual symmetry" is neither reality nor ideas about reality, but simply the organisation of ideas — and 'organisation' involves selecting comparisons and contrasts that may or may not be valid ones. Contrasts and oppositions can be arbitrarily *imposed* upon ideas as much as they can arise out of any 'natural' relation between them.

The criticism I have sketched stands at the heart of the Romantic objection to the prose style of writers like Johnson. For many romantic critics, the style of a Johnson represented exactly a *failure* to ally form and meaning. Hazlitt in 1819 claimed: "the fault of Dr Johnson's style is, that ... it destroys all shades of difference, the association between words and things". That "association" is elsewhere characterised as a "fitness", when Hazlitt insists that "[Johnson's] periods ... have little fitness to the variety of things he professes to treat of" (Hazlitt 1970: 263, 262). Clearly, then, Hazlitt's concept of acceptable form/meaning relationships excluded the typically Johnsonian balance and antithesis. Parallelism of sound and syntax was viewed as an external, artificial grid imposed on the teeming diversity of fact and experience: 'conceptual' excluded 'experiential' and was allied with machines rather than (in typical Romantic fashion) organic growth. "The close of [Johnson's] period follows as mechanically as the oscillation of a pendulum, the sense is balanced with the sound" (ibid. p. 263). It seems Hazlitt is acutely aware here that "sound" is an abstract syntactic/conceptual form which imposes a false structure on reality.

Whatever we think about Haiman's association of rhetoric and iconicity (and there is still room for discussion), we can recognise that historically the formal, usually syntactic techniques of balance, parallelism and antithesis failed to satisfy either eighteenth-century or Romantic criteria for true sound-sense relations, though for different reasons in each case. Whether we still feel that it is profitable to analyse eighteenth-century rhetoric from an iconic perspective will depend on whether ultimately we agree with Haiman's analysis. Examples can be found, however, where balanced syntactic structures seem to be deliberately eschewed in favour of irregularity of an iconic order. Such examples of innovation can be found in possibly unexpected places. Dr Johnson is known as the scourge of iconicity — that is, of that variety of iconicity popularised by Pope. But his own practices can show apparent examples of a writer highly skilled with language who reflects on and plays around with words as he participates in the general atmosphere of debate on how words and the world connect up. Consider the following sentences from *Rasselas*:

> Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had reposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book which was itself concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperour, attended by the prince who stood next in succession (Johnson 1977: 4).

Here the syntax of heavy postmodification is well removed from traditional rhetorical styles involving balance and antithesis, and yet seems curiously apt given the subject of the sentences, which concern the act of hiding treasure at several removes from any possible recovery. This may be accidental: ultimately, we are not able to tell, because eighteenth-century criticism did not know how to focus on examples like this.

Besides an experimental iconicity of syntax, the other area where there is evidence of iconic practice in prose writing of the eighteenth-century has to do with the relation between narrative objects or events and physical book space. Sterne comes most immediately to mind here, using iconic techniques in new ways. On the one hand, he represents the world of his story iconically in the text by using pictures and diagrams (e.g. Sterne 1967: 453, 576). On the other hand, by making the book and its physical spaces the primary object, he manages to make iconicity work in reverse: the shapes of the book are realised by objects and events of the narrative. The *book* is the reality: the narrated 'real world' is iconic of that reality, being shaped to and imitative of the pages, chapter divisions, typographical styles of the volume it is contained by.

Other writers were also interested in the relation between the physical experiences of reading and writing and the narrative they created, and used iconic experimentation to explore this area. Fielding, for example, plays about with connections of word and world as early as the table of contents of *Tom Jones* (1749). As he develops his chapter headings, he alternates between chapter descriptions which refer to the physicality of the book being read, and headings which summarise plot events, as in the titles of chapters 1 and 9 of book IV, with their play on 'containing':

Ch. 1: Containing five Pages of Paper.
Ch. 9: Containing Matters of no very peaceable Colour.

Taking this one step further, Fielding correlates abstract features of narrative and physical features of text in his headings for two chapters in Book V:

Ch. 4: A little Chapter, in which is contained a little Incident.
Ch. 5: A very long Chapter, containing a very great Incident.

In some ways these examples draw on older genre expectations — that epics, which contain 'great incidents', are long, weighty, bulky, while stories of lesser importance warrant less space. But they transform those vague conventions by specifically invoking *physical* (book) space as a mirror for importance of narrative, in a way serious but nevertheless comic. Fielding, as Sterne was later to do, extends the range of 18th-century awareness of possible form/meaning relations by extending the scope of form and creating new similarity relations.

This very brief glimpse at styles of iconicity based on syntactic experimentation and in a heightened attention to the physicality of the book is designed simply to note the gap between theory and practice at this time, and to observe certain characteristics of that practice. One of these is the relatively unproblematic nature of the reality which is represented: this is not a complex internal or subjectivised reality, but a relatively straightforward link between fixed objects or events on the one hand and syntactic shapes or book shapes on the other. It is this feature of eighteenth-century prose iconicity that most noticeably changes in nineteenth-century prose.

4. Nineteenth-century prose iconicity

Romantic literary criticism, like eighteenth-century criticism, was interested in the relation between literary form and some kind of reality. As we might expect, though, the vocabulary of form/meaning correspondence and the definitions accorded to the terms are revealing of the strengths and limitations of contemporary critical thought. Romantic critics were more interested in expanding the concept of 'reality' to include a variable, personal subjectivity. This fact is important for understanding the Romantic enterprise, but not so useful for thinking about iconic practices of the period. It problematised a neat word-world dichotomy which matched up sounds in language to an external world reality or a series of well-defined internal 'passions', and instead focused on a supposed 'organic' integration in which sound and sense were inseparable expressions of an author's uniqueness. The critical move away from a dualist perspective is clear in De Quincey's comments on style:

> ...the more closely any exercise of mind is connected with what is internal and individual in the sensibilities, — that is, with what is philosophically termed *subjective*, — precisely in that degree, and the more subtly, does the style or the embodying of the thoughts cease to be a mere separable ornament, and in fact the more does the manner, as we expressed it before, become confluent with the matter (De Quincey 1890: 229).

The more 'subjective' the text, the more difficult does it become to speak of a 'reality' that is not significantly transformed by the mind of the speaker. And such subjectivity is ultimately unanalysable: for when the dualist model of iconicity is faced with one half of that dualism being infinitely flexible and changeable, what is left to say about form?

The consequence of this shift in understanding the nature of writing and the role of the author was a parallel shift in the interest attaching itself to relations between words and the world, reflected in actual iconic practices. The eighteenth-century experimentation with odd and ironic interconnections between words and a fairly stable internal and external 'world' was largely replaced by new exploration of the connection between writing and the reality of the author. De Quincey's example of "manner" becoming confluent with "matter" was an organic, unanalysable union between subjectivity and style. From this perspective, all writing which faithfully represents the mind of the author (i.e. is not merely stale and derivative) would count as iconic.

Of course the problem with this redefinition of iconicity is that it becomes unmanageable as a stylistic tool: indeed, ceases to be a stylistic tool and becomes instead a world-view. It is not difficult to see, however, that despite the privileging of the relation between language and mind at this time, authors did not stop being interested in the smaller-scale relation between events and objects and the mind, and how this relation might be represented in language. The difference, I would suggest, is that the relation between language and mind came first, and the physical 'real-world' events followed on from this primary relation. As an example, consider the following passage from Ruskin, a great nineteenth-century stylist whose style is so frequently charged with his enthusiasms and passions for his subject. Here he is writing to contrast Greek and Gothic architectural ornament:

> ...the Greek and Egyptian ornament is either mere surface engraving, as if the face of the wall had been stamped with a seal, or its lines are flowing, lithe and luxuriant; in either case, there is no expression of energy in the framework of the ornament itself. But the Gothic ornament stands out in prickly independence, and frosty fortitude, jutting into crockets, and freezing into pinnacles; here starting up into a monster, there germinating into a blossom, anon knitting itself into a branch, alternately thorny, bossy, and bristly, or writhed into every form of nervous entanglement; but, even when most graceful, never for an instant languid, always quickset: erring, if at all, ever on the side of brusquerie (Ruskin 1995: 227).

Is this passage iconic in the narrower sense mentioned above? Note that as Ruskin describes the complex attributes of Gothic ornament the phonetic texture thickens, the syntax expands in multiple complex non-finite clause patterns. In this respect there seems clearly to be some relation between the reality of Gothic ornament and the linguistic features of the text. And yet on closer inspection we must recognise that Gothic ornament is here being represented as a mind and a personality rather than an object. This is not the 'reality' of Gothic, but instead Gothic ornament presented as a metaphor for a certain kind of Northern European cultural mind-set, and this is evidenced by the language of personality used to describe it: "prickly independence", "nervous", "never languid", "brusque". My point is that in cases like this we are not looking at an older, 18th-century conception of sound echoing sense in operation. Sound echoes and reconstructs a mental state, and that mental state is in this case transferred onto an object by way of metaphor.

The same pattern is evident in an example of a much more narrative nature, this from Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859). Here he is describing the dramatic escape of the English party from Paris, the flight to the coast, and the threat of pursuit and capture that hangs over the group. Eventually they need to change their horses:

> Leisurely, our four horses are taken out; leisurely, the coach stands in the little street, bereft of horses, and with no likelihood upon it of ever moving again; leisurely, the new horses come into visible existence, one by one; leisurely, the new postilions follow, sucking and plaiting the lashes of their whips; leisurely, the old postilions count their money, make wrong additions, and arrive at dissatisfied results. All the time, our overfraught hearts are beating at a rate that would far outstrip the fastest gallop of the fastest horses ever foaled (Dickens 1988: 441).

Dickens works a simple iconic contrast of slowness and speed here: the slowness is represented by the five units beginning 'leisurely', and the speed by the final sentence with its series of postmodification and the strong rhythmic recreation of speed. And yet the speed/slowness contrast is not strictly a contrast of real-world states. Rather, speed and slowness reflect the mental state of the occupants of the carriage. "Leisurely" recreates the perceptions of the characters; the fast horses of the final sentence recreate the speed of their heartbeats and hence the fear possessing them. As with the example from Ruskin, we are not dealing here with a simple correlation between reality and language, but a situation where reality is mediated by the human mind: where, that is, the language in the first place recreates mental states and in the second place transfers these mental states onto, and into, objects of narrative.

5. Iconicity in history

What then is iconicity in literature? If we mean by this question, 'what kinds of relations between literary form and "reality" have been imagined and privileged by literary critics over the years?', the answer is many types, which have not necessarily reflected actual literary practices. At this level the interest of critics is a key to how different generations thought of literature and the expectations they had of it. It also provides a key to what historical readers actually saw in texts, what kinds of techniques were officially visible, and what vocabulary they used to describe what they saw.

If, on the other hand, we provide a broad definition of iconicity in advance and look for historical literary examples which fall within that definition, we get a different sort of picture. It is a picture of untheorised experimentation which nevertheless, under analysis, reflects certain kinds of contemporary expectations about what counts as reality, and how literary language can be made to match up to that reality. The differences in practices between periods make evident the changes in deeper assumptions about writing and reality held by writers. Rather than iconicity appearing as a decorative item, one or other form of which might be selected at random by writers over the centuries on no obvious principle of selection, a historical approach will enable us to chart motivations, ideals and impossibilities from writer to writer; and to recognise not only when genuine innovation is taking place, but also why.

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PART II

Sound and Rhythm

What, if Anything, is Phonological Iconicity?

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1. Introduction

Most discussions of iconicity in language contain substantial sections on phonological iconicity[1] (also called, variously, onomatopoeia, phonaesthesia, phonetic motivation or — most frequently — phonetic or sound symbolism), but very few actually tackle the problem of the exact nature of that phenomenon. The basics are clear: according to two recent definitions in handbooks, in sound symbolism "individual sounds are thought to reflect, or symbolize, properties of the world, and thus to 'have meaning'" (Crystal 1987: 174), or "a speech sound seems to correlate with an object in the real world" (Reay 1994: 4064). However, how exactly do sounds "reflect", "symbolize", or "correlate with" "the real world", how exactly can speech sounds be iconic? This is the question I want to address in this paper, and I will do so under three headings: my discussion will proceed from auditory to articulatory and, finally, to associative iconicity.

2. Auditory iconicity (non-lexical and lexical onomatopoeia)

The seemingly most straightforward case of phonological iconicity is constituted by a speech sound or speech sounds representing non-speech sounds or noises: *shshsh* may thus represent the rushing of wind or waves, *toc-toc* the knocking on a piece of wood, *miaow* the noise a cat makes. Such sounds basically imitate (more or less closely) what speakers hear; hence my term 'auditory iconicity'. When auditory iconicity, also called onomatopoeia, is discussed, it is customary to distinguish between non-lexical and lexical forms. *Shshsh* as the representation of a pure noise is non-lexical, while the verbs *shoo* ('to scare or drive away (fowls, etc.) by calling out 'shoo'', *OED*) or *swoosh* ('to make a noise expressed by the syllable 'swoosh'', *OED*) and *whoosh* ('to utter or emit a dull, soft sibilant sound, like that of something rushing through the air', *OED*) are lexical. The boundaries between non-lexical and lexical iconicity are by no means clear-cut, however, since most sequences of sounds have the potential of becoming lexicalized words. The imitative *cuckoo* and *miaow*, for example, may be seen as non-lexical representations of animal noises, but at the same time they also function as fully lexicalized words for the name of the bird and (together with *mew*) the miaowing of a cat respectively. The only exception to this 'principle of interchangeability' seem to be strings of just consonants (*shshsh*) or vowels (*aaaaaa*), since no lexicalized English words consist exclusively of consonants and only few of vowels only. This obstacle is easily overcome, however: as the example of *shshsh* versus *shoo*, *swoosh* and *whoosh* shows, it is usually sufficient to add one or two phonemes/graphemes to turn a non-lexical sequence into a potentially lexical one.

A note on iconicity and conventionality before I proceed. In iconicity in its ideal form the relationship between form and meaning is supposed to be neither arbitrary nor conventional, but determined by the fact that form and meaning are one. This is especially true of auditory iconicity, since non-linguistic sounds and their linguistic representations share air waves as their common medium. The sound sequence *shshsh* thus does not, arbitrarily and conventionally, *represent* the sound of rushing wind, it *is* the sound of rushing wind, albeit produced by another source. In this 'ideal' world of auditory iconicity where one word — supposedly — stands for one and only one sound we do not expect to find any of the features which are characteristic of the arbitrary and conventional vocabulary of a language: ambiguity, polysemy, homonymy, synonymy and so on. However, it is generally agreed upon that onomatopoeic words show only partial iconicity and that they, like all other linguistic signs, are also characterized by conventionality to a greater or lesser degree. This is evident from the examples just given: while everybody would probably agree that the basis of the verbs *shoo* and *swoosh* and *whoosh* is the noise *shshsh*, their precise form and their exact meaning is clearly conventional. Animal noises also highlight this: English roosters go *cock-a-doodle-doo*, while their German, French and Finnish counterparts go *kikeriki*, *cocorico*, and *kukko kiekuu* (Plank 1978: 250, see also Reay 1994: 4068) respectively. Or there is the case of Leopold Bloom's cat in *Ulysses* (4.16, 25, 32),[2] which does not go *miaow*, but, idiosyncratically and with increasing insistence, *Mkgnao*, *Mrkgnao* and finally *Mrkrgnao*. Even completely non-lexical onomatopoeia is conventional to some extent: *shshsh*, for example, could represent the rushing of wind, of waves, the passing by of a car (polysemy, homonymy, ambiguity) and so on, while the rushing of wind could be represented by *ffff* or *ssss* as well as *shshsh* (arbitrariness, resulting in near-synonymy). In these cases the context in which non-lexical onomatopoeia appears, coupled with the speaker's knowledge of certain conventions, is necessary for understanding. In the following passage, for example, also from *Ulysses*, it is the context more than the sequence of letters itself, which signal to the reader that the non-lexical sequences are iconic expressions of Bloom's rumbling stomach (*Prrprr*) and his fart (*Pprrpffrrppffff*), timed to coincide with the noise of a passing tram (*Krandlkrankran*).

> Bloom viewed a gallant pictured hero in Lionel Marks's window. Robert Emmett's last words. Seven last words. Of Meyerbeer that is.
> [...]
> Seabloom, greaseabloom viewed last words. Softly. *When my country takes her place among*.
> Prrprr.
> Must be the bur.
> Fff! Oo. Rrpr.
> *Nations of the earth*. No-one behind. She's passed. *Then and not till then*. Tram kran kran kran. Good oppor. Coming. Krandlkrankran. I'm sure it's the burgund. Yes. One, two. *Let my epitaph be*. Kraaaaaa. *Written*. *I have*.
> Pprrpffrrppffff.
> *Done*. (11.1274–75 and 1284–94)

In his paper "Literature as Imitation: Jakobson, Joyce, and the Art of Onomatopoeia", Derek Attridge (1988) has discussed the mixture of iconic and conventional aspects in both non-lexical and lexical onomatopoeia very convincingly, and there is no need for me to go into this in detail. Iconicity, in brief, is a matter of degree, and all cases of phonological iconicity are also conventional to some extent.

One final point concerning auditory iconicity: in discussions of phonological iconicity a (third) kind of onomatopoeia is often mentioned, which is situated at the submorphemic level somewhere between non-lexical and lexical onomatopoeia. Phonaesthesia,[3] as it was called by J.R. Firth (cf. Reay 1994: 4064; cf. also Plank 1979: 154–55), is constituted by sound combinations occurring as parts of words that seem to evoke certain meanings or meaning-elements. Initial *fl-*, for example, in *flame, flare, flicker, flimmer* evokes 'emission of light', whereas final *-ash* in *bash, brash, clash, crash, dash, fash, gash, gnash, hash, lash, mash, pash, rash, slash, smash, splash, thrash, trash* connotes 'violence' and/or 'speed'; in *flash* these two phonaesthemes appear together, and the meaning 'violent emission of light' is quite appropriate (cf. Bloomfield 1935: 156/§ 9.11 and Wimsatt 1976: 65–66). Phonaesthesia is often subsumed under onomatopoeia, but the two examples just given show that while the word-forms in question do indeed have certain sound sequences in common which evoke certain meanings, these sound sequences do not represent sounds. Most cases of phonaesthesia, therefore, cannot be classified as auditory iconicity, and I will come back to them in my discussion of associative iconicity.

3. Articulatory iconicity

It has been observed by many linguists that in a number of languages of the world the high front vowel /i/ often symbolizes small size, whereas the low vowels /a/ and /ɒ/ symbolize big size, English examples being *little, wee, teeny* versus *large* or *vast*. Words containing /i/ have also been claimed to indicate nearness, words containing /a/ distance, English proximal *this* versus distal *that* being obvious examples (Jespersen 1922: 402 quoted by Reay 1994: 4066, Plank 1978: 264, Plank 1979: 145, Crystal 1987: 175). Both sets (and a number of related ones) are claimed to be iconic.[4] Since neither size nor distance involve sound, however, straightforward onomatopoeia as an explanation will not do: like the phonaesthemes mentioned above these are not cases of what I have called auditory iconicity. How else can or could they be explained? From an articulatory point of view /i/ is characterized by a high tongue position, which we may interpret, respectively, as smallness (of the opening between tongue and palate) or as nearness (of tongue and palate). By the same token the low tongue position of /a/ could then be interpreted as largeness (of the opening between tongue and palate) or as distance (between tongue and palate). Iconicity, it could be claimed in these cases, is constituted by the position of various speech organs relative to each other when certain vowels are uttered and by the spatial or dimensional meaning of these speech sounds. The basis of comparison is the articulation of sounds rather than the sounds themselves, and so I propose to call this form of phonological iconicity articulatory iconicity.

In his book *Language and Style*, Epstein (1978: 27–28) uses exactly such articulatory reasoning to 'explain' line 167 ("Sunk though he be beneath the watry floor") from Milton's "Lycidas". Supporting his argument with a diagram Epstein claims that "the tongue-muscle mimes a movement from low-mid ['sunk though'] to high-front ['he be beneath the'] to low-back ['watry floor'] in the mouth", whereby "the surface of the sea seems to be mimed by the high-front vowels ('be', 'beneath'), and the vowels placed between low or low-back stressed vowels ('sunk', 'watry', 'floor'), seem to convey a notion of the bottom of the sea". Here, then, in an example of individual poetic 'parole' (the examples above relating to 'langue') we have a third interpretation of the contrast between /i/ and /a/, namely high versus low or deep. A note in passing: if Epstein's articulatory line of argument is examined in detail, it turns out to suffer from a serious logical flaw. Epstein conveniently overlooks the fact that the phrase "watry floor" here refers to the surface rather than the bottom of the sea. Contrary to his reasoning, therefore, the low vowels in the words 'watry' and 'floor' relate to something relatively high, so that Milton's acoustic miming — if this is indeed what is happening here — would run counter to the actual meaning of the line. The example is thus far from convincing, but it nevertheless illustrates how a case for articulatory iconicity involving height of the tongue *might* be made.

Can one make a case for it, however? There are at least two reasons, I submit, why articulatory iconicity is somewhat more problematic as a concept than auditory iconicity. First, there is the problem of psychological plausibility. When asked to imitate the sound of rushing wind, for example, any child will come up with something like *shshsh*, and I would thus claim that auditory iconicity is a directly accessible concept. By contrast, and although doctors always ask people to say *aaaaaah* rather than *iiiiiih* when they want to examine their throats, only few non-linguists know that the tongue-position is high (front) for /i/, but low (back) for /a/. One would have to argue that articulatory iconicity works on a subconscious level, that speakers (or whole speech communities) use it to mark something of which they are not, or not fully, aware.[5]

A second problem concerns the number of contrasts that may be expressed by /i/ versus /a/. Reay (1994: 4066) reports on a whole series of experiments:

> [Edward Sapir's (1929)] innovatory experiment to test subjects' reactions to a pair of nonsense syllables *mil*, *mal* 'table' for the concepts 'small', 'large' has led to a whole series of similar experiments. These later experiments have investigated many other synesthetic or crossmodal associations expressed by

> the vowels /i/ /ɑ/. Fischer-Jørgensen (1967) added to Sapir's original experiment the following set of associations using CVC monosyllables as Sapir had done: bright/dark, angular/round, hard/soft, light/heavy, tense/relaxed, tight/loose, narrow/broad, and thin/thick. Fischer-Jørgensen gained positive correlations in all these areas of perception, [...]. The conclusion drawn from these and other similar experiments is that certain vowel sounds tend to group in semantic clusters, and in the case of the high front vowel /i/ and lower back vowels /ɑ/ /ɔ/, these clusters are in definite opposition (French 1972).[6]

The main feature of the /i/ – /a/ opposition, then, is that it is a contrast, perhaps even the most strongly felt contrast in the vowel system (high versus low plus front versus back plus, possibly, unrounded versus rounded). As such it can be employed to express almost any kind of semantic opposition, a fact also illustrated by its use in playful reduplicative combinations involving apophony or vowel gradation: *chitter-chatter*, *tittle-tattle*, *ding-dong*, *pitter-patter*, *tick-tock* (Reay 1994: 4064).[7]

Thus the /i/ – /a/ opposition apparently indicates very many kinds of contrast (little and large, near and far, high and low, bright and dark, angular and round, hard and soft, light and heavy, tense and relaxed, tight and loose, narrow and broad, thin and thick, etc.), and one could argue that it is contrast in general rather than any specific opposition which is mirrored. This cannot be the whole truth, however: if *différence* was all, then it would not matter, for example, whether /i/ stood for 'little' and /a/ for 'large' or the other way round. In fact, however, the high front vowel is regularly associated with one set of these meanings (little, near, high, etc.) whereas the low back vowel is equally regularly associated with the other set (large, far, low, etc.). The reason for this regularity, ultimately, must be the articulatory criteria mentioned at the beginning together with some auditive ones: the /i/ is a high, unrounded, front vowel, the /a/ a low, (often) rounded, back vowel, and although I have just argued that ordinary speakers of a language are not phoneticians, they obviously associate sounds with meanings which somehow correspond to hard-and-fast phonetic facts. It thus seems that some intuitive knowledge of these phonetic facts (or rather, of the tactile sensations associated with producing sounds) is part of the linguistic competence of speakers and of speech communities, and the 'meaning' of the /i/ – /a/ contrast may well be universal (Swadesh 1972, quoted by Crystal 1987: 175, but Plank 1978: 251 quotes Korean as a counter-example). In this sense, then, it is justified to speak of articulatory iconicity as the root of the phenomenon I have tried to present here. It is no more than the root, however, and the full range of meanings expressed by the /i/ – /a/ contrast must have come about by association: 'little' being felt to go together with 'near', 'high', 'bright', 'angular' and so on. By using the term association I have paved the way for the third and final kind of phonological iconicity I wish to discuss: associative iconicity.

4. Associative iconicity

At the end of my discussion of articulatory iconicity I mentioned phonaesthemes such as initial *fl-* 'emission of light' (*flimmer, flicker, flame, flare*), or final *-ash* 'violence' and/or 'speed' (*bash, brash, clash, crash, dash, fash, gash, gnash, hash, lash, mash, pash, rash, slash, smash, splash, thrash, trash*).[8] How do phonaesthemes come about?[9] Most of them do not mirror sounds and so cannot be classed as cases of auditory iconicity, and yet they are associated, however vaguely,[10] with certain meanings; hence my term associative iconicity.[11] I am using the term deliberately in two different senses: speakers associate certain sounds or sound combinations with certain meanings (primary association), but they do so partly (primarily?) because they mentally associate these words with others that also contain these sounds or sound combinations (secondary association). Samuels (1972: 46) has used the term *contextual* to express the same idea: "[T]he validity of a phonaestheme is, in the first instance, contextual only: if it 'fits' the meaning of the word in which it occurs, it reinforces the meaning, and conversely, the more words in which this occurs, the more its own meaning is strengthened". The latter criterion (secondary association) may well be more important than the former: a phonaestheme like *flash*, then, possesses its meaning not so much because of any intrinsic quality of the sound sequences *fl-* and *-ash*, but simply because there exist many words with similar meanings, all containing the same sound sequences. The existence of so many phonaesthetically associated words, in turn, may cause more such words to be created and phonaesthetic word clusters thus have a tendency to perpetuate themselves and to grow larger.

What about primary association? How can initial *fl-* be associated with the meaning 'emission of light' in the first place, irrespective of the number of words that contain this consonant cluster? This question is the most difficult of all to answer, and not many convincing explanations have been proffered.

Why, for instance, do the words for 'mother' in very many languages of the world contain a nasal? The answer, as Roman Jakobson has argued in "Why

'Mama' and 'Papa'?" (1960/71) must be sought in the fact that a baby, when sucking at its mother's breast, can only utter a nasal sound, since its mouth is blocked. Psychologically, the satisfaction received from drinking milk and/or the desire to drink more milk is transferred to the source of the milk, while linguistically the nasal sound accompanying the act of drinking becomes part of the word denoting 'mother'. Jakobson (1960/71: 542) puts the process as follows: "Often the sucking activities of a child are accompanied by a slight nasal murmur, the only phonation which can be produced when the lips are pressed to mother's breast or to the feeding bottle and the mouth is full. Later, this phonatory reaction to nursing is reproduced as an anticipatory signal at the mere sight of food and finally as a manifestation of a desire to eat, or more generally, as an expression of discontent and impatient longing for missing food or absent nurser, and any ungranted wish".

Taking his cue from Jakobson's note on /m/ as "an expression of discontent" Frans Plank (1979: 146–48) has explained certain phonological properties of adversative conjunctions in similar terms. He claims that in the languages of the world adversative conjunctions often begin with /m-/ (examples being French *mais* and Italian *ma*, both from Latin *magis*,[12] or Dutch *maar* from *en wâre* 'it could not be') and explains this apparently universal tendency in iconic terms: "In this case it is not a sound that is being imitated, rather: the position of the articulatory organs when they produce /m/ is identical with their position when one is thinking mutely and reflexively [beim stummen reflektiven Nachdenken]".[13] When this reflexive, half or wholly reluctant attitude becomes verbalized in the form of an adversative conjunction, then — according to Plank — the natural iconic sound to be produced is the /m/ or perhaps generally a nasal.

In these special cases then, Jakobson and Plank have made the associative processes fairly explicit: a physical and/or mental state (drinking followed by a feeling of satisfaction or desire, hesitating) is linked with a specific position of the articulatory organs. If something is articulated at this point, then the resulting sound will correspond to the position of the articulatory organs just outlined.

I have quoted these two case studies as examples of how associative iconicity can be postulated on the basis of primary, or direct association.[14] In many if not most other cases the exact nature of such associative processes is more difficult to establish, but some sort of association between extra-linguistic meaning and linguistic form must be the basis of all of them, including the phonaesthemes mentioned above.[15] Such primary association is supported and strengthened by what I have called secondary association, i.e. the association of words sharing a certain form (here: sound combination) and certain meanings with other such words. Association is thus a form of category building, and associative iconicity provides interesting examples of how semantic categories are signalled and thus 'held together' by common linguistic markers. I do not know whether cognitive linguists have taken an interest in associative iconicity: if they do they will find a great deal of material to study concept formation and categorization.

5. Concluding remarks

According to Peirce, iconicity may manifest itself in three different forms, the image, the diagram, and the metaphor. Only the first two are of interest here. Images are individual, specific representations of meaning in form, based on similarity or resemblance (similarity between a sign and its denotatum). Diagrams, by contrast, are not motivated by such individual meaning-form relationships, but by paradigmatic (*big, bigger, biggest*) or syntagmatic relations between forms, all expressing a particular meaning (similarity not between sign and denotatum, but between the relation of signs and the relation of denotata). In this latter type, resemblance is also possible, but not necessary.

How does the tripartite distinction between auditory, articulatory and associative iconicity suggested here fit into Pierce's scheme? Auditory iconicity, which is constituted by speech sounds made to resemble the non-speech sounds they represent, is clearly imagic. Articulatory iconicity in the basic form outlined here is also imagic: there is a relation of similarity between the way /i/ and /a/ are articulated and their most common spatial or dimensional meanings; the many further meanings of the contrast, however, appear to be diagrammatic. Associative iconicity, finally, is diagrammatic: it is motivated not by individual meaning-form relationships, but by relations between forms all expressing a particular meaning. This basic difference has been recognized by many linguists even though they may have used different terminology to express it: when Ullmann (1962: 84), for example, speaks of primary and secondary onomatopoeia,[16] and Lyons (1977: 102–05) of primary (meaning dependent) and secondary iconicity, they refer to Peirce's distinction between images and diagrams. As the terms imply, diagrammatic (Peirce) or secondary (Ullmann and Lyons) iconicity is seen as less direct, less immediate, and more abstract than imagic or primary iconicity, and it has indeed proved very difficult to account for all the associations that are at work (cf. Plank 1978: 250f.). All three types of phonological iconicity are well-attested in languages throughout the world, however, with associative iconicity playing a substantial role in establishing categories.

What, finally, is gained by suggesting three types of phonological iconicity, as I have done here? I have not said anything really new about auditory iconicity or onomatopoeia, the best-established and also the most immediately intelligible manifestation of phonological iconicity. Articulatory iconicity, on the other hand, has not been isolated and described in this fashion. I have claimed that in its basic form articulation imitates spatial or dimensional meanings, but that its application is widened by association. Associative iconicity, finally, is a new term for what is otherwise called phonaesthesia or secondary onomatopoeia/ iconicity. By using the term 'associative' I have focused on the psychological mechanism that links certain sounds with certain meanings. In some cases (terms for 'mother' and 'father', adversative expressions) linguists have tried to make the associative processes explicit, but in many other cases this mechanism is still mysterious. I have suggested that associative iconicity manifests explicitly (i.e. iconically) marked linguistic categories (categories of form as well as meaning) and that it should be of special interest for cognitive linguists.

Notes

1. 'Iconicity' rather than 'iconism' (Wescott 1971) is now the generally accepted term.
2. *Ulysses* is quoted from Gabler's 'Corrected Text' (Joyce 1986); following usual practice, reference is to chapter and line numbers.
3. The spelling '-esth-' rather than '-aesth-' is also found, especially in more recent publications.
4. Reay (1994: 4066) classifies them as 'vowel phonaesthemes (phonetic symbolism)'.
5. Fónagy (this volume) strongly argues for what he calls 'preconscious' and 'unconscious' iconicity in section 4 ("Levels of iconicity") of his paper. See also note 15.
6. In addition to the references given in the quotation, see also Tarte and Barritt (1971), Fischer-Jørgensen (1978), Woodworth (1991) and Fónagy (this volume, esp. sections 3.3 and 4).
7. Plank (1978: 264) gives German examples: *klipp und klar, niet- und nagelfest, zickzack, Singsang, Wirrwarr*. Plank also points out that most if not all of these combinations constitute so-called 'irreversible binominals' in which the element with the dark vowel follows that with the light one (*chitter-chatter*, but not **chatter-chitter*).
8. For lists see Crystal (1987: 251) and Reay (1994: 4064–67).

9. On phonaesthemes see Bloomfield (1935: 156–57, 244–46), Samuels (1972: 45–48), Plank (1979: 154f.), Reay (1994: 4064–67). Bloomfield uses the terms 'symbolic forms' and 'symbolic words'.
10. See Crystal (1987: 251) for words of caution in this respect.
11. The term 'sound symbolism' is also used frequently and is in some sense appropriate. Within a Peircean context it is confusing, however, because Peirce uses the term 'symbol' to refer to the totally arbitrary and conventional.
12. Cf. German *vielmehr* and English *rather*.
13. My translation from his German (1979: 148): "[...] es wird kein Geräuscheindruck sprachlich imitiert, sondern die Position der Artikulationsorgane bei der Produktion von [*m*] (bilabial: Lippenverschluss, nasal, Zunge tief in Ruhelage) ist die gleiche wie charakteristischerweise beim stummen reflektiven Nachdenken [...]".
14. Cf. my discussion of Epstein as an example of articulatory reasoning.
15. Fónagy (this volume) devotes a good part of his paper (sections 3.3 and 4) to this process of primary association, which he sees as a form of metaphoric transfer "based on proprioceptive, tactile, motor excitations" (3.3.3).
16. Ullmann uses the terms 'onomatopeia' and 'phonetic motivation' as synonyms.

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Imagination by Ideophones

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1. Contrasts and criticisms

The apparent charm of certain words to conjure up their message by their music could explain answers to opinion polls about the aesthetic value attached to them in various languages. On one occasion we learn what the English considered "the ten most beautiful" and "the ten ugliest, most unpleasant" words. In the first group they named *chimes, dawn, golden, hush, lullaby, luminous, mist, melody, murmuring*, and *tranquil*. The second, reckoned "ugliest", comprised *cacophony, crunch, flatulent, gripe, jazz, phlegmatic, plump, plutocrat, sap*, and *treachery* (Boets 1965: 56). Note that there is phonetic suggestiveness in either group: we may say that speakers are swayed by sense, but moved by sound.

From another occasion I remember the Dutch, seemingly deaf to phonaesthetic appeal, simply taking the word for the thing itself and coming up with items like *moeder* 'mother' and *liefde* 'love' as the most beautiful words they knew. Now these contrasting attitudes must be due to the accident that everybody is born either a little Platonist or a little Aristotelian. The former will readily respond to phonetic motivation, the latter resents it even while admitting its existence in onomatopoeia (Ogden and Richards 1946: 36). Plato himself was ironical about the two contrasting attitudes adumbrated in his *Cratylus*, but for us he did impart perennial momentum to questions about the "rightness of names" (Porzig 1962: 20–30). Those dry-as-dust Dutch make obedient disciples of the Saussurean Bally (1951 [1909]: §§ 37, 63–64), who warns native speakers as well as foreign learners not to be provoked to associations by the form or sound of words, always to go straight to their meaning, and thus to fight both the etymologizing and the onomatopoeic instinct – with Leech (1969: 100) warning in a similar vein sixty years after: "All too often imaginative reactions to the meanings of words are projected on to the sounds of which they are composed".

We often get the impression that the words in question have been a thorn in the flesh of some theorists. After duly recognizing their exceptional status, they start playing it down or explaining it away. The special status was already noticed by George Chapman in 1598 when he remarked about the word *swaggering* that it was new and much in vogue in certain circles, "being created as it were by a naturall [onomatopoeia] *without etymologie or deriuation*" (OED: s.v. swagger *v.*; italics mine).[1] Historically speaking, those modern linguists understandably react against the various sound-imitative theories of the origin of language, the *bow-wow, ding-dong, la-la, pooh-pooh, yo-he-ho,* and similar theories, which have all been discredited (Jespersen 1947: 412–416; Crystal 1988: 289). But critics have other and principal reasons as well. Of these, let us pass over the radical refusal by Hjelmslev (1968: 55), who acknowledges sound-symbolism but relegates it, as being merely notions ("Vorstellungen"), to language *use* that has nothing to do with language *structure*. Among recurrent criticisms, there is the quantitative objection that only a small number of words are onomatopoeic (Sapir 1949: 7–8; Bolinger 1975: 217; Lyons 1977: 101), and that they are subject to stylistic restrictions, e.g. to the language of conversation for utterances like *boing, brrr...,* or *whoosh* – along with other "snorts and sniffs" (Crystal and Davy 1969: 105). It is no doubt owing to such restrictions that such words have been regarded as rather primitive. In a workbook on general rhetoric (from the French), *boum* is called "somewhat silly" ("etwas läppisch"), and it is perversely implied that it was only the chansonnier Charles Trenet that made this *boum* well known (Dubois 1974: 81). Beside familiar talk, pertinent registers are human and animal noises, animal names, calls to animals, story-telling, ballads and songs, trade names and advertising, comic strips, and four-letter words. As to ideophones among the last-named, not only are many transparently trivial, basically meaning 'to push', like G. *bumsen* and Du. *neuken* (cf. E. *nudge*), but some are of the same word family, like G. *ficken,* MDu. *fokken,* E. *fuck,* Du. dial. *fokkelen,* G. *vogeln, vögeln,* all synonymous (Kluge 1995: s.v. ficken; Meier 1979b: 656).

More serious is qualitative criticism. As when, enlarging upon *boum,* synonyms like *baoum* and *braoum* are cited to show that onomatopoeia has no fixed form, and so all variants are equally plausible (Dubois 1974: 81). Similarly, exclamations like G. *hoi!, iiih!* and *pst!* are said hardly to qualify as word-forms, although they meet the requirement of being able to occur as one-word utterances (Lutzeier 1995: 29). How such interjectory human noises are "linguistically adapted" (Kruisinga 1943: 49), i.e. lexicalized and so grammaticalized, does not concern us here. But we may observe that English had one simple way of turning some *naturlaute* into verbs: /sː/ generated *to hiss*, /zː/ *to buzz*, /ʃː/ *to hush*, and /mː/ *to hum*. The general formative constraint, however, is one already built into the definition of ideophones as it prescribes that the phonetic imitation must proceed by speech sounds (Marchand 1969: 314), which thus fit into the phoneme system of the language. Depending on the degree of their adaptedness to the normal English phonemes and phoneme combinations, a gliding scale has been proposed for ideophones, distinguishing them as "wild" or "tame", or "semi-wild" (Rhodes 1997: 279–281 *et passim*). Non-phonemic *naturlaute* used (well-nigh globally) as affective interjections are yet quasi-phonemic when rendered alphabetically, like *aha, ahem, hem, ow, uh-huh, whew*, and may become really phonemic when read out as words, which happens with *faugh, humph, phew, tut-tut,* and *ugh* (see pronouncing dictionaries and Quirk 1985: 853). By origin spontaneous, they are also conventional and, when found not as an automatic reflex (*Anzeichen*, i.e. 'symptom') but as a purposive token reference (*Zeichen*, i.e. 'symbol'), can be intentional signs (Nehring 1963: 87–88) and thus true ideophones. The restriction to speech sounds directly invalidates the objection that imitative words like *cackle* and *cluck* for the guttural cry of a hen have hardly anything in common with actual mimicry of the sounds as heard in nature, and that even such mimicry is still a far cry from the real thing.

Another criticism has been that various words of this type denoting the same phenomenon may be rather different in sound, like *chuchoter, flüstern, whisper* (Leech 1969: 96; Brekle 1974: 39). But this does not make then any less onomatopoeic or efficient. What is more, such variety may reflect different angles or aspects of one's perception. Thus *humming* and *buzzing*, referring to bees, are wide apart phonetically but do mean the same noise, perhaps depending on whether it is heard from afar or nearby or felt, as Leisi (1985: 108) points out, as "reassuring" or "not reassuring". Smithers (1954: 111) also suggests distance as the criterion between *crack* (shot heard from far) and *bang* (nearby). A last objection, levelled at the very status of words here considered, is that, except for certain interjections we have mentioned, it is impossible to determine their meaning by their sound only (Körner 1977: 7, n. 6). In the light of this undeniable fact, both Peirce's reliance on the "natural" resemblance in the icon between the sign and its object (Lyons 1977: 102) and the assumption in Ogden and Richards (1946: 11–12) that in the onomatopoeic word the relation between the symbol and the referent is no longer "imputed" but "real", will have to be considerably modified.

With ideophones in literature, by the way, we shall constantly have the buzz of bees, the beat of horses' hooves, the clash of swords, the hiss of snakes, the murmur of brooks, and the whisper or rustle of leaves echoing through our minds. The most often quoted proof of the objection last discussed, which for many critics has clinched the matter, was proposed by John Crowe Ransom in 1938 when – thinking of Chicago slaughterhouses, and long before mad cow disease – he altered the line *And murmuring of innumerable bees* ("The Princess", "Introductory Song" 207, Tennyson 1969) into *And murdering of innumerable beeves*. This was to show that phonaesthetic effect does not depend on sound, because slight changes in sound spoil it all. As Wellek pointed out, however, the change of the second *m* to *d* is not slight and in turn destroys the ideophony of *innumerable* (Wellek and Warren 1962: 162 and n. 11). That was before everybody realized that '*m* to *d*', being phonemic, is by definition a semantic change, which makes the whole 'proof' redundant. The semantic priority, in fact, should never have been in doubt: while verbs like *to bark* and *to swallow* induce ideophonic interpretation, the homophonous nouns meaning 'rind of tree' and 'bird of the genus Hirundo' do not. Now the underlying motive for modern linguists to play down the role of onomatopoeia becomes visible when the critic really lets the cat out of the bag, saying that "languages only make a very limited use of sound-imitative or iconic signs, *because otherwise the principle of arbitrariness* in the relation between sign and meaning *would be null and void*" (Brekle 1974: 39; italics mine). That is, for the sake of theory such signs mustn't be too numerous or too important.

2. Iconic status and terms

As to the quantitative criterion, I have not made any counts but my impression is that even in common core English – not to speak of dialectal and other Englishes – phonaesthetic words are far from scarce or negligible. Let us only recall the large chapter devoted to them in Marchand (1969: 313–343) and the substantial studies Leisi and his school have produced on the semantics of words denoting noise, laughing and smiling, seeing, light and brilliance – full of ideophones though not treating them as such (Leisi 1985: 99–124 and his bibliography). Then there is the growing share, in the second half of the present millennium, of what Strang in her statistical account of the "ecological" evolution of the English monosyllable called the "onomatopoeic and unexplained stock" of formations (Strang 1979), and there are the untold cases closed in etymological dictionaries with the remark "of imitative origin".

Moreover, a recent American collection of twenty-one conference papers on sound-symbolism (Hinton 1997), of which by far the greater part is about non-European tongues, demonstrates the ubiquity of ideophones in native languages of five continents. Quite generally, these separate studies and their signposting introduction (Hinton, Nichols and Ohala 1997) discuss in detail most topics that could only be touched upon here.

When planning this paper, I fancied that it was the "aural images" (Rhodes 1997) called up in our minds by ideophones that could be looked upon as icons. In some previous publications I had signalled ideophones, though without a clearly iconic approach, among Caxton's Dutch-English tautological pairs, like *he wentled and tombled* (Meier 1979a: 22–29), in certain agminals (group collective nouns) like *bunch, clump, cluster, lump, a gaggle* (of geese), *a tuft* (of trees) (Meier 1980: 188–191), and as words that contain serial phonaesthetic 'morphemes' (like *sl-* or *-ump*) or which had, like *patter*, become ideophones by joining related sets, or, as simplex words, like *cuckoo*, constituted "the only instances of motivation and etymology falling together synchronically" (Meier 1989; quotation: 61). I was much surprised to learn that Peirce had proposed the term 'icon' for the ideophones themselves to distinguish them, as being (in language the only type of) non-arbitrary signs, from the arbitrary ones he called 'symbol' (Lyons 1977: 102–105). Now the attribution of arbitrariness to non-iconic linguistic signs has commonly been fathered on Saussure, though his views were distorted by simply saying that "symbols are arbitrary" (Meier 1967: 23–24).

I had another surprise, therefore, when I discovered that the contrastive properties 'natural' (i.e. motivated, iconic) vs. 'arbitrary', 'conventional' (i.e. non-motivated) were applied to language not only by Lessing and Leibniz, but already by Rabelais, who (actually harking back to expositions in Plato's *Cratylus*) gets his title figure Pantagruel to remark: "It's a mistake to say that we have language by nature; languages exist through arbitrary institution and by human convention; the words – as the dialecticians say – do not signify naturally, but at one's pleasure".[2] Also, Lessing's point that onomatopoeia and interjections are, exceptionally, *natürliche Zeichen* appears equally old, and onomatopoeia as the ultimate foundation of words was a principle of the Stoics. Of course, this is not the place to discuss doubts about such ancient distinctions, nor whether 'arbitrary' and 'conventional' can really be synonymous, or true antonyms to 'natural'. From the diachronic point of view the strong urging, throughout his chapter "Schallwörter", by Harri Meier (1986: 142–161) to keep ideophonic *effects* strictly apart from ideophonic *creation* is most salutary. His warnings (Harri Meier 1986: 158–161), especially, that "onomatopoeic structures" must not lightly be identified with "etymological structures" should not go unheeded. But exploring ideophones synchronically as iconic signs in particular could reveal that neither does the language user feel his word-hoard to be completely arbitrary, nor will the meaning of even echoisms be clearly established by their phonic substance. Let the cuckoo boast that he is the only bird the world over to noise his own name abroad, the pigeon and the owl can lay claim to an *oo-oo* that is much the same in terms of human speech sounds.

In whatever sense we take 'icon', the pictorial nature of ideophones has repeatedly been emphasized. Richards (1955: 128) referred to the not strictly sound-imitative onomatopoeia as "auditory verbal imagery" or "free auditory images"; Frye (1973: 258–259) ranked the phenomenon, which he said was also known as "imitative harmony", with *opsis* ('sight') rather than *melos* ('song'), and he remarked that colloquial speech loaded with such "verbal opsis" was, by pictorial metaphor, aptly called "picturesque" and "colourful". Nowottny (1991 [1962]: 13) applied Pope's expression "style of sound" to poetic onomatopoeia. Wellek (1975: 412) wrote of sound-symbolism as the "physiognomy" or (quoting Elizabeth Sewell) "the sound-look" of words, while Kloepfer (1975: 109) suggested that the system of co-occurrence of semantic and phonetic features commonly called *Klangsymbolik* might better be named *Klangbild*. Admittedly, such descriptions, to which we can add *Lautmalerei* and 'word-painting', may be nothing but metaphors.

The metaphor, in its turn, has been known as 'figurative' language, *beeldspraak*, and the like. And it was classed with onomatopoeia among the tropes of ancient school rhetoric, for instance by the Venerable Bede (Miller et al. 1973: 106–111). Thus with his tropes, all exemplified from the Vulgate, we get Onomatopoeia figuring next to Metaphor, Catachresis, Metalepsis, Metonymy, etc. Onomatopes, according to Bede, are "quite often used in Holy Writ", and his striking illustration from the picture of the war-horse in action in Job 39: 19–25, not really echoic in the Hebrew, has left its phonaesthetic mark in subsequent translations. Lessing (1974: 650) described the metaphor as a means whereby poetry could raise its otherwise arbitrary signs to the power of natural ones, like onomatopoeia and interjections. Applying Hjelmslevian principles, Guiraud and Kuentz (1970: 133) equate *onomatopées* and *métaphores* in that both are more or less self-explanatory, and the term *symbole figuratif* is proposed to embrace both. Referring to Peirce, Dressler (1987: 17) also links the two but remarks that onomatopoeic words are "the most natural icons", whereas metaphors are "the least iconic ones", because they "exhibit some mere parallelism or partial similarity between signans and signatum".

The lexical variants I have used to indicate our subject may seem just another sample of the tiresome proliferation of near-synonymous technical terms. The appearance of most of these in English is quite well attested. Some were introduced by renowned linguists, chiefly because they were dissatisfied with 'onomatopoeia' or alternatives. The *OED* (s.v. echo *sb.*) shows that James Murray had proposed 'echoism' in 1880, as also 'echoic' (which the dictionary then used) – no doubt remembering Pope's dictum about the sound and the sense. The term 'ideophone' (*OED*: s.v. ideo-), used in 1881 by Alexander Ellis in a different sense, was by Smithers (1954: 73 n.) applied to English sound-symbolic words. In 1930 J.R. Firth in his great little book *Speech* (Firth 1964: 184) coined the term 'phonaestheme' (to denote *sl-* in *slack, slouch, slush*, etc.) and in 1951 he justified his word 'phonaesthetic' (Firth 1957: 194). The whole of Chapter 6, "Phonetic Habits", in Firth's *Speech* brilliantly outlined new directions for a critical study of our subject. In her important contribution, Katie Wales (1990: 339) mentions, as a synonym of 'phonaestheme', the term 'psychomorph', which is ascribed by Bolinger (1975: 554) to the Linguistic Circle of Prague. Of more loosely descriptive designations, 'imitative' (*OED*: s.v.) is first quoted from 1865, 'sound-symbolism' from 1901, and 'sound-symbolic' from 1964 (*OED*: s.v. sound *sb.* 3), whereas the simplex 'symbolic' (= 'sound-symbolic') is illustrated in *Webster* (s.v.) by *fl-* in *flash, flame, flare* ('light in motion') and by *-ounce* in *bounce, pounce, trounce* ('rapid movement') and is used in *ODEE* (e.g. s.v. dither), where it says "of symbolic origin".

'Onomatopoeia', first recorded in the *OED* (s.v.) from 1577 (example: "*hurlyburly*, for an uproare and tumultuous stirre"), is obviously too long and too learned and makes awkward derivatives. Shortened from it, the noun 'onomatop(e' (*OED*: s.v.) never really caught on. Ullmann (1962: 82) renamed it "phonetic motivation", and in Marchand (1969: 313–343) the relevant chapter is called "phonetic symbolism". Since 'onomatopoeia' literally means 'name-making', which was literally Latinized as *nominatio*, the term itself may have suggested that producing *Schallwörter* was the proper way of naming things. Yet 'onomatopoeia' will still be used, and the following differentiation may be practical:

ideophone

Primary Iconicity	Secondary Iconicity
onomatopoeic	*phonaesthetic*
(sound-)imitative	*(sound-)symbolic*
echoic	*psychomorphic*
elements	elements

The term 'ideophone', in this view, is the hyperonym comprising all members of a special class of verbal icons, i.e. non-arbitrary, sound-motivated linguistic signs. Terms referring to speech sounds imitating acoustic impressions reflect primary iconicity, those answering speech sounds evoking other sensory and mental impressions reflect secondary iconicity. On this distinction see Lyons (1977: 103–104). Before addressing the question of iconicity proper in turning to the essentially imaginative, i.e. image-forming, character of ideophones, I must reserve a section to the exposition, chiefly, of two complementary approaches, correctives, in a way, to the reductionist views with which I opened this paper.

3. Ranges and relativity

First, a narrowing of focus can bring out a widening of aspects. This happens when we consider as structural units of ideophony not individual words but constitutive elements of words. It was for this purpose that the terms 'phonaestheme' and 'psychomorph' were suggested. The latter rightly implies that ideophones only function through and in mental apperception. Without, of course, using these terms, even Jespersen (1947: 396–411) isolated such elements (like *fl-*, *sl-*, *gl-*; *-sh*, *-tch*; geminates; the verbal suffixes *-le* and *-er*; vowel contrasts like /i/ and /u/) as carriers of sound-symbolism in what is one of the most level-headed earlier accounts. Smithers (1954) does not talk about phonaesthemes, either, but from his truly seminal study those who find sound-symbolism too much idiom- and context-bound to be of any importance for the language system (Dik and Kooij 1972: 110) could have revised their views. Smithers most scrupulously not only traces the relationship of many English ideophones, but accounts for structural principles in their formation and the regularity (largely in disregard of established sound-laws) of substitution, especially among homorganic consonants, of initial and final consonant variation, of gemination of final stops, of derivation with the suffixes *-l-* and *-r-*, of reduplication, etc. Thus he gains access to whole ideophonic word families, some of which also show semantic patterns in developing figurative meanings. For instance, within the same set of ideophones, the alternation or co-occurrence of the concrete notion 'twist' with the abstract notion 'contentious' can be illustrated by the words *wriggle* and *awry*, and so similarly for 'poke up'/'disturb': *pother / bother*, 'hop about'/'jest, mock': *skip / scoff*, and 'chatter'/'confound': *babble / baffle*. Both Firth, whom Smithers ignored and who had named them phonaesthemes, and Bloomfield (1962 [1933]: 245) three years later, who accepted them as morphemes, dealt with these parts of ideophones as basic structures. Also, both discerned homophones or polysemes among them: as -ump$_1$ meaning 'protuberance' in *bump, clump, lump*, and *-ump$_2$* meaning 'heavy fall' in *dump, slump, thump*.

Only such analytic procedures made further insights possible. One is the observation that typically the initial part of ideophonic roots suggests the *kind*, the final part the *manner* of event or agent referred to (Smithers 1954: 86). For instance, *sn-* implies a sound or movement produced against or through some obstruction: nasally in *sniff, snore, snort, snot*, quickly in *snip, snap, snatch*, slowly in *snail, snake, sneak, snoop*. Transferring this principle to stem and affix, we may take as exemplary the Old English verbs in *-ettan*, of which three quarters are ideophonic. Here, the root denotes what sort of thing is perceived, the suffix its iteration (plus speed, disruptedness, pointedness, diminution, etc.). *Bealcettan* 'belch', *blǣgettan* 'cry', *clæppettan* 'throb', *cloccettan* 'beat, palpitate' (G. *glucksen*), *crācettan* 'croak' (G. *krächzen*), *hālettan* 'greet' (G. dial. *heilsen, helsen* <*heilazzen*), *hoppettan* 'hop' (G. *hopsen*) can be interpreted as symbolizing staccato sequences of the syllables /bæalk/, /blæː/, /klap/, /klok/, /kraːk/, /haːl/, and /hop/. While in English this type only survives in *grunt* (<*grunettan*; G. *grunzen*), German still has the cognate formations in *-zen* or *-sen* (<*-azzen*) whose original working can be retraced by considering *ächzen* 'groan', *bumsen* 'bounce', *glucksen* 'cluck, gurgle', *hunzen* 'scold', and *sumsen* 'buzz', to represent a rapid succession of uttering the monosyllables *ach, bum, gluck, Hund* (as invective), and *summ*. The equivalent of obsolete *-ettan*, with its dactylic effect of a skip or hitch in the rhythm, is restored in modern forms like *floppety, hippety-hoppety* (cf. *proputty* below), *clickety-click* or *clippety-clop*. The same effect crosses Germanic borders as it emerges in French verbs of diverse origin. Examples are *feuilleter* 'leaf through (pages)' or *haleter* 'pant' and, notably, *rapiéceter* 'patch together', "mettre sans cesse de nouvelles pièces ou mettre beaucoup de petites pièces", from *rapiécer* 'piece up', or *voleter* 'fly to and fro, flutter', from *voler* 'fly'. In these, the *-et-* (even with the vowel swallowed) marks the fragmentation of the action by reduplication. Such iconic constellations invite a larger study of synaesthetic loads in eligible suffixes and other appendages.

Another analytical finding is that in the formation of blends the share of those achieved between ideophones has been comparatively frequent. This is evident from Pound (1967 [1914]), thirty-six per cent of whose blends (75 out of 205) concern ideophones. Among *-ettan* verbs, an early instance is seen in the 11th-century *Lambeth Psalter* 49.19, where for *lingua tua concinnabat dolos*, 'thy tongue instigated deceit', the glossator put *tunge þin gealchette facn*. This verb is unique and is best explained as a fusion of *ceahhettan* 'cackle, laugh' (OHG. *kachazzen*, id.; cf. L. *cachinnare*, id.) and *gealpettan* 'speak loudly, boast' (cf. *gielpan*, id.), to imply 'your tongue boastfully cackled deception' (Wiesenekker 1991: 326–327). Such fusions, as well as the further, closely related observation that new, fully acceptable ideophones can readily be created, are no doubt connected with the free exchangeability of phonaesthemes. If this is a rather exceptional rule, it befits their exceptional status. This status also accounts for the conclusion, from the study of psychomorphic elements, that phonemes in ideophones sometimes share, sometimes resist, orthodox sound changes. These and related features have been pointed out and refined upon in various general works (Ullmann 1962; Leech 1969: 96–100; Samuels 1972: sections 3.10, 4.2, and 4.6).

Secondly – by contrast with the first part of this section –, a widening of the angle reveals the relativity of phonaesthesia. I once developed the lexicological vision of an associative field forming an aura of virtually over forty different dimensions around a given subsense (sememe) of any word. These descriptive dimensions are really questions the lexicographer can ask of any sememe, as e.g., in the prosodic sector, whether there are assonances, or rhyme words, or alliterations, to it. Now only one of these questions is about its possible phonaesthetic load. Taking the sememe *property* (sense: 'possessions'), nobody would suspect it of even latently having such a load. But I found it patent in the two opening lines of "Northern Farmer, New Style": "Dosn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters awaäy? / *Proputty, proputty, proputty* – that's what I 'ears 'em saäy" (Tennyson 1969). This also demonstrates how non-phonaesthetic words may occasionally, or habitually, be drawn into the semantic orbit of ideophones on account of their morphonemic make-up. Thus, *innumerable* was only impregnated with phonaesthesia by the *murmuring bees*. Habitual entry into the onomatopoeic sphere was achieved when *patter*, 'repeat the Paternoster', fused with *patter*, the frequentative of the ideophone *pat* 'touch lightly'. *To catch* became partly ideophonic, because it was supported by *latch* and *snatch*, to mean 'get hold of' rather than 'pursue', to which sense its etymological doublet *to chase* has stuck. (*Catch* is from Northern F. *cach(i)er*, while Central F. had *chacier*.) As Rigter (1991) has shown, another dialectal form of F. *chasse*, appearing as the verb *to jass* (*up*) in the Creole of New Orleans around 1900 (perhaps because in their style of playing one musician, or one tune, 'chases' the other), resulted in the term *jazz*, now felt to be highly sound-symbolic.[3] Possibly, the form with *-zz* was at first a case of 'graphic onomatopoeia', since the rare final *-zz* in English only signals ideophones, like *buzz, fuzz, whizz*. In fact, in any English language user's experience the phonaesthesia of a word may work through its spelling, what the Germans call *Wortbild* or *Schriftbild*. The collocation 'physically fit' may strike you as rather feckless, but if you see it written as "*fizzically fit* (for winter)" in an advertisement for an orangeade (*The Observer*, "Life" 3/11/96: 44), the effect is at once electrically ideophonic.[4]

By such graphic or even typographic devices, ideophones turn into ideographs, which are then iconic in a special sense. In Guiraud and Kuentz (1970: 133), however, the terms *onomatopées graphiques* or *graphémiques* refer to letter-shapes as representing the sound-symbolism of the vowel they stand for, as: the *i* being pointed and the *o* being round. Much similar phonaesthesia is applied in trade marks or brand names. Examples found in Lötscher (1987) are *Bazooka* (chewing gum), *Fffi* (insecticide), *Jif* and *Vif* (detergents), *Krispies* and *Smacks* (corn flakes), *Pritt* (adhesive paste), and see Latour (1996) and also Piller (this volume). It is remarkable that such brand names are actually found to be far more widely acceptable across different cultures than the allegedly idiom-bound working of onomatopoeia would appear to allow. This is also true of those partly graphic ideophones that are having a field-day in comics, where they may be laid on thick and printed boldly into the pictures, as *ah, bump, ho, pop, smack*, etc. As far as I know, Oswalt (1997) is the first linguist to have systematically included such "exclamatory interjections" from a comic-strip corpus, collected over a period of more than ten years, as the basis of a remarkable structural analysis. It is noteworthy that the originator of the modern comic strip, Wilhelm Busch, also initiated its frequent onomatopoeic exclamations, and his usage in

Max und Moritz may be compared with their English equivalents in Görlach (1986), as *schnuppdiwupp / whoops; ritzeratze (voller Tücke) / see-saw, see-saw, tap, tap, tap; kracks / crack, rums / bang, crash, bang; kritze kratze / scritch, scratch, scrawl;* etc. Morphogrammatically, English ideophones are extraordinary in being freely available not only as interjections but as bare stems in use as verbs, nouns ('the plash or oars in water'), adverbs or predicates ('the ball came plop on the flower-bed'), bases for adjectives in -y, and some being readily adopted as technical terms and borrowed into other languages: *box* (into all languages), *blurb* (G. 'Klappentext'), *catch* ('Arretiervorrichtung'), *flirt* (all languages), *flash, flashback, flipflop, flipper, floppy disk, mumps* (into German), *scrambler* ('Verwürfelungsvorrichtung'), *zoom* (?'Kameraaufnahmesimultan-nahferngleiteinstellungsvorrichtung').

4. Image problems

Ideophones have an image problem. I have implied as much in discussing the doubtful status they have in the eyes of a linguistic public. Another, recent example is a study by Frankis (1991) of Middle English ideophones in various manuscripts of the *Ancrene Wisse*, where ideophones are quite wildly announced as "the Lunatic Fringe of Language". This is all the more deplorable as the author, a worthy successor to Smithers, like him finds both regularities *and* unpredictable forms among phonaesthetic variants. But in our context the 'image problem' is the one that concerns the sort of image ideophones call up in the speaker-listener. This is also a central concern of the excellent study by Rhodes, though he (wisely) confines himself to "non-vocal tract images", considers these in terms of the more strictly phonetic contour, and points out that they are *not* Peircean images (Rhodes 1997: 277 and n. 1). Although no doubt iconic, their medium is not optic, and they cannot compare in iconicity with ideographs like modern signboards in railway stations. The 'image' of ideophones is in the mind, not in the senses, and it is an impression rather than an idea. We can even agree with Nash (1989: 131), who, insisting that phonetic symbolization "depends neither on nature nor on convention, but on *illusion*", seems to repeat Bally (1951 [1909]: § 64), where he remarked about the subject, "la plupart du temps, il s'agit d'une pure illusion", adding that it is the meaning that makes you find musical effects in the sounds, rather than anything the other way round. But illusions turn into objective realities by being intersubjectively experienced. Most current dictionary definitions of given ideophones do not bring out their specific imagery. They either enumerate equally ideophonic synonyms (*fling*: 'throw, hurl') or things to which the word can be applied (*crash*: 'noise as of broken *crockery, thunder, loud music*, etc.') or try a more abstract, looser description (*jam*: 'squeeze thing into space between two surfaces') (*COD*: s.vv. fling, crash, jam).

More competent but neatly circular is what we find for the Dutch word *klikklak*, whose meaning is defined as "the sound which is being imitated by this word" (*van Dale*: s.v.); like its Middle English synonym *lik-laking* (*MED*: s.v.), it is specifically applied to the clash of swords. Now, any echoism can justifiably be defined in this way! And it seems significant that, while the conventional, intellectualized dictionary definitions most nearly fail ideophones, their use by speakers in their mother tongue is typically swift and sure and to the point. Of course, circularity does not deliver a clearer picture of the icon we are after. Its impression may sometimes be acoustic, sometimes optic, tactile, saporific, olfactory, sometimes kinetic, or then a blend or switch between any of these, labelled 'synaesthetic', and, whenever desired, implicitly metaphorical. That its iconicity cannot be pinned down to the five senses is evident because we find even the absence of sensation rendered phonaesthetically. For soundlessness, among other things, liquids and nasals seem typical, as in *silent, still, stilly, tranquil, calm, lull, mute;* for motionlessness *st-* in *still, stiff, stand, state, statue, stock, stone, stuck;* for senselessness the centralized vowel /ʌ/ in *blunt, dull, dumb, numb, stunned*. And everyone will have his or her favourite poet to depict 'lessnesses' by means of verbal music.

From analysis classifying static facts we should pass to synthesis focussing on some dynamic unifying factor. Because even if iconicity in ideophones is complex, their production must be rather simple and elementary. If Firth (1964 [1930]: 150 and 173) quite generally looked upon "language as *a bodily habit*" and on "words as acts, events, habits", this will *a fortiori* apply to phonaesthemes that were so important to him. For Firth (1957: 194), as discussed in Adams (1973: 145), only "dismissed" sound-symbolism and onomatopoeia as terms and the views behind them, not as phenomena. Now, part of what follows may be just a reflex of the gesture theory of the origin of language, of which Wilhelm Wundt was a fervent advocate as against the sound-imitative theory (Paul 1920: 182). But I found Lessing (1974: 605) already remarking about organs of speech: "Even the movement of organs can express the movement of things". And Paul (1920: 177; my italics) clearly has in mind the creation of ideophones when he observes that in their case "the inner relationship between sound and meaning" can only reside in "the sensuous impression of the sound upon the listener and in *the satisfaction offered to the speaker by the action of the motor nerves required for the production of the sound*". Let me only add that the listener's motor satisfaction is surely equal to the speaker's, and that thus the icon turns out to be a piece of action painting, in which, as Leech (1969: 98) says, the sound "enacts" the sense rather than merely "echoes" it. Whereby he refers to the proposition by Nowottny (1991 [1962]: 112–113) of the term "enactment" in the place of "imitation". In articulatory motivation, then, we see the mainspring of both echoic and sound-symbolic diction (and *not* a third category beside these), which has a legitimate claim to be a resource of iconicity or *Bildhaftigkeit*.

There is a classic on universal articulatory motivation by Oehl (1933), who sees the action of hand and fingers as its basis and expounds its role in the creation of corresponding roots, the equivalence of types and counter-types (as /kap/ and /pak/), and the establishment of well-defined phonic and semantic patterns. Nehring (1963: 81–82) discusses and defends this approach as he recalls how in Oehl (1933: 83–104) e.g. a world-wide mapping of the sense 'seize' in the syllable /kap/ is found to point to bodily motions being 'imitated' by articulatory movements, whereby the sounds uttered simultaneously may even be secondary. The point, in any case, is that the production of sounds and the action of the organs of speech cannot be separated, and that the latter is both primary and more directly intuited. In the light of this insight, all ideophones ultimately share their sensory stimulus or motor impact, wherein their image is essentially contained, with what French critics have called *onomatopées cinétiques* and *onomatopées articulaires*. With 'kinetic' ones, "the movements of the organs of speech mimic those of the instrument or member with which the blow is struck" (Guiraud 1969: 68). The similar but subtly different 'articulatory' ones are marked "by a certain position of the phonatory organs, or by certain motoric tensions of those organs, suggestive of distinct concepts" (Guiraud and Kuentz 1970: 133). In this condition the authors see the only grounds on which e.g. the verb *humer* 'sip' can qualify for ideophone. How different the well-bred French manner of sipping from the synonymous but boorish G. *schlürfen* and Du. *slurpen*, though equally motivated by the articulation required! In keeping with his consideration of "the mass-producer as poet", Lötscher (1987: 284–286) further specifies under *Pritt* (cf. above): "This word imitates, by sound-painting and by articulation, the rapid sticking together of two surfaces; the geminate *-tt* especially may be felt to be a tactile parody of the act of sticking".

Three final observations will round off my account. First, the quotation from Pope about the sound and the sense that I hinted at may have been at the back of many readers' minds. Now the outstanding scholar Stephen Ullmann, who was to write brilliantly on sound-symbolism (Ullmann 1962: esp. 82–96), once completely misquoted him, no doubt from memory, as having said: "The sense must be the echo of the sound" (Ullmann 1951: 38). Whereas Pope of course wrote:

> 'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
> The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
>
> "Essay on Criticism", 364–365 (Pope 1978)

Beside Pope's wisdom in putting "must *seem an* echo *to*" and not "must *be the* echo *of*", the striking thing about this is that both versions are right with regard to ideophones: the relationship between sound and sense is dialectical and interdependent, its effect is the result of circularity.

Secondly, from another fine earlier scholar, Logan Pearsall Smith (1925: 263), we learn that certain forcible and vivid semantic idioms convey their "meanings not to the intellect alone, but, by a short circuit, as it were, directly to those centres of the nervous system whence muscular action proceeds". It seems to me that this is also true of ideophones, which may thus be said to transmit their expressive suggestions straight *from* the nerve-centres *to* the nerve-centres.

Thirdly, we find a surprising parallelism between onomatopoeia and the etymon when Steinthal (1955 [1871]: 258) argues how, in the course of linguistic evolution, both of these original assets of any language tend to go underground. Primarily (he says) onomatopoeia is absorbed by the characteristic "inner form" (i.e., the word content), and subsequently the etymon is submerged in language use. But (he continues) neither one nor the other is actually destroyed, so that onomatopoeia can be restored by sound changes, and new etymons may arise by folk etymology. One instance of the former possibility may be found in the history of F. *chasser*, which we caught a glimpse of. There, the articulatory phonaestheme /kap/ 'seize' of its etymon L. *captiare* (<*captus*, p.p. of *capere* 'seize') was bleached or absorbed to leave the verb with the sense 'pursue', but in *catch*, preserving /ka/ of /kap/ and with the new phonaestheme *-atch*, the sense 'seize' is restored.

Typical idioms have always been prone to ageing and attrition (Meier 1992: *passim*). Hence they also share with onomatopoeia and etymons the submerging and becoming opaque of vital elements (phrases, metaphors, transforms), which may nevertheless be reactivated. So here, in the ideophone, etymon, idiom, we have an associated, non-intellectualized triad rarely seen or treated together.

Notes

1. For the bracketed term the text has *Prosopopeia*, but this means 'personification' and must be erroneous.
2. The passage from *Pantagruel* (1532: Bk. 3, ch. 19) is quoted both in Ullmann (1962: 80) and in Harri Meier (1986: 142). My attention had been drawn to Lessing (1974) by Scherer (1977: 159 and 171–173).
3. I thank Victor Fenigstein, Luxembourg (first composer to set to music all Shakespeare's *Sonnets*), for pointing out how in playing jazz "l'un chasse l'autre".
4. Famous writers of the twenties already wrote in praise of American advertising for its sensuous and (I suppose) phonaesthetic appeal: "Some of the cunningest American literature is to be found in advertisements of soap-suds, for example. These advertisements are almost prose poems" (Lawrence 1973: 34). And: "Already the most interesting and, in some cases, the only readable part of most American periodicals is the advertisement section" (Huxley 1948: 133).

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Iconicity and Beyond in "Lullaby for Jumbo"

Semiotic Functions of Poetic Rhythm*

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1. Kinetic processes in poetic rhythm

The great majority of studies of iconicity in poetic texts are devoted to the visual aspect of the semiotic device because the visual dimension is most readily identifiable in written texts; but also the sound aspect of poetic iconicity has been studied with some intensity as the sound dimension of language is conventionally objectified in the graphic representation of the texts as well. In contrast, the investigation of the rhythmical dimension of poetic texts has suffered relative neglect,[1] and one can easily argue that the main reason for this neglect lies in the fact that the written text encodes this dimension only very imperfectly. If we define rhythm as the segmentation of time into perceptible units,[2] we can see how little information the written text gives about its rhythmical dimension: for the lapse of time is only optionally encoded since a unidirectional, uninterrupted reading of a poem from beginning to end is only one form of its reception: other temporal scannings are possible and likely, even expected by some (e.g., 'concrete') texts. And as to the segmentation of time, it is virtually uncoded because morphological and syntactic segmentation by no means correlates significantly and consistently with temporal segmentation. Only the fixed line endings of poetry seem to imply temporal breaks, but they also may easily be overridden, as so many readings — including by poets themselves — demonstrate. So it is difficult to study possible iconic qualities of poetic rhythm from written texts when rhythm is only so very insufficiently encoded.

As to the signified of possible iconic qualities of rhythm, it is obvious that movements are most likely to be represented iconically. Kinetic processes, as particular forms of energy distribution over time, lend themselves most readily to reflection in poetic rhythm.

The question I will ask myself in the following is whether interpreting such kinetic processes in poetic rhythm in terms of iconic signs is the only acceptable one or whether other semiotic interpretations are also possible. In order to be able to argue this question from a tangible basis it seems necessary to find a text which bypasses the methodological dilemma addressed before and offers a consistently encoded rhythm which can be critically analysed.

2. Edith Sitwell's *Façade*

A text suitable for this purpose are the poems from that exceptional collection by Edith Sitwell called *Façade* (1961a: 110–158),[3] which came out in the *annus mirabilis* of English modernism, 1922 — i.e., in the year of *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* — and are undoubtedly most astonishing lyric avant-garde products of the period. They were conceived as typically depersonalised,[4] experimental[5] poems which use a symbolist, freely associative style of writing (cf. MacNeice 1968: 54)[6] and, according to some, are pure nonsense,[7] while others are convinced that they do make some sort of sense (cf. Lindsay 1950: 18),[8] though, admittedly, of a rather private character.[9] They are a very personal expression of Sitwell's, that upper-class poet's, difficulties with enduring "Victorian Aristocratic Life" (Edith Sitwell 1987: 22), and as such they typically reflect early modernism's anti-Victorian attitudes. This is done, very subtly, by introducing a child's perspective[10] so that the texts appear as "sophisticated nursery-rhymes", as Louis MacNeice has very aptly labelled them (1968: 52; cf. also Lindsay 1950: 15).

The reasons why these poems are relevant in the present context are at least twofold. First, the texts originated in the poet's playful experiments with rhythms in which she attempted to realise, in poetry, dance measures such as waltzes, polkas, fox-trots and others (cf. Osbert Sitwell 1949: 185). So, in Edith Sitwell's own words, these "*abstract* poems" are often "virtuoso exercises in technique" (1961b: xvi) and use "heightened" rhythms (ibid.: xv), and in many cases they reflect defined 'cultural units' of a kinetic character such as the dances already mentioned but also others like "The Drum" or "The Wind's Bastinado" (which are titles of poems from *Façade*).[11]

The second reason is that we not only have recorded readings of the poems by the poet herself, which give us a clue as to her rhythmical intentions, but also a musical notation of the rhythms. *Façade* was the product of a collaboration between Edith Sitwell and the composer William Walton,[12] and both had a work in mind which was modelled on Cocteau and Satie's *Parade* and Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*. That is, the words of the poems are recited, not sung, to accompanying music, and so the composition cannot be said to be a 'musical setting' of the poems in the traditional sense. The score of these "recitation poems" (Singleton 1960: 48) only indicates the rhythm — i.e., the segmentation of time, without any reference to melody — and it is worth mentioning that some of the poems were published before the collaboration started (cf. Pearson 1989: 180, 183) and, thus, were not written with the musical association in mind.

3. "Lullaby for Jumbo"

One of these poems is "Lullaby for Jumbo"[13] (see Figure 1), which was chosen for discussion because, on the one hand, it best captures the "child-like" (MacNeice 1968: 52) quality and nursery spirit of the poems and, on the other, implies, from its title, a specific kinetic image that lends itself very well to the kind of analysis here attempted. Osbert, the elder of Edith's brothers, tells us that the Sitwell children were very fond of a generation-old rocking-horse they had at home (cf. Osbert Sitwell 1946: 38, quoted in Edith Sitwell 1987: 11), and Pamela Hunter, chief-exegete of Sitwellian semantic puzzles, confesses that she has "always imagined *Façade* taking place through the eyes of a child, rocking to the music as it sees everything larger than life" (Edith Sitwell 1987: 11). So the image, suggested by the poem's title, of the rocking cradle or the mother's — or any other person's — rocking motion when soothing a baby, reflects the 'master image', as it were, of the collection, namely the rocking-horse, representing a very specific form of rhythmical energy distribution.

7. *Lullaby for Jumbo*

JUMBO asleep!
Grey leaves thick-furred
As his ears, keep
Conversations blurred.
Thicker than hide
Is the trumpeting water;
Don Pasquito's bride
And his youngest daughter
Watch the leaves
Elephantine grey:
What is it grieves
In the torrid day?
Is it the animal
World that snores
Harsh and inimical
In sleepy pores? —
And why should the spined flowers
Red as a soldier
Make Don Pasquito
Seem still mouldier?

Figure 1. *Edith Sitwell, "Lullaby for Jumbo". In 1961a: 119.*

This is not the place to attempt an interpretation of the poem but this much ought to be said that, according to Hunter's information (cf. Edith Sitwell 1987: 45–46), little Edith experienced steamships as elephants, with their funnels as "trumpeting" (l.6) trunks, their double planks as "thick furs" (l.2), the engine's noise as "blurring conversations" (l.4) and so forth. The "mouldy" (l.20) Don Pasquito is Edith's "boring and dull" (ibid.: 46) father, with his skin reddened (l.18) from swine fever. Jumbo, the elephant, is "asleep" (l.1) and "snores"

(l. 14): so the ship seems to be idling on in the heat ("the torrid day", l. 12), and we might even sense in the poem a gentle rolling motion of the ship as well.

Figure 2. *Edith Sitwell/William Walton, "Lullaby for Jumbo". In Walton (1951, recited part: 12)*

In an attempt to identify illustrative rhythmic elements in the recitation of "Lullaby for Jumbo" (see Figure 2), one can first of all observe that the bar measure of the notation is $\frac{6}{8}$, which is the traditional measure for lullabies as, e.g., in Chopin's famous "Berçeuse".[14] (The $\frac{9}{8}$ which we also find in "Lullaby for Jumbo" results from the instrumental interludes, so it is not used for the recitation itself.) The basic pattern of the $\frac{6}{8}$ lullaby measure is a slow alternation of 'long' and 'short', which gives the characteristic lilt and gentleness of the motion. Looking at the recitation, we notice that it is consistently structured by two such measures of $\frac{6}{8}$, usually as four bar periods. (Only in the middle of the poem do we find a distribution of six plus two bars, which again make eight, i.e., two times four.) Thus the segmentation of the text shows no interruption of the gentle see-saw motion.

Looking at the number of accents per line, we can observe that in the book version of the printed poem their placement is ambiguous in several cases (e.g., ll. 2 and 17, see Figure 1), but in Sitwell's own reading of the text[15] — which follows (with some rubato) the version in the musical notation — all lines, irrespective of their number of syllables, have two accents. This distribution clearly strengthens the see-saw effect we have noticed. The 'model' for the distribution of accents is x́xxx́, a configuration which we find spread over the whole poem, i.e. in lines 1, 5, 11 and 16. The other lines deviate from this model to a lesser or higher degree, but they never give up the two-accents rocking structure.

A very interesting additional observation was made by Edith Sitwell herself as to the kinetic effect of assonances and alliterations in poems: she says that a "most giddy rocking sound" (Edith Sitwell 1961b: xxxvii) is achieved when a phrase at the end of a line forms a rhyme, assonance or alliteration with the beginning of the next line. This is what we find at several places in "Lullaby for Jumbo": "asleep" and "leaves" (ll. 1–2), "keep" and "Conversations" (ll. 3–4), "daughter" and "Watch" (ll. 8–9) and possibly — as loose forms of assonance — "furred" and "ears" (ll. 2–3) as well as "snores" and "Harsh" (ll. 14–15) are cases of such sound-links which, according to Sitwell, produce a 'giddy rocking sound'. In this case it is the sound quality which determines the rhythmical effect and not — as we have observed in the other cases — the energy distribution, i.e. the accents, the durations and the breaks. One could also argue that the abab rhyme scheme of the poem — i.e., another structure based on sound quality — equally suggests a rhythmical see-saw effect.

Figure 3. *Edith Sitwell/William Walton, "Lullaby for Jumbo". In Craggs (1977: 60)*

The observations made so far have all been based on the printed versions of the poem's text, in both their 'literary' and 'musical' notations, and on Dame Edith's own reading. If we look at the instrumental accompaniment (see Figure 3) we realise that it is the bass clarinet that first introduces the lullaby rhythm of slow alternating shorts and longs in $\frac{6}{8}$, and that other instruments take it up. I do not detect further iconic rhythmic effects in the instrumental parts but, of course, there are numerous sound illustrations, which need not concern us here (the 'snoring' of the bass clarinet, the suggestion of 'big animal' by the slow play of the low instruments, the eccentric 'elephantine' saxophone, the brooding heat suggested by the general 'drowsiness' of the music, etc.).[16]

4. Icon

With the example of "Lullaby for Jumbo" at hand we may be in the position to take up the central question of this paper about the semiotic status of kinetic processes in poetic rhythm. The obvious answer is that the poem offers a typical example of what has been called "prosodic iconicity" (Brogan 1993a: 552), "mimetic", "representational" rhythms (Brogan 1993b: 776), or "imitative rhythms", "[e]xpressive effects" (Harding 1976: 93, 85), and so on: i.e., the poem mirrors the rocking movement which we generally associate with a cradle or a person soothing a baby. This is an association that is suggested by the title of the poem and at the same time a particular interpretation of the text based on the "*latent*" power and "*potential* suggestibility" of language (Shapiro and Beum 1965: 14, 15). The ability of language to perform that iconic function rests in the fact that speech rhythm itself is "a movement system" (Harding 1976: 93), i.e. a system of a bodily, muscular movement, in the words of *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*: "[i]n poetry the medium for mimetic enactment is of course the body of the poem, its corporeal substance" (Brogan 1993c: 1038). This 'corporeal substance' of the poem is the "energy-deployment" or "energy discharge" of speech articulation, and I agree with D. W. Harding that "energy expenditure" is "the essential expressive feature of rhythm" (1976: 156, 102, 107). Thus our rocking mother, cradle or horse releases energy in a distinctive distribution which is related to that which we also find in the poem.

5. Intrinsically coded act

The essential semiotic question concerns the nature of this relationship. It is only incidentally that Harding hits the nail on its head when he says, "rhythm reflects — or, more properly, is itself part of — the energy conditions" in the referential world (1976: 101). This remark indicates an awareness of the fact that both the movement of the cradle and the movement of the speech rhythm in the poem have the same energy distribution; in other words, they are partly identical. The "movement is not a 'meaning'" of the poem "but rather an intrinsic property" of it (Lidov 1987: 70). With this perspective, the rocking of "Lullaby for Jumbo" is, in Umberto Eco's terminology, the 'pseudo-iconic phenomenon' of an "*intrinsically coded act*", defined as "signification through the use of a part of the referent" (1976: 209). Eco's well-known example of such an intrinsically coded act is the picture of a red flag: while the rectangular shape of the flag on the picture is an iconic representation, its redness is not; the redness of the referential and pictured flags is the same (cf. ibid.: 210–211). Thus, by analogy, the energetic aspect of the real-life rocking cradle, or real-life rocking person, is 'intrinsically coded' in the poem, which implies that all these movements have a common denominator, as it were, i.e., they are "*homomaterial*", in Eco's terms (ibid.: 225), or are "*tokens of a type*" (Monelle 1992: 211) of motion and thus, by definition, are not iconic.

But then there are other aspects of the cradle and the person, such as, e.g., their visualisation as an object or human being respectively, which of course are not found in the poem. In other words, there are two links between the extrinsic referent — the 'cultural unit' (to use Eco's concept) — of the 'lullaby' on the one hand and the poem on the other. One link is on the sensual level, more precisely on the proprioceptive level of kinetic experience, i.e. the rhythm, and the other is on the cognitive level, which implies an act of interpretation evoking images, in our case — induced by the title of the poem — evoking (most likely, but not inevitably) the images of mother or cradle. What I am referring to is of course the janus-like nature of all verbal utterances, namely their having a sensual-material and a mental-cognitive side, or their being a thing and a sign at the same time. The one is a matter of experience, of immediacy, of physical enactment, the other a matter of reflection, of interpretation, of meaning-generation. It is the nature of the poetic use of language to foreground the sensual side, the 'corporeal substance', as we have called it, of the text,[17] and it is a major purpose of poetic rhythm to make possible, and to guarantee, that experiential function of poetry. However, it will depend on the inclination of the recipient whether (s)he will choose such an experiential approach to the text and experience a rhythm like the rocking of "Lullaby for Jumbo" as such an 'intrinsically coded act' or whether (s)he will take a cognitive attitude and imagine, iconically, a lulling woman, or rocking-horse, or garden swing, or nothing at all.

6. Index

The final phase of this paper discusses a further semiotic approach to kinetic processes in poetic rhythm which is closely linked with the one just treated but goes in a different direction. It is an approach which has been strongly propagated by Vladimir Karbusicky (cf. 1987a,b), and though it very well applies to poetry, it has had its main impact in the field of the semiotics of music (cf. Lidov 1987; Tarasti 1987; Nattiez 1990, Ch. 5.5.: "Referring Externally", 118–127; Monelle 1992, Ch. 7.6.: "Music as Indexical Sign", 209–214). As with the conception of 'intrinsically coded acts', it proceeds from the material basis, the 'energetics', of the text (cf. Karbusicky 1987a: 28) but, in contrast to that other semiotic device, it does not concern itself with the relationship of the energetics of the text with its extrinsic referent but with the text's recipient. Thus the interest, with this approach, lies in the influence, the impact, the effect of the kinetic 'corporeal substance' of the text on the listener. This line of interest of course is not new, it is the time-honoured aesthetic concern with the expressive force, the provocative power of 'energetic' presentations.[18] This expressive force has traditionally been connected with the emotions, i.e., what is being evoked by the presentation are feelings, and from antiquity these feelings have been associated with movement: the Aristotelian notion of *movere* has survived in our modern conception of 'moving the passions'. So the idea is that the motion of the text stirs a motion, and emotion, in the recipient. It cannot be ruled out that it is possible to experience such effects, but their description is necessarily vague,[19] and Karbusicky argues bravely that such emotions induced by the text are "encoded in the depth of our consciousness" (1987a: 29).

The question as to the semiotic status of these emotional effects has generally been answered in terms of index. According to Peirce's definitions this seems justified: an index is "a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of being really affected by that Object", and these indices "direct the attention to their objects by blind compulsion" (1949: 107, 108).[20] These definitions stress the naturalness and inevitability of such connections about which there is "no question of resemblance" for they are "dynamic" connections, in Raymond Monelle's words: "[t]he sign-function of this sort of 'dynamic index' is *synergistic*, based [...] on contiguity-in-motion"; the relation "is metonymic rather than metaphoric, indexical rather than iconic" (Monelle 1992: 212, 213).[21] The exact nature of this relationship is still very little understood, some talk about a "structural homology" (Steiner 1993: 1141), for others the movement presented and the emotion evoked are "isogenous, linked by an inner behavior" (Lidov 1987: 77–78). Karbusicky attempts the following description: "To the *affect* belongs [...] the experienced bodily movement that we repress in the course of our socialization; it becomes the kinetically-felt impulse (*motorisch empfundener Antrieb*) of inner-life." (1987a: 31) Whatever the attempted explanation may be, kinetic processes in poetic rhythm can perform a recipient-oriented, emotionally based indexical sign-function.[22]

7. Conclusion

By way of summary, I may draw three conclusions from what has been said. First, the fact that the poetic rhythm of one and the same text, such as Edith Sitwell's "Lullaby for Jumbo", allows at least three different semiotic interpretations underlines Eco's conviction that there are no fixed "types of signs" but rather various "*modes of producing sign-functions*" (1976: 217). Which sign-functions are produced by the text and its recipients largely depends on the specific aspect chosen from the total semiotic context to look at the sign. Second, the discussion of "Lullaby for Jumbo" has shown that there is an obvious iconic dimension in the poem on the level of the rocking poetic rhythm, but the foregoing discussion will have shown that significant other forms of encoding — such as intrinsically encoded acts and indexical sign-functions — can be identified in the poem as well. This reflects more recent post-structuralist, or "postmimetic" (Brogan 1993c: 1041) tendencies in literary criticism which distrust the representational capacities of language and accept a greater potential of interaction in the aesthetic experience between the perceptual data basis and the perceiver. And third, the discussion might also have shown that the quiz games or puzzles of Edith Sitwell's early poetry point directly to such a more open conception of the aesthetic experience and thus prove their modernity by emphasising their 'corporeal'-performative character and the multivalent semiotic status ensuing from it.

Notes

* I am grateful to Werner Wolf (University of Graz) for his helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

1. "[...] iconic communication in sound-time has had a very modest development in comparison with that enjoyed in almost every culture by the spatial icon" (Osmond-Smith 1972: 32).
2. This definition follows Heusler ("Gliederung der Zeit in sinnlich faßbare Teile": 1925–29: I/17). Similarly Fraisse: "To speak of rhythm is to speak of an ordering in temporal succession" (1978: 235).

3. The final shape of the collection contains thirty-seven poems.

4. Osbert Sitwell, in his autobiography, talks about the "elimination of the personality of the reciter" as one of the main objectives of *Façade* (1949: 183). Cf. also Singleton 1960: 50.

5. "Experiments with words" (Osbert Sitwell 1949: 192).

6. For a discussion of the symbolist background of Sitwell's poetry cf. Lindsay 1950: 14–15.

7. In an early review in *The Saturday Westminster Gazette* we can read that "Miss Sitwell [...] dances a gracefully grotesque 'pas seul' of absurdities" (quoted in Gerstmann 1936: 103). Similarly, Julian Symons called Edith Sitwell "the arch-nurse of empty phrases" (quoted in Morrison 1981: 90). Frank Howes postulates that *Façade* "must rather be appreciated as nonsense verse is appreciated" (1965: 11).

8. Edith Sitwell herself has expressed her intention "to make [her] images exact — though heightened" (1961b: xxxiv).

9. This is the gist of Pamela Hunter's interpretations in Edith Sitwell, 1987: passim. ("[...] Edith's comment that her texts were often based on personal memory rather than general experience, and that the reader must therefore be excused for not understanding certain details", ibid.: 11).

10. In a reference to Cocteau/Satie/Picasso's *Parade*, which is one of the models for *Façade*, Edith Sitwell herself talks about "the poetry of childhood overtaken by a technician" (1961b: xvii).

11. Of the thirty-seven poems in the final collection seventeen have titles which imply an acoustic and/or kinetic dimension, among them five dances and five songs (such as "Jodelling Song" or "Popular Song") and some 'natural' phenomena (like "Rain" or "Madame Mouse Trots").

12. For a comprehensive presentation of all the various versions of *Façade* cf. Craggs 1977: 51–75. The definite version of the poems with musical accompaniment is of 1951 and comprises twenty-one poems out of the complete thirty-seven.

13. No. 7 in Edith Sitwell (1961a: 119) and in Craggs (1977: 60).

14. Brahms' popular "Wiegenlied" with its slow 3/4 measure is an exception.

15. Recording with Dame Edith Sitwell, Sir Peter Pears and the English Opera Group Ensemble conducted by Anthony Collins (Decca set LXT 2977, rec. Oct. 1954).

16. Very likely, a model for some of these musical suggestions — as for the poem's title and central idea — was Debussy's piano piece "Jimbo's Lullaby (Berçeuse des éléphants)" from *Children's Corner (Coin des enfants)*, 1908. The earliest version (1922) of Sitwell's title was "Jumbo's Lullaby" (cf. Craggs 1977: 51).

17. "In expository prose the physicality of words is suppressed, whereas in poetry it is foregrounded" (Brogan 1993c: 1041).

18. For a historical survey of 'energetic' aesthetics cf. Bernhart 1993: 313–331 (Ch. 6.1. "Exkurs: Die 'energetische' Kunstauffassung").

19. This is why even the normative eighteenth century found it difficult to assign definite affects to rhythms and metres: "these inconsistent and vague categories do not constitute a doctrine" (Neubauer 1986: 56–57).

20. Karbusicky equally stresses "the directness, [...], the singularity, the event character, and the psychosomatic symptoms" of such compulsive indices (1987a: 24).

21. Eco argues in a similar way: "I propose not to consider as 'iconic' the so-called 'expressive' properties of certain signals, by which they are supposed to 'induce' a feeling of similarity between the signal and a given emotion" (1976: 203).

22. It should be stressed that the indexical emotions here addressed are emotions *evoked* by the text and not emotions which are *represented* in the text: only recipient-oriented, 'pragmatic' emotions are indexical; extrinsic, 'referential' emotions are what Osmond-Smith calls "'unconscious icon[s]'" in which "the abstract form" of the text relates to "pertinent relational features of a perceptual model" (1972: 40).

A still different matter are those emotions which, according to some people's view, are the *poet's* own emotions finding immediate expression in the poem. Such sender-oriented emotions would be indices, like the recipient-oriented ones, could they be verified. I agree with Monelle referring to the parallel situation in music: "The naive interpretation of music aesthetics — that music is the expression of some real emotion or other — represents music as an *indexical* sign, like a spontaneous cry. In this form, such a view is untenable" (1992: 198).

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Part III

Letters, Typography and Graphic Design

Alphabetic Letters as Icons in Literary Texts

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FORM IS NEVER MORE THAN AN EXTENSION OF CONTENT
W.C. Williams (1968: 330; quoting Robert Creeley)

1. Introduction

Single letters of the Greek alphabet were derived from Phoenician pictographs or icons (e.g. α, alpha, from the sign for ox, 'aleph', actually an icon of the ox's head tilted by 90° to the right). Medieval calligraphers exploited the iconic potential of Roman letters in their elaborate manuscript-initials as, for instance, in *The Book of Kells*.

One may say that writers since antiquity have been conscious and have exploited (often for obscene purposes) the iconic dimension of alphabetic letters. Long before E.E. Cummings made a full poetic use of the alphabet as a rich source of iconic signs, e.g. in his typographic rendering of the word 'look' by 'l oo k', authors since the Renaissance had been aware of the inherent iconicity of alphabetic letters. Thus Victor Hugo saw in the capital A the shape of a roof; capital C to him signified the crescent of the moon; in capital L he recognised a leg and foot, and capital S to him was an image of a snake. Paul Claudel pointed out that the French word 'locomotive' looks like the outline of a steam-engine moving to the left, the 'l' forming its funnel, the three 'o's marking the wheels and '-tive' the engine-driver's cabin.

But before looking at examples taken from non-experimental and non-typographically oriented literary texts let me make a few general remarks and draw some distinctions.

I particularly want to emphasise that all iconicity is semantically motivated. It is the *meaning* of a text or the *semantic context* that alone determines whether a linguistic sign or literary element has iconic force. Thus Lord Tennyson's (1969: 836) famous onomatopoetic line in *The Princess* (vii, 1.207), "And murmuring of innumerable bees", cannot be falsified into "And murdering of innumerable beeves" because the semantics are wrong, because beeves do not make a humming sound.

Hence, iconicity, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder: the perception of imitative form depends on the reader's capacity to see connections, to perceive similarities between the meaning of a sign or text and the formal means used for its expression. The semantic content has to activate and focus the normally latent mimetic potential. So any iconic interpretation must always move from meaning to its formal miming, it can never work the other way round. What is generally true of any sign is also true of the icon: the meaning of a sign is not contained within it, but its meaning arises only in its interpretation.

2. Three categories of letter-icons

However, not all iconicity is of the same nature. Adopting, and at the same time extending, the distinctions made by Trevor Pateman (1986), I should like to divide icons into three categories: namely into transparent, translucent and — this is my addition — subliminal icons. However, it must be pointed out that these categories often blend into each other and are not always easy to separate.

Applying these distinctions to alphabetic letters, we get:

2.1 *Transparent letter-icons*

The letter-icons belonging to this category are immediately recognisable, such as when Shakespeare (1951) refers to the circular Globe Theatre by the letter-metaphor "this wooden **O**"[1] (*Henry V*, 'Prologue', 1.13) or when Dickens, describing a circular mirror-frame in *Sketches by Boz* (1969: 178, ch. XXI), uses the letter-simile "a round frame like a capital **O**". John Donne (1971: 84) uses the upper-case letter 'A' in "If they be two, they are two so/As stiff twin compasses are two" ('A Valediction: forbidding Mourning', ll.25–26) to offer an icon of what a pair of contemporary compasses looked like (Bauer 1995: 109). To a reader familiar with the shape of 17th century compasses the 'A' is a rather transparent icon. A large number of letter-icons in concrete poetry and in the poetry of E.E. Cummings — e.g. his use of the 'o' for the moon or of the two parentheses ')' and '(' for the crescents of the waxing and waning moon — belong to this category (see Michael Webster in this volume).

2.2 *Translucent letter-icons*

Letter-icons that are translucent seem to be conventionally or non-iconically used letters at first blush but once an inherent similarity between meaning and form has been pointed out, they reveal themselves as icons in a flash, and we wonder why we did not recognize their iconic character before. In the passage from the 'Prologue' to *Henry V* (ll.9–18) alluded to above we find five capital 'O's that to me are translucent icons:

> The flat unraised spirits that have dared
> On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth
> So great an object: Can this *cockpit* hold
> The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
> Within *this wooden* O the very *casques*
> That did affright the air at Agincourt?
> O, pardon! since a *crooked figure* may
> Attest in little place a *million*;
> And let us, *ciphers* to this great *accompt*,
> On your imaginary forces work

As there is only one other 'O' in the whole 'Prologue', namely at its very beginning, the crowding of five capital 'O's into this passage seems to me to turn these letters into translucent icons for the round objects mentioned, namely "cockpit", "wooden O" and "casques" (casks). However, the capital 'O's also stand for the circular zeros or "ciphers" (l. 17) which belong to the semantic field of such expressions in the passage as "crooked figure" (l. 15)[2], "million" (l. 16, connoting six zeros) and "accompt" (l. 17).

The cumulative evidence of letter-icons in this passage suggests that Shakespeare probably made a conscious use of translucent icons here but intentionality is of minor importance. Let me illustrate this by an example in which a typesetter's mistake resulted in an unintentional but superb icon. In the leader of *The Sunday Times* (2 August 1992: 2/3) we read:

> For the rest of this year, in the hope that the prime minister is right and we are *worng*, The Sunday Times will mute its criticism ...

Due to the wrong spelling ("worng") of the word 'wrong' the very form mirrors its meaning. It seems, compositors can be iconically creative too!

A rather special, diagrammatic use of the iconic potential of alphabetic letters is made by George Herbert (1974: 63) in his 'Easter-Wings'. In the middle of both stanzas of this famous pattern poem the capital letters 'M' and 'W' succeed each other in line-initial position. Both stanzas suggest two funnel-shaped outlines of wings. Now, the fifth line of each stanza marks the end of a process of diminution, decay: "Most poore" in stanza 1, and of thinning, "Most thinne" in stanza 2. However, the identical sixth line in each, "With thee", indicates the beginning of an inversion made possible with the help of God. Now this process of decay and regeneration is typographically mirrored by first a decrease and then an increase of line length. But, as Matthias Bauer has pointed out (in this volume), the reversal of man's fate with divine assistance is also iconically reinforced by putting 'M' and 'W' above each other in the text, thus making the initial letter 'W' of line six look like a mirror image or an inversion of the initial 'M' of the preceding line.

2.3 *Subliminal letter-icons*

The letter-icons of this class shade into the translucent letter-icons and are hardly perceptible to the reader nor does the author seem conscious of their presence. This subliminal use of letter-icons corresponds to the subliminal use of sound, rhythm and even syntax to reinforce meaning in numerous literary texts. For instance, I have discovered by accident that in poetry the word 'owl' is often accompanied by words containing a double 'oo'. In my opinion, the frequent [u:]-sound of these words are meant subliminally to suggest the typical hooting cry of the owl. In terms of iconic letters, however, particularly when such words as 'blood' and 'door' occur, which have no [u:]-sound, one may speculate whether words with an 'oo' in the immediate neighbourhood of the word 'owl' may also function as subliminal iconic hints at the two staring eyes of the bird.

An example of a subliminal iconic use of an alphabetic letter is offered by Lord Tennyson's poem 'St. Simeon Stylites' (1969: 542–51). This poem is a dramatic monologue spoken by the famous Syrian pillar saint St. Simeon, who lived on a pillar or column (Greek 'stylos') for some thirty years. Now, the whole text of Tennyson's poem is richly sprinkled with the first person singular, the capital letter 'I'. On one level this pervasive presence of the capital 'I' may be expressive of St. Simeon's extreme 'saintly' egotism. But in my view, the letter 'I' also functions as a subliminal icon of a pillar or column. I conclude this from a passage of the poem (ll. 157–64) where the capital letters 'I' are clustered around and stand in the immediate vicinity of the words 'pillar' (159), 'Stylites' (160) and 'column' (161) so that the iconic force of the capital 'I' rises to the surface and becomes translucent:

O my sons, my sons,
I, Simeon of the *pillar*, by surname
Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,
The watcher on the *column* till the end;
I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine bakes;
I, whose bald brows in silent hours become
Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now
From my high nest of penance here proclaim ...

In this passage the letter 'I' is put in a prominent or an isolated (properly stylitic) position four times: namely three times at the beginning of a line (ll. 158, 161 and 162), and once after a caesura (l. 159). Moreover, the iconic function of the letter 'I' in these cases seems to me strongly hinted at by the fact that four times a comma detaches or visually isolates the columnar letter 'I' from the rest of the line.

A further example of the subliminal use of an alphabetic letter is offered by Emily Dickinson (1970). Although only seven of her poems were published during her life-time, she seemed to have been more aware of latent iconic possibilities of letter-shapes and lineation than has commonly been assumed.

In her covertly erotic poem 'A Bee his burnished Carriage' (poem 1339) Dickinson alludes to the familiar analogy between the pollination of a flower and sexual intercourse:

A Bee his burnished Carriage
Drove boldly to a Rose –
Combinedly alighting –
Himself – his Carriage was –
The Rose received his visit
With frank tranquility
Withholding not a Crescent
To his Cupidity –

Their Moment consummated –
Remained for him – to flee –
Remained for her – of rapture
But the humility.

As can be seen, Dickinson sprinkles the upper-case letters 'C' (five of them) all over the first eight lines of this poem. In these lines, a sexual 'deflowering' by a supposedly male bee penetrating the blossom of a female flower is obliquely described. In my view, the capital 'C's here are subliminal icons of the crescent-shaped petals of the rose (the word 'Crescent' stands prominently at the end of a line roughly in the middle of the poem). I feel that Dickinson must have been aware of the traditional sexual meaning of the rose as the phrase "Withholding not a Crescent/To his Cupidity" (ll. 7–8) suggests. For the rose, at least since the mediaeval *The Romance of the Rose*, has retained its iconic symbolism of alluding to the female pudenda. It is further interesting to note that in the final four lines of the poem which, as it were, describe the 'post-coital' phase of detumescence, there occurs, significantly, just one lower-case 'c' in "consummated" (l. 9).

Dickinson uses the letter 'C' as a subliminal icon for a crescent in other poems as well, e.g. in poem 508 (ll. 11–12), "Called to my Full – The Crescent dropped –/Existence's whole *Arc*, filled up", or poem 1178 (ll. 3–6), where the letter 'G' is a sort of look-alike of 'C':

Fling up thy Ball of Gold
Till every Cubit play with thee
And every Crescent hold –
Elate the Acre at his feet –

There are numerous passages in which Dickinson uses the letter 'C' to emblematise and reinforce circular processes or round forms, such as a cycle, a circuit, a circle or circumference (see poems 160, 552, 802, 813, 889, 943, 967, 1129, 1631 and 1663).

3. The letter 'O' as icon

Let me now focus on the alphabetic letter that in literary texts since Shakespeare has most frequently been used for iconic purposes, namely the letter 'O'. Its round or oval shape may visually suggest any roughly circular object, such as a face, an eye, a ring, a crown, a wreath or a round target. It may help to evoke the orb of a heavenly body, the sun, moon or the earth. It may also be an icon for an opening: the mouth or female pudenda. However, the letter 'O' may also iconically stand for a circle, functioning as an emblem of perfection. And the letter 'O' may even be an icon for a circular process.

Let me illustrate the various iconic functions of the letter 'O' by a few selected textual examples.

3.1 *'O' as an icon of circular or round objects*

One of the chief iconic uses of the upper-case and lower-case letters 'O' in mainstream literature has been as an icon for round or roundish objects.

In a passage from *Love's Labour's Lost* (5.2.44–46), in which Rosaline and the Princess talk about letters and a portrait, we read:

Rosaline	My red dominical, my golden *letter*:
	O that your *face* were not so full of **O**'s!
Princess	A pox of that jest! and I beshrow all shrows.

The two 'O's here may be taken to function as transparent icons for the round pock-marks left by smallpox (see the word "pox" in the third line). Of course, the single 'O' at the beginning of line 45 may also be seen as an icon for "your face".

In a passage from Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* (4.15.62–64), the capital letter 'O' stands for a crown and garland. Cleopatra, watching the death of Antony, laments:

> ... **O**, see my women, [*Antony dies*]
> The *crown* **o**' the earth doth melt. My lord!
> **O**, wither'd is the *garland* of the war ...

The two capital "O"s and the lower case "o" of the abbreviated preposition seem to me transparent icons for the circular objects mentioned in the passage: "crown" (l.63; in *King John* [5.1.2] the crown is called "The circle of my glory"), and "garland" (l.64). In addition, the "o" may even emblematise "the earth" (l.63).

In *Absalom and Achitophel* (Part II, ll.457–63) John Dryden (1950: 143) uses the capital letter 'O' as a translucent icon for round corpulence. Here, as in *MacFlecknoe*, the butt of Dryden's satire is the fat Irish poet Thomas Shadwell, "A Tun of Man in thy large bulk is writ" (l. 195). Dryden uses the capital 'O' especially cleverly when he saddles Shadwell with the Biblical name "Og":

Now stop your noses, readers, all and some,
For here's a *tun* of midnight work to come.
Og, from a treason-tavern *rolling* home.
Round as a *globe*, and liquored ev'ry chink,
Goodly and *great* he sails behind his link.
With all his *bulk* there's nothing lost in Og,
For every inch that is not fool is rogue:

The various expressions used in connection with "Og" here, "tun", "rolling", "Round as a globe", "Goodly", "great" (big, stout) and "bulk", to me indicate that the capital 'O' in Shadwell's nickname has an iconic intent.

Let me add two examples from the poetry of Ezra Pound. In his early poem 'On His Own Face in a Glass' Pound (1977: 34–35) uses the capital 'O' as a translucent icon for his face mirrored in a looking-glass:

"On His Own *Face* in a Glass"

O strange *face* there in the glass!
O ribald company, O saintly host,
O sorrow-swept my fool,
What answer? O ye myriad
That strive and play and pass,
Jest, challenge, counterlie!
I? I? I?
And ye?

The theme of the poem is that our 'I' consists of a plurality of 'I's, even of a myriad. Now in the very title and the text of the poem, this concept is iconically expressed both imagically (the 'O' suggesting a round face) and diagrammatically (a number of 'O's, seven in all, standing for a number of faces or 'I's).[3]

Another example is offered by Pound's imagist poem 'Fan-Piece, for Her Imperial Lord' (1971: 108), especially in the printed edition that has an oversized initial 'O'. The capital 'O' of the text is a transparent icon of the typical circular shape of a Chinese fan, which was often used as a parting gift and whose white colour is a sign of mourning in China:

O *fan* of white silk,
clear as frost on the glass-blade,
You also are laid aside.

Pound, by choosing a large initial 'O' in the printed version, must have been influenced by Herbert Giles's more explicit translation of the original Chinese poem (1910). Giles's text also begins with a letter-icon, "**O** fair white silk", but it moreover contains the telling lines (3–4) that describe the round shape of the fan by means of a simile:

> See! friendship fashions out of thee a *fan*,
> *Round* as the *round moon* shines in heaven above.

3.1.1 *Iconic censorship in a passage by D.H. Lawrence*

An interesting case of the iconic representation of round objects by means of two upper-case 'OO's is offered by a passage in Ch. XIII, "Baxter Dawes", from D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. In that passage Paul and Clara are at the beach. Clara is naked and ready to go swimming. In the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of D.H. Lawrence* (1992: 401) we read the following, reconstituted *early* text:

> She was a white, velvet-skinned woman with heavy shoulders. A little wind, coming from the sea, blew across her body and ruffled her hair.
> "**OO**!" she said, hugging *her breasts* between her arms, "it's cold!"
> The morning was of a lovely, limpid gold colour. [...] She glanced at the sea, then looked at him. He was watching her with dark eyes which she loved and could not understand. She gathered *her breasts* between her arms, cringing, laughing:
> "**OO**, it will be so cold!" she said.
> He bent forward and kissed *the two white, glistening globes* she cradled. She stood waiting. He looked into her eyes, then away at the pale sands.

Obviously, there is a rather transparent use of the double "OO" as an icon for Clara's pair of breasts, an icon both of their globular form and of their whiteness, of "the two white, glistening globes". The doubleness and symmetry of "her breasts between her arms" is further reinforced by the repetition of "her breasts" on one hand and the chiastic arrangement of "OO!" > "her breasts" >< "her breasts" < "OO" on the other. Furthermore, the doubleness is also reflected in the alliterative repetition of "gl" in "glistening globes."

Now, when we compare the above version of the early text as it is presented in the *Cambridge Edition* with that of later editions, for instance, the *Penguin* edition of 1948, we are struck by the fact that the original passage underwent some heavy editing: Not only were some phrases censored but the original "OO!" was deleted and the second "OO" was subjected to a sort of, what I would call, *iconic censorship* by being printed "Oo". Here is the *Penguin* text (Lawrence 1948: 434):

> She was white and velvet skinned, with heavy shoulders. A little wind, coming from the sea, blew across her body and ruffled her hair.
>
> The morning was of a lovely limpid gold colour. Veils of shadow seemed to be drifting away on the north and the south. Clara stood shrinking slightly from the touch of the wind, twisting her hair. The sea-grass rose behind the white stripped woman. She glanced at the sea, then looked at him. He was watching her with dark eyes which she loved and could not understand. She hugged her breasts between her arms, cringing, laughing:
>
> "**Oo**, it will be so cold!" she said.
>
> He bent forward and kissed her, held her suddenly close, and kissed her again. She stood waiting. He looked into her eyes, then away at the pale sands.

The fact that both upper-case double "OO"s were deleted tells us that at least the editors seemed to have been aware that they were dealing with a transparent icon.

3.2 *'O' as an icon of celestial globes*

Writers have often iconically suggested the visual shape of sun, moon, the stars and of the earth by putting an 'O' just before or in the vicinity of their mention in the text.

3.2.1 *Stars*

Let me again start with Shakespeare. In a passage from *Midsummer Night's Dream* (3.2.187–88) Lysander has recourse to the lower-case 'o' in the plural:

> Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
> Than all yon fiery oes and *eyes* of light.

The 'oes' here are transparent icons for the fiery circles or stars, which are additionally compared to eyes.

3.2.2 *Earth*

In a passage from *Antony and Cleopatra* (5.2.79–81) Cleopatra says the following of Antony:

> His face was as the heav'ns, and therein stuck
> A *sun* and *moon*, which kept their course, and lighted
> The little **O**, th'*earth*.

The letter 'O' here is a transparent icon for the terrestrial globe. But at the same time, the letter 'O' also implies the orbs of sun and moon which are mentioned first and which implicitly seem to be the 'big' 'O's compared to "The little O" of "th'earth" (l. 81).

Christina Rossetti (1945: 478) in her Petrarchan sonnet 'Rest' (ll. 1–2) was again to use a translucent icon in connection with the earth:

> O *Earth*, lie heavily upon her *eyes*;
> Seal her sweet *eyes* weary of watching, *Earth*.

The chiastic arrangement of "Earth" > "heavily" > "her eyes" >< "her...eyes" < "weary" < "Earth", by coming full circle, additionally reinforces the circular image suggested by the letter 'O'. One may further suggest that the 'O' is also an icon of the eye (see Section 3.3 below). The globular form of the earth would then be a perfect seal for the equally globular eyes.

3.2.3 *Sun and moon*

In *Julius Caesar* (5.3.59–63) the letter 'O' functions as a translucent icon for the setting sun which is remarkable for its huge size when nearing the western horizon. Titinius says to Messala:

> But Cassius is no more. O setting *sun*,
> As in thy red rays thou dost sink to night,
> So in his red blood Cassius' day is set!
> The *sun* of Rome is set. Our day is gone,
> Clouds, dews, and dangers come. Our deeds are done.

Apart from these three capital 'O's in the quoted excerpt, there are another ten but non-iconic 'O's in Scene 3. However, the meaning of the quoted lines induces the iconicity of the capital 'O' which suggests the disc of the sun. It seems as if the letter-icon 'O', in imitation of the setting sun, is sinking down the lines: the sun is said to be "setting" (l. 59), to "sink" (l. 60), till he "is set" (ll. 61, 62), when finally the "day is gone" (l. 62), and everything is "done" (l. 63). It may be maintained that the sun's absorption by the western horizon is mirrored in the final incorporation of the 'O' in a word, namely in the two "Our"s (ll. 62, 63).

In his 'A Valediction: of Weeping', after having said "On a round ball" (l. 10), that is, having used a subliminally iconic way of visually suggesting the round earth, John Donne (1971: 84) also has recourse to the initially translucent icon of the letter 'O' for another celestial globe in the phrase (l. 19):

> O more than *moon*,
> Draw not up seas to drown me in thy *sphere*.

The word "sphere", however, retroactively converts the translucent into a transparent icon.

In his poem 'With how sad steps, O Moon' (ll. 1–2) Wordsworth also has recourse to the capital 'O' as an icon making it typographically suggest both "Moon" and "face":

> With how sad steps, O *Moon*, thou climb'st the sky,
> How silently, and with how wan a *face*!'

The modernists still availed themselves of the letter 'O' when they had the earth or moon in mind. Referring to the earth, Ezra Pound (1986: 290) magnifies the initial 'O' of the Latin beginning of 'Canto LV' in manuscript fashion in order to increase the iconic potential of the first letter of "**O**rbem".

And T.S. Eliot (1969: 67) writes in 'The Fire Sermon' of *The Waste Land* (line 199):

> O the *moon* shone bright on Mrs. Porter

thus continuing the tradition of using the letter 'O' as a translucent icon of sun, moon or earth.

3.3 *'O' as an icon of the eye*

Since Shakespeare the letter 'O' has been used by writers as an icon for the eye(s). In *Romeo and Juliet* (3.5.31–32), for instance, Juliet speaks the following words:

> Some say the lark and loathed toad change *eyes*;
> O, now I would they had changed voices too!

As the letter 'O' immediately follows after "eyes", it acquires a translucent iconic force.

In a passage from *King Lear* (4.2.80–82), Albany and a messenger talk about Gloucester's loss of his eyes:

> *Albany* But, O poor Gloucester!
> Lost he his other eye?
> *Messenger* Both, both, my Lord.

The letter 'O' in "O poor Gloucester!" is a translucent icon for "the other eye". But subliminally, the large number of lower-case 'o's in the three lines reinforce this icon. The double 'oo' in "poor" and the two "Both, both" — a pair of identical words (with an 'o' in their middle!) whose repetition seems to me to be more than a form of emphasis — iconically strengthen the fact that not just one but both eyes of Gloucester were blinded.

In the climactic scene in *Julius Caesar* (3.2.195–202), in which Antony finally shows Caesar's body to the plebeians, we find a repeated insistence on visual perception:

Anthony	[...]
	Kind souls, what weep you when you but *behold*
	Our Caesar's vesture wounded? *Look* you here!
	Here is himself, marr'd, as you *see*, with traitors.
1. Plebeian	O piteous *spectacle*!
2. Plebeian	O noble Caesar!
3. Plebeian	O woeful day!
4. Plebeian	O traitors! Villains!
1. Plebeian	O most bloody *sight*!

The five words ("behold", "Look", "see", "spectacle" and "sight") that emphasise the shocking sight of Caesar's wounded corpse are reflected and reinforced by six initial capital 'O's. In my view, the sequence of capital 'O's attributed to the four plebeians do not just stand for lamenting ejaculations but are also translucent letter-icons for the plebeian's eyes. In addition, each of the lines introduced by the letter 'O' also contains at least one more lower-case 'o', climaxing in l. 202 with three more 'o's. It is interesting to note that the first plebeian brackets the five 'O's by the two synonyms "spectacle" and "sight".

As a last illustrative example taken from Shakespeare let me just refer to his 'Sonnet 148' (1996: 106), which is concerned with the visual distortion caused by the mental trickery of love, by "love's eyes".

O me! what *eyes* hath love put in my head,
Which have no correspondence with true *sight*?
Or, if they have, where is my judgement fled,
That censures falsely what they *see* aright?
If that be fair whereon my false *eyes* dote,
What means the world to say it is not so?
If it be not, then love doth well denote
Love's *eye* is not so true as all men's: no

How can it? O how can love's *eye* be true,
That is so vexed with *watching* and with tears?
No marvel then though I mistake my *view*:
The sun itself *sees* not till heaven clears.
O cunning love, with tears thou keep'st me *blind*,
Lest *eyes*, well *seeing*, thy foul faults should find.

In the poem the expression "eye(s)" is used five times (ll. 1, 5, 8, 9, 14) and the act of seeing is alluded to seven times ("sight", "see", "watching", "view", "sees", "blind" and "seeing"). Lines 1, 9 and 13 put the capital letter 'O' in close vicinity to the words "eyes" and "eye". In ll. 8–9 we have a symmetrical arrangement of words that centres the capital "O": "Love's eye" > "How can" > "O" < "how can" < "love's eye", an arrangement which mirrors the symmetry of a pair of eyes.

Looking for corroboration in the other 153 sonnets we discover that those 81 poems that have a capital 'O' (37 with 'O' as a single letter, the others with 'O-' as a word-initial) usually have one to three of them. There are only two other sonnets that have four 'O's (23, 59) and one (65) has even five. Whereas in 'Sonnet 65' the 'O's do not seem to have any iconic function, we get some corroboration in 'Sonnet 23' where three of the four 'O's stand in direct connection with looking and eyes: "O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might: / O let my *looks* be then the eloquence" (ll. 8–9) and "O learn to *read* what silent love hath writ: / To hear with *eyes* belongs to love's fine wit" (ll. 13–14). And in 'Sonnet 59', which also deals with the act of seeing, we get: "O that recòrd could with a backward *look*" (l. 5).

However, there are further confirmations of the use of 'O' as an icon for the eye in other sonnets, such as 'Sonnet 47': "When that mine *eye* is famished for a *look*, / Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother" (ll. 3–4), and: "Or if they sleep, thy picture in my *sight* / Awakes my heart to heart's and *eye*'s delight" (ll. 13–14). Let me end by giving a last example from Shakespeare's sonnets, namely 'Sonnet 103', where it says: "O blame me not if I no more can write! / *Look* in your glass, and there appears a face" (ll. 5–6); the 'O' here may, of course, also be an icon for "glass" or "face".

Let me now point to two later examples in which the capital letter 'O' is used as an icon for the eye or eyes.

In Henry Vaughan's 'Cock-Crowing' (1976: 251–52) we find a passage (ll. 41–47) where the capital 'O' is employed as a translucent icon:

This veil thy *full-eyed* love denies,
And only *gleams* and fractions spies.

O take it off! make no delay,
But brush me with thy *light*, that I
May *shine* unto a perfect day,
And warm me at thy *glorious Eye*!
O take it off! ...

In this passage devoted to the perception of visual effects ("gleams", "light", "shine"), the juxtaposition of the two emphases, "full-eyed" and "glorious Eye", with the two capital 'O's in prominent position seems to me a clear indication that the letter 'O' here is informed by iconicity.

In John Keats's sonnet 'To Sleep' (1970: 511–12) we also find a translucent use of the letter 'O' as an icon for the eye(s):

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,
Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,
Our gloom-pleased *eyes*, embowered from the light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:
O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close,
In midst of this thine hymn, my willing *eyes*,
Or wait the Amen, ere the poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities.

It is noteworthy that the letter 'O' occurs several times to conform to the plural "eyes" and that it is given prominence by standing at the beginning of the four non-indented lines. In a more speculative vein one may say that the double 'oo', which occurs twice ("gloom" and "soothest") within three lines, may be interpreted as yet another icon for a pair of eyes.

But the use of capital 'O' as a letter-icon of the eye can also be found in prose. A good illustration is offered by the short story 'Mugby Junction. Main Line. The Boy at Mugby' (Dickens 1956: 515–24). In this dramatic monologue Charles Dickens makes a translucent iconic use of the letter 'O': it stands for the staring and omnipresent eye of the boy-narrator's superior in the railway Refreshment Room, for "the glare of Our Missis's eye" (515). To emphasise the glowering character of the superior's eye and its ubiquitous nature Dickens has recourse to the repetition of the formulaic phrase "Our Missis", a phrase that occurs fifty times on nine pages. Thus we read on the first two pages (515–16):

"**O**ur Missis's eye"
"Ah! **O**ur Missis"
"But **O**ur Missis,"
"where **O**ur Missis,"
"You should hear **O**ur Missis"

On the second page (516), Dickens writes the phrase "**O** my eye, my eye!" which is probably meant to give the reader a strong transparent hint that in this story the letter 'O' is meant to be an icon for an eye. The presence of this "Our Missis's eye" is so pervasive and powerful that it affects the boy-narrator so strongly that in his malapropisms he prefers words that contain the vowel 'o', as for example, "and her eyes **o**mitting sparks, flew at him, cotched the decanter out of his hand ..." (517); or, when he says of Mrs Sniff that she "had kep' her eye upon him [Mr Sniff] like the fabled **o**belisk ..." (524). A corroborating example of Dickens's awareness of the potential of the capital letter 'O' as a transparent icon was given above.

3.4 *'O' as an icon of an opening*

Frequently, the letter 'O' is also used as an icon for a roundish opening, a mouth or a hole.

3.4.1 *'O' as an icon of the mouth*

The letter 'O' represents a rounded vowel and it is an iconic image of the shape of our lips when we pronounce [o]. Thus the author of the Vulgate version of the Bible seems to have been aware of the iconic potential of the letter 'O' in the Latin word 'os' for 'mouth' (it may also mean 'bone') and 'osculum' for 'kiss', when he heaped up the 'o's in the 'Song of Solomon, 1.2':

> **o**sculetur me **o**sculo **o**ris sui

John Milton in his elegy 'Lycidas' uses the 'O' as a letter-icon of the mouth of a fountain: "**O** fountain Arethuse" (Milton 1968: 246, l. 85). There are only four isolated 'O's in the whole poem, which is a bit surprising for a long elegiac poem, and the closest 'O's in the text are roughly fifty and eighty lines apart. From this I conclude that the 'O' here is not just an interjection of lament but intentionally iconic.

The German poet Rilke also uses the letter 'O' as a transparent icon for the mouth of a fountain in a sonnet from *Die Sonette an Orpheus*, Zweiter Teil, XV (1974: 80–81):

> O Brunnen *Mund*, du gebender, du *Mund*

In the English translation of this line by J.B. Leishman and Stephen Spender (Rilke 1939), the iconic transparency of 'O' is greatly reinforced:

> O fountain-*mouth*, you giver, O you *round*
> *Mouth*

Whereas Rilke's text contains one upper-case 'O', printed as a very large initial in the Insel edition, and no lower-case 'o', in Leishman's and Spender's translation, apart from adding the word 'round', there are two transparently iconic upper-case 'O's and six lower-case 'o's. It seems that the translator may have had a more strongly developed sense of the iconic possibilities of the letter 'O'. Whether this is a poetic gain is a matter for argument.

In *Othello* (5.2.98–101), Othello addresses Emilia:

> O, insupportable! O heavy hour!
> Methinks it should be now *a huge eclipse*
> Of *sun* and *moon*, and that the affrighted *globe*
> Should *yawn* at alteration.

Although there is a high number of 'O's in Act 5, in this passage the letter 'O' occurs three times within three lines. Due to the semantic context, 'O' here additonally assumes iconic force and suggests the round shape of "sun", "moon" and "globe". But what seems equally, if not more, important here is that the 'O's in this excerpt may also suggest the earth's "yawn" (or wide gape as with an earthquake) expressing astonished fright at the quasi-cosmic change brought on by the murder of Desdemona.

Margaret Atwood (1995: 101), in the first part of her recent poem 'OH', uses the letter 'O' as a transparent icon for the circular shape of funeral wreaths which she, in turn, compares to "the shocked mouths grief has made" emitting their mute sighs in the form of "round silent Ohs":

> It's Christmas, and the green *wreaths*,
> festive and prickly, with their bright red
> holly berries, dot the graves,

> the shocked *mouths* grief has made
> and keeps on making:
> *round* silent Ohs,
> leafy and still alive
> that hurt when you touch them.
>
> *Look*, they are everywhere: Oh. Oh. Oh. Oh.
> What else can be said?

By using a number of "Oh"s to represent a number of wreaths in the cemetery, "Look, they are everywhere: Oh.Oh.Oh.Oh.", Atwood also has recourse to diagrammatic iconicity while at the same time emphasising visual perception, "Look".

3.4.2 *'O' as an icon of the female genitals*

Since antiquity, especially since the Roman writer Ausonius, and into the 20th century, alphabetic letters have been used as transparent and translucent icons for the male ('I') and especially the female ('O') genitals. Wilhelm Füger (1997) has described the long tradition of *usus obscenus litterarum*, especially of the letters 'C', 'D', 'I' and 'O'. He has also shown how Joyce in *Finnegans Wake* makes use of the capitals 'I' and 'O' in "immediate or close neighbourhood, thus suggesting their mutual attraction or intercourse respectively" (61).

Other modernists such as T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound have charged the letters 'I' and 'O' with sexual iconic meaning. Anthony Johnson (1976) has suggested that Eliot was influenced by Corbière in this respect and that in his poetry many of his 'I's and 'O's stand for the phallus and the vagina respectively. I feel that Johnson goes too far in his claim but there is at least one passage in Eliot's poem with the telling title 'Sweeney Erect' (ll. 13–16), where he uses the letter 'O' for the female pudendum:

> This withered root of knots of hair
> Slitted below and gashed with eyes,
> This *oval* O cropped out with teeth:
> The sickle motion from the thighs.

With the line "This oval O cropped out with teeth" (l. 15), a line into which three further o's have been crowded, Eliot obviously alludes not just to a mouth but, as the last line (16) describing a woman's movements during sexual intercourse suggests, he also refers to the concept of the *vagina dentata*. Eliot, by the way, has long been notorious for his obscene King Bolo poems, some of which have recently been made public (Eliot 1996).

Ezra Pound (1986) uses the combination 'Io' as an icon for the male genitalia (or possibly for both the male and the female genitals) in the passage from 'Canto XLVII' (238), which is devoted to sexual mysteries and the vegetation rituals associated with "the yearly slain" such as Adonis and Tamuz:

> Hast thou found a nest softer than cunnus
> Or hast thou found better rest
> Hast'ou a deeper planting, doth thy death year
> Bring swifter shoot?
> Hast thou entered more deeply the mountain?
>
> The light has entered the cave. **Io! Io!**
> The light has gone down into the cave,
> Splendour on splendour!

What Pound expresses here is the sacredness of the living forces and expecially of sexuality in connection with the mysteries of Eleusis: "*Sacrum, sacrum, inluminatio coitu.*" ('Canto XXXVI': 180).

A relatively recent sexual iconic use of the letter 'O' has been made by John Updike (1965) in his short story 'Wife-Wooing' (75):

> What soul took thought and knew that adding 'wo' to man would make a woman? The difference exactly. The wide **w**, the receptive **o**. *Womb*.[4]

But the iconic use of letters to suggest sexual organs (especially of the letter 'O' for the pudendum), that is, the rich tradition of the 'lovers' alphabet' (see Gordon Williams: 1994, Vol. II, 829), was also familiar to Shakespeare, Donne and other 17th century authors. Let me just quote some telling examples.

In Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (4.1.50–52), we discover a rather transparent use of the letter 'O' as a sexual icon in the conversation between the Welsh parson Sir Hugh Evans, Mrs Page, Mrs Quickly and the boy William Page:

Evans	Leave your prabbles, 'oman. — What is the *focative case*, William?
William	**O**, — *vocativo*, **O**.

The quibbling on 'case' (for female pudenda), 'focative' and 'vocativo' (for 'fuck') obliquely and yet clearly suggests to us that the letter 'O' is a ribald icon here standing for something that defines any "'oman".

In *Romeo and Juliet* (3.3.81–90) the lascivious Nurse, also using the term 'case' for the female pudenda, tells the friar:

Nurse	O holy Friar, O, tell me, holy Friar,	
	Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?	
Friar L.	There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.	
Nurse	O, *he is even in my mistress' case,*	
	Just in her case. O woeful sympathy,	
	Piteous predicament. Even so lies she,	
	Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering.	
	Stand up, stand up. Stand, and you be a man.	
	For Juliet's sake, for her sake, *rise and stand.*	
	Why should you fall into so deep an O?	

The Nurse's four lamenting 'O's acquire their sexually iconic force due to the bawdy punning context and their vicinity to, or juxtaposition with, the quibble on "case" for pudendum, as in the two lines: "O, he is even in my mistress' case" (l. 84) and "Just in her case. O ..." (l. 85).

If the last 'O' in this thoroughly ribald passage, namely in the Nurse's question addressed to Romeo, "Why should you fall into so deep an O" (l. 90), is seen in the context of such quibbling words as "stand", "rise" and "fall", the letter 'O' is less a rendering of a "profound groan", as the note in the *New Cambridge Shakespeare* wishes us to believe (140, note on line 90), than an icon for the vagina.

This sexually iconic use of the letter 'O' is further corroborated by a passage in the same play (3.5.46–47) where Juliet in a conversation with Romeo grieves:

> O, by this *count* I shall be much in years
> Ere I again behold my Romeo.

The bawdy iconic function of the capital 'O' here can be recognised when one is aware that in *Romeo and Juliet*, as Frankie Rubinstein (1995) has pointed out, Shakespeare uses "count" here as a pun on 'cunt'. In her 'Introduction' to *A Dictionary of Shakespeare's Sexual Puns and Their Significance*, Rubinstein writes: "'By my [or "this"] count' is used twice in the play (the only two occurrences of the phrase in Shakespeare) and each time it means not only 'by my [this] reckoning' but also 'by my [this] cunt" (xi; the other quibbling use of "count" is made by Juliet's mother in 1.3.71). It is noteworthy that after this phrase Juliet begins her three addresses to Romeo with what, I feel, is a sexually iconic 'O' (ll. 51, 54, 60).

A further corroboration is found in another passage of *Romeo and Juliet* (2.1. 37–38), where Mercutio in a bawdy joke makes an almost transparent use of the iconic 'O':

> O Romeo, that she were, O that she were
> An *open-arse* and thou a poperin pear!

The suggestion that the letter 'O' is a sexual icon here gains even more force when we remember that just a few lines before Mercutio quibbled about raising "a spirit in his mistress' *circle*" (2.1.24).

And finally, if more proof should be wanted, there is Postumus' misogynist speech in *Cymbeline* (2.5.1–35) where the bawdy quibbles on "pudency" and "the woman's part" in the first half strongly suggest that the 'O' in the following quotation (ll. 14–19) is a sexual icon:

> This yellow Iachimo ...
> [...]
> Like a full-acorn'd boar, a German one,
> Cried 'O!' and mounted; found no opposition
> But what he look'd for should oppose and she
> should from encounter guard....

On the subliminal level, there is a crowding of lower-case 'o's (there are fifteen) in the three lines (18–20) following the capital 'O', which is rather unusual and which reinforces the bawdy letter-icon.

To round off this subject, let me just have a brief look at John Donne (1971: 124–26). In his highly erotic 'Elegy 19: To His Mistress Going to Bed' (ll. 25–28), where the lover pleads with his woman-friend, we also encounter a use of the letter 'O' as a translucent icon of the female pudendum:

> Licence my roving hands, and let them go
> Before, behind, between, above, below.
> O my America, my new found land,
> My kingdom safliest when with one man manned ...

Both the fact that this is the only capital 'O' in the text and the bawdy semantic context suggest to me that we have a sexual letter-icon here.

3.5 *'O' as an icon of perfection*

The letter 'O' has also been used as an icon of the circle, a traditional symbol of perfection. In John Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* (1950: 120, ll. 838–39), we find a couplet where the capital letter 'O' functions as such a transparent icon both for the circular nature of a person's life and of the perfection of the brief life of Barzillai's son, "snatched in manhood's prime" (l. 833):

O narrow *circle*, but of pow'r divine,
Scanted in space, but *perfect* in thy line!

The capital 'O' as a translucent icon for the most perfect geometrical figure, namely the circle, also recurs in later poets.

Thus, in Alexander Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, Part II — an essay, by the way, in which Pope shows a keen awareness of the great iconic potential of poetic language — there is a passage (Pope 1968: 151–52, ll.247–52; Pope's emphases) in which the capital letter 'O' is used as a translucent icon for Michelangelo's perfect circular dome of St. Peter's in Rome (reinforced by the rounded parentheses):

Thus when we view some well-proportion'd Dome
(The *World*'s just Wonder, and ev'n *thine*, O *Rome*!),
No single Parts unequally surprize;
All comes *united* to th' admiring Eyes;
No monstrous Height, or Breadth, or Length appear;
The *Whole* at once is *Bold* and *Regular*.

In a similar way, John Keats in his 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' (Keats 1970, 537, ll.41–42) iconises both the round shape and the perfection of the Greek urn:

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with *brede*
Of marble men and maidens *overwrought*,

There are only two detached capital 'O's in the whole poem, but only the initial 'O' in line 41 is in a prominent, highly visible position, giving it the force of an icon. And the capital 'O' of "Of" in line 42 reinforces the idea of circular perfection as well as of a braid of pictures encircling the urn.

3.6 *'O' as an icon of a circular process*

The capital letter 'O', when seen as a circle, has also been used as a translucent icon or rather diagram for a circular or cyclical process.

In a passage from his poem 'Obsequies to the Lord Harrington' (Donne 1971: 256–63, ll.93–96), John Donne first points to the reader's distinct perception of single letters in the reading process:

Just as a perfect reader doth not dwell,
On every syllable, nor stay to spell,
Yet without doubt, he doth distinctly see
And lay together every A, and B;

From this we may confidently conclude that what is distinct for the reader is even more distinct for the author. In other words, Donne was visually aware of the single letters of the alphabet.

Donne, similar to Dryden in the example from *Absolom and Achitophel* quoted above, then goes on (ll. 101–106) to lament the narrow circle of life "in short-lived good men" (l. 97):

> O why should then these men, these lumps of balm
> Sent hither, this world's tempests to becalm,
> Before by deeds they are diffused and spread,
> And so make us alive, themselves be dead?
> O soul, O *circle*, why so quickly be
> Thy ends, thy birth and death closed up in thee?

This passage contains three out of the four isolated capital 'O's used in the poem (the fourth capital 'O' emblematises a sun-dial). To me, the three 'O's, especially the 'O' preceding the word "circle", are translucent, even transparent icons visually evoking the cycle of man's brief life.

A similar iconic use of the letter 'O' is made by T.S. Eliot in his first chorus of 'Choruses from *The Rock*' (Eliot 1969: 147, ll. 1–7):

> The Eagle soars in the summit of Heaven,
> The Hunter with his dogs pursues the *circuit*.
> O perpetual *revolution* of configured stars,
> O perpetual *recurrence* of determined seasons,
> O world of *spring and autumn, birth and dying*!
> The endless *cycle* of idea and action,

In my reading, the three initial capital 'O's (ll. 3–6) form a trinity of diagrammatic icons for the eternal circularity or cycle of all cosmic and natural ("spring and autumn, birth and dying!") processes, a circularity that Eliot variously calls "circuit," "revolution" (in its etymological sense), "recurrence" and "cycle" in this passage.

4. Conclusion

I hope enough has been said and shown to convince the reader that alphabetic letters have had iconic functions in mainstream literary texts in English at least since Shakespeare. Of course, I am aware that the iconic use of letters in literary texts is of a rather restricted nature. However, as it is part and parcel of what there is on the page, I feel that it is well worth considering and that it deserves further investigation.

Notes

1. All emphases in bold and in italics in the quotations are mine.
2. As Olga Fischer has pointed out to me, in Shakespeare's time, 'crooked' still had the meaning of 'curved' or 'bent'. The *OED* lists as the first meaning of the adjective 'crooked': "1.a. Bent from the straight form; having...bends and angles; curved, bent, twisted, tortuous, wry". The last quotation illustrating the use of 'crooked' with the meaning 'bent', 'curved' is from *Lady of the Lake* (1810, I.xxiii) by Walter Scott: "That falchion's crooked blade". In addition, the two 'oo's in this word give it an iconic touch of its own. 'Figure' stands for "a numerical symbol" (OED, meaning 19a)
3. On the difference between 'imagic iconicity' and 'diagrammatic iconicity' see the 'Introduction'.
4. The 'w' may suggest wide open legs. See Wilhelm Füger (1997) for the tradition of anthromorphic letter shapes.

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'singing is silence'

Being and Nothing in the Visual Poetry of E. E. Cummings*

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1. Introduction

The American poet E. E. Cummings (1894–1962) created an iconic visual poetry based on his own idiosyncratic syntactic and spatial dislocations of words on the page. He also wrote a great number of poems in traditional forms, including many sonnets and quite a few poems in the exacting French form of the *ballade*. This paper explores how Cummings employed iconic means in both traditional and visual forms to convey abstract ideas of being and nothing which he associated with images of twilight and silent singing. While Cummings used iconic techniques in all his poems, his visual poetry calls attention to these techniques by radical word-splitting, spatial arrangements of words, and syntactic dislocation. Far from being mere technical displays, however, Cummings' visual poems use an iconic visual shorthand to embody or make present the linear rhetorical paradoxes of his poems written in more traditional forms.

Cummings used iconic techniques of presence and absence (visual form and blank space) to present in living form his philosophy of self-transcendence. Though this philosophy is expressed in *fin-de-siècle* images like twilight and silence, it is actually a personal amalgam of Emersonian transcendentalism and American individualism. Unlike the symbolist poets, Cummings presents the twilight not as a haven for a world-weary and lovelorn poet, but as a time when the physical un-world dissolves into "dream" and the self becomes one with nature. At twilight, the moon, stars, and songs of birds emerge to blur and overwhelm what Cummings calls the un-world (and what we tend to call the 'real' world), creating a transcendent and evanescent world of being which Cummings represents with words like *are*, *is*, *if*, *am*, *dream*, *silence*, *mystery*, *miracle*, *nothing*, *nowhere*, *singing*, *grow*, and *begin*.

2. Linear and iconic paradoxes

First, I would like to look at how Cummings approaches these themes within the linear confines of a sonnet, which, while it is conventional in many formal, generic respects, also is representative of the iconic effects that Cummings creates in his more formal rhetorical poems. This twilight poem is called "luminous tendril of celestial wish" (Cummings 1994: 669):

luminous tendril of celestial wish

(whying diminutive bright deathlessness
to these my not themselves believing eyes
adventuring,enormous nowhere from)

querying affirmation;virginal

immediacy of precision: more
and perfectly more most ethereal
silence through twilight's mystery made flesh—

dreamslender exquisite white firstful flame

—new moon!as(by the miracle of your
sweet innocence refuted)clumsy some
dull cowardice called a world vanishes,

teach disappearing also me the keen
illimitable secret of begin

In this sonnet, the poet addresses the new moon as one might a lover or a deity. (For an extensive discussion of Cummings' moon poems, see Heusser 1997a.) The poem encapsulates many of Cummings' twilight themes: while erasing and blurring the un-world, twilight allows the timebound self to disperse into the timeless dreamworld, here represented by the new moon. Yet the poet asserts a number of paradoxes about this twilight state of being. Despite appearing in the world of time, the moon is both "ethereal" and deathless: it poses questions yet affirms: it is immediate yet precise. Described as "dreamslender", it is both slender like a dream and a lender of dreams. Like a deity who comes to dwell among men, the moon puts "flesh" (through the agency of "twilight's mystery") on its own "most ethereal / silence", causing the clumsy, cowardly un-world to vanish. In addition, it teaches the "secret of begin" to the "disappearing also" self of the poet, whose eyes (or "i's" — various selves) do not believe themselves, are not themselves, and yet somehow are still "believing eyes".

Like the un-world, the clumsy, dull self of the poet disappears as it merges with twilight and learns "the secret of begin" from the emergent new moon. Twilight blurs enough distinctions to allow the self to "begin" to merge with the dream world of deathlessness. Both the eyes of the self and the new moon ("diminutive bright deathlessness") have (ad)ventured forth from "enormous nowhere" to become or begin to be both in and out of the world of time. Cummings' paradoxes, illogical in the un-world, make sense only in the dream-world of "begin" that has been ushered in by twilight and the new moon.

Although written in a traditional form, "luminous tendril of celestial wish" nonetheless contains iconic effects. For example, the isolation in space of three individual lines (lines 1, 5, and 9) may be taken to refer to the thin, solitary, new moon. The reader may also, if he or she wishes, leap across intervening linear syntax to read these three lines as a single consecutive description of the moon. (Thus: "luminous tendril of celestial wish ... querying affirmation;virginal ... dreamslender exquisite white firstful flame".) These leaps are called "spatial syntax" by Richard D. Cureton, who notes that Cummings almost always embeds them in syntactically coherent (if not always normally ordered) statements (1986: 272). Cummings employs spatial syntax in both traditional and visual forms, but it is probably more common in his visual poetry. In "luminous tendril of celestial wish" a simple example of spatial syntax occurs at the end of the poem in the white space after the last word "begin". By omitting the final period or full stop, Cummings iconically reinforces the verbal paradox of ending the poem with the word "begin". Lacking a final period, the blank space invites the reader (and poet) to "begin" to be a self outside the clumsy un-world, outside of words themselves — to begin a disappearance into the silent mystery and "illimitable secret of begin". A similar use of white space to indicate emptiness, nothing, or beginning occurs in line four, "adventuring,enormous nowhere from)" in which the syntax mirrors the thought — "from" comes *after* "nowhere", emphasizing the blankness of the moon's beginnings, as does the blank white space that separates the end of this line from the next. And the new moon itself appears from nowhere as the parenthesis at the end of the line. In a remark from a letter which he copied into his notes (now at the Houghton Library, Harvard University), Cummings commented on his use of white space, the visual nature of all his poems, and why line-drawings are superfluous ornaments to his poems:

> so far as I'm concerned,each poem is a picture γραφη – γραφω "I write"(whence our word "graphic")but originally "I make lines"--cf the Poet-Painter of China)and the paperspace around each poem is a where in which it heres or a surface on which it floats. Consequently,line-drawings-on-the-poempage strike me(much as I love to write by drawing)as redundant
>
> (letter to CHFord
> Easter Sunday,1943[1]

Iconicity is often a technique of presence, of reader involvement, a way of bringing to words and spaces the movement and immediacy of life. For Cummings, the poem "heres" or "floats" on the white surface "where" of the page. Each poem is present, living and acting on the page. Yet we have seen that Cummings also uses the white space of the page to indicate absence, a twilight erasure, the dissolution of the world and the self into a transcendent other. Closely allied with this present/absent dichotomy is another as well: the speaking/silent character of signs on the page. While the quotation above stresses the visual nature of *all* his poems, elsewhere Cummings commented on at least one difference between his rhetorical and visual poetry: "not all my poems are to be read aloud — some ... are to be seen & not heard" (1969: 267).

The visual poems are silent in other ways as well. In general, Cummings' more visual poetry "draws" paradoxes in iconic ways rather than presenting them in aphoristic rhetoric. Sometimes the persona of the poet disappears entirely or is present only in the structure of the iconic word-images presented by the poem. The visual poems often end with Zen-like questions rather than with affirmations or (as in the poem just discussed) with apostrophes to the being depicted in the poem. Rather than presenting *verbal* paradoxes of transcendence, the visual poems present *iconic* paradoxes of the silent singing of visual signs and of the transformation of the self into nothing.

a-

float on some
?
i call twilight you

'll see

an in
-ch
of an if

&

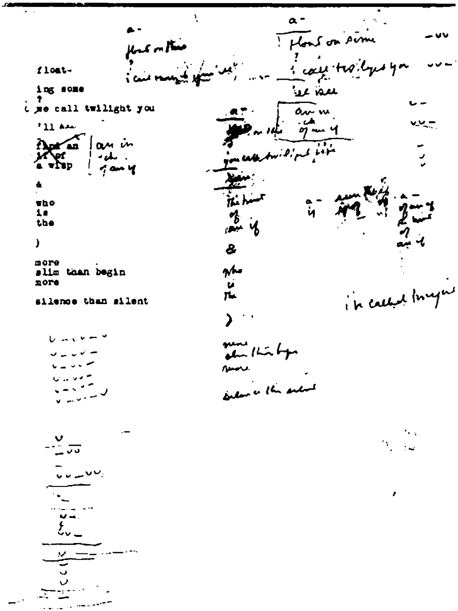
who
is
the

)

more
dream than become
more

am than imagine

Like "luminous tendril of celestial wish", this poem (Cummings 1994: 571) is about metaphysical feeling occasioned by viewing a sliver of the moon at twilight. The "i" persona of the poet appears in this poem, too, but here "twilight's mystery" becomes the more tentative and iconic "some / ? / i call twilight". Somewhat like the sonnet, this more iconic poem is organized in a 1–3–1 line pattern (lacking, of course, the final couplet). But its use of iconism is more daring. Two non-alphabetic symbols, the question mark [?] and ampersand [&], "draw" ideas that cannot quite be sounded out as words. The question mark takes the place of the word(s) "thing" or "where" in the word(s) "something" or "somewhere", but it is put in graphic form to indicate the fluid, liminal nature of twilight and to indicate the poet's reluctance to characterize twilight's mystery as a "thing" (cf. Friedman 1960: 105). In addition, as Eva Lia Wyss pointed out to me at the conference in Zürich, the question mark mirrors in slightly distorted fashion the lower-case "i" of the poet directly below it. Thus, the questionable thingness and whereness of twilight is mirrored in the poet's lower-case self. The ampersand foreshadows the icon that makes up the whole of the next isolated line: the right parenthesis which represents the sliver of a



float-
ing some
?
we call twilight you
'll

~~float an~~
~~if of~~
a wisp

&

who
is
the

)

more
slim than begin
more

silence than silent

Figure 1.

new moon. (In correspondence, Professor Max Nänny noted that the parentheses are called 'lunulae' or 'little moons' by typesetters.) In a visual paradox, this parenthesis both asks and answers the poem's question — "who / is / the /) [moon]". The moon is both there (it "heres") and *not* there on the page. By using form to imitate meaning, the iconic device presents an ethereal message that is literally 'unspeakable'.

While some elements of the poem are unpronounceable, manuscript evidence shows that Cummings nevertheless scanned the entire poem, silent 'sounds' included (Figure 1).[2] Notice that the draft of the last phrase reads differently, but scans exactly the same as the final version. (Perhaps the poet replaced "more // silence than silent" with "more // am than imagine" because he thought that mentioning silence would be redundant in a poem containing silent signs.) As you can see, Cummings first annotated the meter as a regular sound-pattern, disregarding the visual 1–3–1 line pattern.[3] Like this:

∪ ___ ∪ ∪ ___ ∪
a- float on some ? i
∪ ___ ∪ ∪ ___
call twi light you'll see
∪ ___ ∪ ∪ ___
an in -ch of an if
∪ ___ ∪ ∪ ___
& who is the)
∪ ___ ∪ ∪ ___
more dream than be come
∪ ___ ∪ ∪ ___ ∪
more am than im ag ine

Above the second long mark, Cummings has penciled in a barely visible question mark, indicating either a hesitancy to award a stress or long pause to a silent "syllable", or his emphatic insistence that the question mark be stressed. The top right of the draft sheet shows at least some hesitation, for Cummings does not scan the question mark there. At any rate, when Cummings next scanned the poem as it appears on the page (at the bottom left of the draft sheet), the position taken by the question mark is most decidedly marked as stressed or long. If we attach these markings to the poem, it looks something like this:

∪
a-
—— ∪ ∪
float on some
——
?
∪ ∪ —— ∪ ∪ ——
i call twilight you'll see
∪ ——
an in
-ch
∪ ∪ ——
of an if
∪
&
——
who
∪
is
∪
the
——
)
∪
more
—— ∪ ∪ ——
dream than become
∪
more
—— ∪ ∪ —— ∪
am than imagine

Besides marking the two silent syllables [?] and [ )] as long, Cummings indicates two elisions ("you / 'll" and "-ch / of") across the visual 1–3–1 line pattern. Though I know of few other visual poems for which Cummings worked out the scansion, this annotation shows how he thought silent "syllables" could "sing" in a visual-verbal scheme. The parenthesis-icon, like the moon, barely exists — it is a long silent sound in the metrics of the poem; it is more like a dream than an actual physical object in the sky; it is an "in / -ch / of an if" — yet it is more "am" — more present, alive, and existent on the page — than it is imagined.[4] Norman Friedman noted that the delicate effect of substituting silent syllables for the unnamed moon was encased or offset by the rhythms implied in the 1–3–1 line pattern: "... at the same time there is within and around these devices a pulsing regularity caused by the line-arrangement pattern, a rhythm that prevents the aesthetic effect from becoming altogether too volatile" (1960: 105). Though he could not have known of it, perhaps Friedman sensed the presence of that other rhythmic pattern annotated by Cummings in manuscript, working in a kind of counterpoint to the visual-verbal rhythms of the 1–3–1 line pattern.

In addition to being answered visually, the question of "who / is / the /) [moon]" is also answered rhetorically: the moon is "more / dream than become / more // am than imagine". This phrase is odd because Cummings usually associates the word *dream* with imagination and the word *become* with being or "is" ("am"). One way of interpreting these final lines is to see them as rhetorically reinforcing the iconic oscillation of being represented by the question mark and parenthesis. The final lines imply that, like the silent signs, the twilight and moon are absent and present at once: they exist ("am") as parts of nature, parts of the time-world which "becomes", while at the same time they partake of the world of "dream", which for Cummings represents transcendence of nature. The new moon is simultaneously more in the dream-world than in the world of becoming (waxing) and more in the real world of being ("am") than in the unreal one of imagination. The poet may also be saying that the moon's being ("am") surpasses the world of art or imagination. In a similar way, using the parenthesis icon as a stand-in for the crescent moon [ )] goes beyond the normal sign system of written language, while at the same time the single parenthesis functions within language to indicate, as Olga Fischer pointed out to me in correspondence, the moon's "'half' existence" set apart from the main text. As Robert Wegner points out, "the moon is both *afloat* and *a float*" (1965: 151), both floating above or beyond the observer and a real shining presence parading in the sky. In the same way, the parnethesis-icon both floats beyond language and "heres" on the page.

3. Iconic singing

The themes of silent singing and twilight are found together in many other Cummings poems. For example, in "light's lives lurch" (1994: 633), an army of "unbeing" ghosts rises from "a once world" at dusk, while the poet asks his love to "stand with me while silence sings / not into nothing and nothing into never / and never into ... forever". And in an earlier poem (1994: 428), the poet ("ignorant disappearing me") feels "hurling vastness of love" enter him at twilight,

> (emptying our soul
> of emptiness)priming at every pore
> a deathless life with magic until peace
> outthunders silence.

The transformation of self into dream occurs in these silent twilight moments; that transformation is part of the singing of silence. The silence that "through twilight's mystery" was made "flesh" in "luminous tendril of celestial wish" (1994: 669), is seen in a late poem as actual, living flesh: "(silence is the blood whose flesh / is singing)" (1994: 839). In other poems, too, songs made by nature are paradoxically silent: in one, the poet hears "a cloverish silence of thrushsong" (1994: 745), while in another he listens to the "quitenotimaginable silenceofsound" that is the rain (1994: 754).

In one poem, "all which isn't singing is mere talking" (1994: 804), the poet fears that the noise and the talk of radio and the un-world will drown out the silence of being. The poem asserts that only singing sounds can co-exist with the silence of being. Furthermore, it contends, talking is only "talking to oneself", and thus does not communicate, but only drives "dumb mankind dizzy with haranguing". (I take this line to refer to the hypnotic effect of the radio speeches of the 1930s and 40s.) The poem concludes its series of contrasts between singing and talking, nature and culture, and silence and technology with the assertion that singing is at one with the silent being of nature: "the very song of(as mountains / feel and lovers)singing is silence" (1994: 804). The innermost mystery of singing, its "very song", is somehow felt by mountains and lovers to be silent.

In the poem "these children singing in stone a / silence" (1994: 525), Cummings speaks explicitly of a silent, visual work of art which nevertheless sings. As Wendy Steiner has shown, this ekphrastic poem uses a number of devices (enjambments, puns, split words, repeated words) to interrupt the "temporal flow" (1982: 43) of the syntax, while at the same time its repetitive, rondo-like nature imitates that most temporal of arts, music. If, as I suspect, the poem is an *ekphrasis* of Donatello's famous *cantoria* in Florence, then its rondo-like repetitions may also be an imitation of the twisting, circular — yet flat and friezelike — dance of the putti in the singing gallery.[5] Just as the parenthesis-icon in "a- / float" demonstrates visually the paradoxical presence/absence of the moon, so does the poem "these children sing in stone a / silence" indicate rhetorically Cummings' conception of a paradoxically silent song, "made / of silent as stone silence of / song" (1994: 525). But for Cummings, the most obvious and perhaps least paradoxical form of silent singing occurs in his visual poems that "are to be seen & not heard" (1969: 267).

The poem "birds(" (1994: 448) depicts and describes how birdsong fades into silence (into being and nothing) at twilight. In this poem, the parentheses represent swallows flying at dusk, while the diminishing stepped letters at the end depict the birds' vanishing, soon silent, singing "voices" (which nevertheless still "are"). The birds' voices fade into "twilight's vastness", into "Be" and "now" and "soul" until they "are" "a" part of the silence:

birds(
      here.inven
ting air
U
)sing

tw
iligH(
t's
  v
    va
       vas
vast

ness.Be)look
now
    (come
soul;
&:and

who
   s)e
      voi
c
es
(
are
  ar
    a

Through the silently singing visual sign, Cummings represents the being or life or mystery that cannot be put into words. Yet the poem is full of musical effects, some achieved, paradoxically, by visual means. For example, the repeated parentheses, alternating left and right, show us visually the swallows (or 'swifts') passing to and fro, while at the same time they function as rests or bars might in a musical score. And when you try to speak aloud the scarcely pronounceable sequence that begins at line three, "ting air / U / sing / tw / iligH(/ t's / v / va / vas / vast / ness", a music very much like the twittering of birds results. The vastness of twilight is rendered in a kind of stutter, or if you like, musical progression or crescendo, which is mirrored by the reverse stutter or diminuendo at the end of the poem: "are / ar / a". Manuscripts at the Houghton Library show that Cummings experimented with several endings before deciding on the final version:

1. who	2. who	3. who
s)e	s)e	s)e
voi	voi	voi
c	c	c
es	es	es
(	(a-re	(a-r)E
a		
-r)		
e		[bMS Am 1823.5 (54)]

The unpronounceable dying fall of the printed ending refers to the fading cries of the birds, to the dissolution of the self (addressed in the third stanza: "Be)look / now / (come / soul") into twilight, and to the paradoxical oneness of song and silence, of bird-voices and man-soul. Thus, this dying fall ("are / ar / a") signifies both being ("are") and nothing ("a" — a thing unnamed and unnameable). Or, as Martin Heusser puts it rather dramatically in his recent book, twilight indicates in Cummings both "an immensely powerful order which underlies everything" and "the horror that lies in the infinite" (Heusser 1997b: 197–198).

In fact, the visual-musical effects are essential for rendering the silent singing of the twilight moment of transformation. The paradox of silent singing is embodied in the musical, yet difficult-to-pronounce sequences of chopped-up words. Through puns, the poet indicates how the human self disperses into the twilight like the disappearing birds and their fading song: it is "U" who sings with the birds' metaphorical and silent song of flight, making birds' and men's "voices" indistinguishable. And further down the page, the Italian plural "you" ["voi"] is integral with the "voi / c / es" that "are" on the page even as the poet questions "who / s)e" they are. The polyglot sequence continues in Franglais with "c / es (/ are", meaning "these [birds, voices, humans] are being, are one". These visual "voices" of the birds are scattered in the vastness of the sky, whose shape they mirror. Mysteriously, each succeeding "stanza" of the poem is stepped one space further to the left than its predecessor, initiating a subtle counter-descent to the rightward sweep of "twilight's vastness" and the birds' disappearing song at the end of the poem. Visually and syntactically, the poem ends with a question, the certainty of a mystery.

We have seen how Cummings uses iconic means to reinforce and embody paradoxical themes like silent singing and the twilight dissolution of self into the being of nothingness. I will close with a far-from-transcendental poem that shows how an iconicity that serves to sketch an imagist portrait can at the same time embody Cummings' transcendental themes, in this case that of silent singing. The poem (1994: 611) is about a Chinese laundryman at work:

chas sing does(who
,ins
tead,
smiles alw

ays a trifl
e
w
hile ironin

g!
nob odyknowswhos esh
?i
rt)n't

Cummings explicated this poem in a letter to an unknown correspondent, dated February 9, 1949:

> "chas sing" ... is the name of a Chinese laundryman on Minetta Lane(maybe Street). This poem tells you that,in spite of his name, he doesn't sing(instead,he smiles always a trifle while ironing nobody knows whose shirt. I can't believe you've never done any ironing: but,if you have,how on earth

> can you possibly fail to enjoy the very distinct pictures of that remarkable process given to you by the poet's manipulating of those words which occur in the poem's parenthesis?! (1969: 162)

The poem does indeed present an iconic imitation of the work of ironing. For example, the word-breaks and commas in the first stanza depict the hesitation in stroke and smoothing of wrinkles that occur in ironing. The second stanza sweeps back and forth, while the third imitates various intensities of steam-action, whether shooting from the spout ("g!"), merely whooshing ("nob odyknowswhos esh"), or quietly hissing and gurgling ("?i" and "rt)n't"). Despite Cummings' disclaimer in the letter, poem, iron, and laundryman *do* sing, albeit silently, in the movement of the poem. The poem sets up the paradox rhetorically, by clearly stating in the first line that "chas sing *does*", only to negate that statement and the obvious meaning of the laundryman's name in the last line. Even the laundryman's first name contains within it a silence/sound paradox. For "chas" is an abbreviation of "Charles" and as such, would not normally be pronounced aloud in American English. (No doubt the first two words of the poem mimic the sign-board outside Mr. Sing's shop and not his name as it was spoken.)

Like "a- / float" and "birds(", this poem wonders about a "who". Who the moon is, whose voices are singing, and whose shirt is being ironed are all matters left up to the reader to ponder. The mystery of "who", of personality, lies at the heart of many of Cummings' poems about transcendence. Martin Heusser points out that because the questions in these poems are about a mystery, they are meant to be "unanswerable" (1997a: 57). Heusser quotes the ending of "my darling since" (1994: 368):

> (for only Nobody knows
> where truth grows why
> birds fly and
> especially who the moon is.

At moments of transcendence, being and nothing merge, so only a 'being' named Nobody could possibly know the truth about the moon's personality. As we have seen, in these liminal, twilight moments the personality of the poet-self merges with the mysterious and evanescent 'personalities' of natural phenomena. Personality is seen as spirit, or as a self that dissolves into a state of being that looks very much like nothing. And personalities act in mysterious ways. We do not know who the moon is, or whose voices are singing when bird-song has faded, or whose shirt Charles Sing is ironing. We do not even know why Mr.

Sing does *not* sing, but only smiles a trifle while ironing. These are the mysteries of being and nothing that Cummings has embodied in his visual-verbal icons.

Notes

* The quotation "singing is silence" forms part of the last line of Cummings' sonnet "all which isn't singing is mere talking" (1994: 804). This paper is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Ruth Webster, who knew why people do not sing when they are ironing.

1. Houghton Library, bMS Am 1892.7 (219) folder 8.
2. Houghton Library, bMS Am 1892.5 (1).
3. Greek scholars may recognize this meter as a modified Aeolic; cf. Halporn et al. (1994: 29).
4. Readers of concrete poetry will be reminded of Eugen Gomringer's "silencio" which plays with metaphorical blank space in much the same way as Cummings plays with silence and sound here.
5. Cummings visited Florence several times, and/or he could have been reminded of the *cantoria* by the reproduction in Adrian Stokes' *Quattro Cento* (Plate XX, facing p. 129), which was published (1932) shortly before the poem (1940). Throughout his book, Stokes often talks of "stone-blossom" (7, 199) and, while he emphasizes the children's dancing rather than singing, he does say of the *cantoria* and of a similar stone relief at Prato: "Swollen with vigour [the putti] enhance rhythm beyond the powers of music. Such a stampede, a thunderous lilt, not heard — ... can never run down, too strong and too subtle for the plodding ear, dance sudden and final in the corridor behind the columns of the encrusted singing gallery at Florence" (131). And: "so the marble putti who play along the marble of Donatello's singing gallery, are the most intense manifestation of stone-blossom" (132).

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Iconicity and Divine Likeness

George Herbert's "Coloss. 3.3"

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1. Introduction

The subject of this essay is the connection between formal and semantic aspects of language in George Herbert's poem "Coloss. 3.3", which will be examined from the perspective of 'iconicity'. This term, as distinct from other expressions which might be used for such a relationship (e.g. 'functionality'), fits particularly well the cultural and theological context in which Herbert's use of poetic language has to be seen, for it points to the concept of similarity or likeness which can be regarded as a common denominator of the pursuit of knowledge, artistic creation, and the search for religious truth in the early modern period.[1] It can be argued that Herbert is more obviously conscious of poetic form than, for example, Donne or Crashaw. One might even go so far as to say that in Herbert's *The Temple*, published in 1633, nearly every kind of iconic representation is to be found. Thus, to give only a few examples, thematic concerns may be reflected by the shape and outline of the printed text or the sound of its words, by the numbers implied in the structure of a poem, by syntactical patterns conspicuously employed, or by links made between poems through formal correspondence. This characteristic feature of Herbert's poetry, however, defies critical simplifications, and is only to be appreciated by means of closely reading individual poems. At the same time, the close reading of such a poem as "Coloss. 3.3" may contribute to making us more acutely aware of the iconic dimension of poetic language in general.

Joseph H. Summers once observed critically that Herbert is too often remembered only for the poems which "resemble the subject in typographical appearance", and is credited with inventing "the practice of writing poems in shapes such as wings and altars" (Summers 1954: 123). Among some 170 poems of *The Temple*, however, there are just two obvious pattern-poems, "The Altar" and "Easter-wings". The shapes of both poems are traditional and could already be found in the Greek Anthology.[2] Summers points out that besides these two "visual hieroglyph[s]" (*ibid* p.140) *The Temple* includes a number of poems in which the "formal organisation of the subject [is] imitated by the formal organization of the poem" (*ibid* p.135), a way of representation which, in semiotic terminology, would be called diagrammatic. In these cases, the reading process involves discovering the hidden relationship between the subject matter of a poem and the sounds and letters of its words, as well as their grammatical and metrical order. While Summers himself mentions several examples of this kind, and some critical attention, notably by Martin Elsky, has been paid to "the materiality of language" in Herbert's poems (Elsky 1983), many treasures remain to be raised. Furthermore, the function and intellectual context of Herbert's iconic language have not yet been fully explored. One of the most perceptive contributions to this topic is still Rosalie Colie's 1963 essay, in which she discusses "the shape of content" in *The Temple*, regarding the poet's matching of form to matter as an imitation of the *logos*. For the greater number of Herbert's poems, however, the question of what this imitation exactly means still remains unanswered. In spite of John Shawcross's pointing out that it "is a cliché of criticism ... that the stanzaic form, structure, and metrics of the individual poems in *The Temple* have major significance for meaning within each poem and within the sequence" (Shawcross 1980: 211), it seems that we are only just beginning to see or hear on how many interconnected levels of Herbert's poetry the medium is an image and part of the message.

For example, Inge Leimberg has recently shown that the "idea" of "Easter-wings", namely that "faith in Christ's resurrection is like a pair of angel's wings carrying man out of ... his fallen existence upwards to be again with God" (Leimberg 1996: 480) is to be recognized not only in the outline of the poem as a whole but in the very shape of its letters. Thus in the lines "Till he became / Most poore: / With thee / O let me rise" and "That I became / Most thinne. / With thee / Let me combine", the letters M and W, which mark the center and turning point in both parts of the poem, are given a position in which they become an image not only of the wings but of the complete reversal taking place at Easter, as they exactly mirror each other. The example already suggests that in Herbert's poetry iconic representation is not confined to the mimetic relationship between subject matter and auditory patterns or visual shape. Rather, as will be shown more closely in "Coloss. 3.3", outer form itself may become an image of the connection between 'outside' and 'inside'. Herbert's concern with the relationship between God and man, spirit and matter, principle and realization, or meaning and appearance is, as it were, translated into the spatial and temporal relationship between the elements which constitute the ordered language of the poem. The distance and identity of both kinds of form — the outward shape of things and their inner pattern or archetype — is thus reflected by outer and inner, marginal and central, large and small, or plain and mysterious parts of the text. Regarding *The Temple* as a whole, this includes the relationship between such obviously iconic poems as "Easter-wings" and others in which the mirror of shape and structural order is darkened.

An intermediate position is held by Herbert's "Anagram", where the subject of Christ's incarnation, of his being borne by Mary, in whom he "pitches his tent", is not only visualized by the braces enclosing the MARY/ARMY anagram within the split-up word "*Ana-gram*" (cf. Leiter 1965: 543). It is also to be found in the subscription to this typographical emblem (cf. Elsky 1983: 254–55): "How well her name an Army doth present / In whom the *Lord* of *Hosts* did pitch his tent!" The Lord's intent made manifest in his choice of Mary is visualized by the words *in* and *tent* between which the second line is stretched out. *Intentus* of course means "stretched out" and exactly fits the image of a tent upheld by stretched lines. Thus both space (the typographical arrangement of the words upon the page) and time (here implied by the "etymological" use of words)[3] are seen by the poet as places where an original assumes outer form. If this is paradoxically realized by means of enclosure, the mystery of the divine person is all the more cogently pointed out, since he is, according to the traditional Hermetic dictum, a circle whose centre is everywhere, whose circumference nowhere.[4]

2. "Coloss. 3.3"

Coloss. 3.3

Our life is hid with Christ in God

My words & thoughts do both expresse this notion,
That *Life* hath with the sun a double motion.
The first *Is* straight, and our diurnall friend,
The other *Hid* and doth obliquely bend.
One life is wrapt *In* flesh, and tends to earth:
The other winds towards *Him*, whose happie birth
Taught me to live here so, *That* still one eye
Should aim and shoot at that which *Is* on high:
Quitting with daily labour all *My* pleasure,
To gain at harvest an eternall *Treasure*.

In "Coloss. 3.3" the subject of embodiment and enclosure is visualized by a diagonal *intextus* (or, and one should not put it past Herbert to have implied this pun, an *acros[s]tic*) reminiscent of the figured poetry by Porphyrius and Hrabanus Maurus. Elizabeth Cook has reminded us that Wimpheling's 1503 edition of Maurus's *De Laudibus Sanctae Crucis* was republished in 1605, and that Herbert's sponsor and friend Lancelot Andrewes owned a copy (Cook 1986: 23–24). The poem is an exact square of ten lines having ten syllables each (not counting the feminine endings in lines 1, 2, 9 and 10). The diagonal *intextus* divides this square into two equilateral triangles, each having three sides of nine units length. Semantically, the notion of two seems to prevail. In line 1, the twofold nature of "words & thoughts" is emphasized by "both", in line 2 a "double motion" is mentioned, and in lines 3–6 the syntax is structured by the contrasting pairs "The first" — "The Other" and "One" and "The other". Then, however, only one of a pair of eyes is mentioned, the one which "aim[s] and shoot[s] at that which Is on high". Mere opposition and dichotomy thus seem to be left behind when the speaker and the divine "He", the two persons referred to in the diagonal line, become one. This transformation of two into one corresponds to the transformation of three into one or two into one or two into three as it is expressed by the biblical quotation which forms the subtitle of the poem: "*Our life is hid with Christ in God*". Man, Christ, and God are three-in-one, but the triad also forms united groups of two: "Our life" and Christ are hidden together in God; since "hid with" also means "hidden by" however, the subtitle also says that our life is enclosed by Christ-in-God. The mystical mathematics of this theological statement is epitomized and reflected by the shape of the poem, which evinces a kind of miraculous geometry: a square which is formed of two equilateral triangles, so that the numerical length of its diagonal (10) is identical with the length of its sides (also 10). The unity of two and three is also to be found in the two equilateral triangles which remain when the diagonal line is taken out: each of it has three sides of nine units length; nine, however, is also the square of three.

Herbert's subject is the motion of human life which, like (or together with) that of the sun, is a double one. When he stresses the identity of "words & thoughts" in expressing this "notion",[5] he implicitly points to the proximity of subject-matter and visual representation on the page. Notion and notation go together. (The musical connotations of "notion" should not be neglected, either.) But what exactly is expressed both semantically and iconically? At first it seems that there are two motions clearly to be distinguished: a "straight" one, which is "our diurnall friend", indicated by the straightness of the poem's lines to be read in time, one after the other, and a hidden one, which "doth obliquely bend", indicated by the line forming, at an oblique angle to the lines proper, the hidden words, "*My Life Is Hid In Him That Is My Treasure*". Apart from our daily lives, Herbert seems to say, there is a life secretly enclosed in or by one who is above or beyond our quotidian existence. This is confirmed by the familiar pun on "sun" in line 2. This line refers to the celestial body whose daily course from dawn to dusk appears to be a straight one from east to west, but which, during the year, follows an oblique or slanted course between the two tropics[6] (or which, during the night, returns unseen to the east); it also refers, however, to the son who shared human life but who, in his divine nature, is hid in God. (The parallel between "*with Christ*" in the subtitle and "with the sun" in line 2 confirms this reading.)

Such a reading agrees with Chauncey Wood's view, shared by most commentators, that the diagonal line represents the "hidden life with Christ, which is said to 'obliquely bend'" (Wood 1979: 15; cf. Fish 1972: 203–04, Patrides 1974: 100, Cook 1986: 44). But when we look at the poem more closely, doubts arise about such an unequivocal identification. Is the motion which "obliquely bend[s]" (line 4) to be identified with the one that "winds" (line 6) and to be contrasted with the one that "tends to earth" (line 5)? This seems possible, but it is equally possible to see a connection rather than a contrast between lines 4 and 5 since both refer to a life which is inside rather than outside, as it is "*Hid*" or enclosed by a body of flesh ("wrapt *In* flesh"). Line 5 would then continue line 4, especially since the downward movement expressed by "tends to earth" perfectly coincides with the "obliquely" bent, downward motion of the hidden life or line. The syntactic parallel, however, between "The first" and "One" in lines 3 and 5 and the repeated "The other" in lines 4 and 6 contradicts this reading. If lines 4 and 6 refer to the same movement or life, the motion which "doth obliquely bend" and the one that "winds towards *Him*" must be identical. But here again difficulties arise: if the two movements are represented by the layout of the text, the one that is "*Hid* and doth obliquely bend" corresponds to the diagonal line, whereas the winding movement is the one which follows the verse lines through the poem. A turning and winding movement is what "verse" of course etymologically means, since *versus* originally denoted the furrow made by the turning of the plough.[7] This movement is pointed out by the enjambment of lines 6–8, in which the winding course is imitatively described. This obvious kind of iconic device goes together with the more subtle one of syntactically and semantically blending the two movements: the straight line of our daily lives is a winding one, while the oblique line is of course also a straight one, whether it tends to earth or to heaven. The identity of straightness and obliquity is further reflected typographically within the diagonal line. The words are all printed in italics, that is, oblique letters. But the initial letters of these words, emphasized by being capitalized, are all composed of straight lines: M, L, I, H, and T.

Thus, in spite of the seemingly clear-cut distinction between "The one" and "the other", it is impossible to tell the two movements apart. They are shown to be inextricably linked, a connection which is also visualized by the fact that the personal pronoun "*Him*" is the object both of the diagonal straight line and of the verse lines denoting the laborious, winding movement. The words "*In Him*" enclose the centre of the poem, no matter whether it is read diagonally or following the horizontal lines (where the marginal "earth" becomes the central word; it is the 42nd or 43rd word of 84 or 85 words in the poem, depending on whether the ampersand in line 1 counts as a word). Seen two-dimensionally, the centre of the square of verse lines is formed by the four words "*In* flesh ... towards *Him*". Thus the spatial centre of the poem enfolds the numerical or temporal one, "earth", which spatially belongs to the periphery of the printed text. This double aspect of the centre coincides with the mystical geometry of the poem. The 'solution' to the paradox of our life being on the one hand "wrapt *In* flesh" and, on the other hand, "*Hid In Him*" is of course that Christ himself is made flesh ("whose happie birth") and is, as Herbert says in the next poem of the sequence ("Vanitie [I]"), "Embosome[d] in us" (24). This mystery is literally "centred, and embowelled in the womb and bosom" of Herbert's text (Donne 1953–62: vol. 7, 302). The N-shaped appearance of the poem as a whole (a square with a diagonal line from the top left-hand corner to the bottom right-hand one) also points to the subject of "in-being", for the letter N, as Nicholas of Cusa has it, is an abbreviation of IN.[8]

The subject of mystical enclosure is further elaborated by the organic imagery of birth and death, sun and earth. These are again dichotomies which bear the seed of their transcendence in themselves. And again this is realized iconically in that the apparent dichotomies *between* terms are to be found connotatively *within* single words. Double "notions" punningly reflect the unified double motion of life. Let us read once more the central lines:

> One life is wrapt *In* flesh, and bends to earth.
> The other winds towards *Him*, whose happie birth
> Taught me to live here so, ...

The syntactic order underlines that the first life is a movement from life to death, as "earth" marks the end of the sentence, while the second is a movement towards life, as "birth" marks the end of the line, and "live here so" the end of the relative clause. These movements are both confirmed and reversed by the predicates "is wrapt" and "winds". "Winds" of course here denotes a circular movement upwards but, in the context of life and death, it also connotes the winding-sheet, the cloth in which Joseph "wrapt the body of Christ" (Matt. 27: 59; cf. Mark 15: 46, Luke 23: 53). Accordingly, Christmas ("whose happie birth") already implies Good Friday (which in turn implies Easter). Conversely, "wrapt" in line 5, which primarily refers to the death-bound body in which man's soul is dressed, also points to the mystery of the incarnation and the birth of Christ, whose light, as Herbert says in his poem "Christmas", "Wrapt in nights mantle, stole into a manger" (10). Moreover, folded in the word "wrapt", so to speak, is the word *rapt*, which according to the *OED* (1.1.) primarily means "Taken and carried up *to* or *into* heaven (either in literal or mystical sense)". Together with another meaning of *rapt*, namely "Carried away *in spirit*, without bodily removal" (*OED*), this would make Herbert's expression sound like a contradiction in terms. But, one might object, doesn't "[w]rapt in flesh" rather imply a kind of bodily rapture, being "ravished" or "enraptured" (*OED* 3.) in and by a body, or even "raped" (*OED* 5.)? The answer is yes, of course, but this again is the very point made: whatever is thought or said or done by man is located "in flesh".

This is also emphasized by Herbert's changing his biblical text, which in the Authorized Version reads: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God". Herbert leaves out "ye are dead" and changes the more distant "ye" into the more personal "our" (further changed into the even more personal "my" in the diagonal line; cf. Bloch 1985: 36). Herbert here in a way corrects the Apostle Paul, in so far as the Christian is not already glorified in death but has to "live here" a life of "daily labour". Only in and through such a life an eternal harvest may be gained. Herbert brings Colossians 3.3 visibly closer to other statements in St. Paul, for instance Philippians 1: 23–24: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you". He also visualizes Isaiah 41: 4–5 or Luke 3: 4–5 ("make his paths straight"; "the crooked shall be made straight") with its characteristic climax, "And all the flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3: 6). "... here on this lowly ground", Donne's speaker says in *Holy Sonnet* VII, "Teach mee how to repent" (Donne 1952: 8); Herbert shares this humanist emphasis on teaching and right action: Christ's birth "Taught me to live here so, *That* still one eye / Should aim and shoot at that which *Is* on high". The daily labour must finally be quitted but first it must be done in order to repay or clear off ("quit") pleasure, which in turn has to be completed: that is, the poem itself, the "versing" that the poet elsewhere confesses to "relish" ("The Flower" 39). As in "The Flower" the imagery of natural growth goes together with a reflection of the writer's work.

William B. Bache (1982: 28) has pointed out that each horizontal line of "Coloss. 3.3" branches out from the italicized diagonal (e.g. "*My Life Is Hid In* flesh and tends to earth"). Herbert thus secretly inscribes his poem with an icon of organic growth. At the same time, the horizontal verse lines are the furrows in the field that has to be tilled by the poet — an image of great appeal to George Herbert, who time and again alludes to the etymology of his Christian name. The poet as a *γεωργῶν* indeed "tends to earth" in that he attends to it.[9] He does not create but cultivate, tending carefully what language brings forth. Language itself points out this mimetic relationship between the farmer and the poet, who are both oriented towards the sun. As we have seen, *vertere* is the poet's as well as the farmer's occupation. In Latin, he who cultivates land and he who clads notions into words is said to *peragere;* at the same time, their lines both resemble the course of the sun, which also describes a turning movement.

As Joseph Scaliger has it in his commentary on Varro's explanation of *solstitium* as the point on the sun's path where it turns and recedes:

> *Versum siquidê vocabant rustici, cùm sulco ad finem perducto iterum reditur eò unde arationis principiû suscipiebatur: quod versû, peragere dicitur Plin. lib. 18. Ab eo Græci, ut ait Pausanias, βουστροφηδὸν γράφειν, dicebant, cùm uno verso peracto in paginâ, inde sumitur initium ad alium progrediendi, ut in arato. Quod nos contrà facimus. nâ versu peracto, idem semper initium progrediendi tenemus. Sic igitur sol elegantißime à Varrone dicitur ad versum proximum stare cùm regreditur.* (Scaliger 1619: 73)

> For indeed farmers used the word *versus* when the furrow having been drawn to the end [of the field] was returned again to the point from where the ploughing was first undertaken; this is why it is said by Pliny in Book 18 [of *Naturalis historia*] that one has to carry on with a verse.[10] For the same reason the Greek, as Pausanias says, use the expression 'to write like the turning of the oxen': when one verse line is written down on the page; another start is made from there to proceed to the next line, as in the ploughed [field]. This is done contariwise by us, for once a verse is made, we always keep the same starting point from where to proceed. Thus the sun is most elegantly said by Varro to stand at the nearest verse before it returns.

Even if we do not read or write any more in the ancient Greek manner of *boustrophedon*, we have to return to the beginning before we can begin to "plough" through the next line.

With the coincidence of farming and verse-making once more the shape of the poem comes into view. The effect of the hidden line depends upon the "earth" in which it is embedded. George Puttenham, whose *The Arte of English Poesie* contains an extensive discussion of figured poetry, regards "the square or quadrangle equilater" as a sign of the earth. The relationship is not arbitrary or merely symbolic but iconic, as the square and the element of earth share the essential feature of "inconcussible steadinesse" (Puttenham II.xi [xii], 1936: 100).[11] The iconic reference of Herbert's squarely arranged verse-lines is corroborated by the fact that in Varro's *Res rusticae* (1.10) *versus* is a square measure of farmland (Varro 1978: 33). Even the diagonal or "oblique" line iconically points to the farmer's work, since according to Pliny's *Naturalis historia* (18.178), a field which has been ploughed in straight lines must be worked with oblique furrows as well.[12] Herbert's poem may thus be regarded as an image of the field in which the treasure is hid (cf. Matt. 13: 44), which in turn encloses the speaker's life. At the same time, the diagonal divides the poem into two equilateral triangles, and this triangle, in Puttenham's discussion of geometric shapes in poetry, represents the air (100). This again coincides with the verbal imagery of the poem, since the downward movement towards the earth is complemented by an upward movement in the open air towards the sun. The seed has to be lowered into the earth before the shoots (cf. line 8) may appear and follow that which "Is on high", i.e. the sun or son of line 2, which is literally placed high up in the poem.

Herbert's connection between the square form of his poem with its openly hidden diagonal and the image of vegetative growth, however, is not only to be seen as part of a symbolical tradition but also as drawing on the *thesaurus* (or "eternall *Treasure*") of language and matter itself. The square is the prototypical geometrical form which leads to endless growth in that its diagonal is the side of another square which is double the size of the first one. This generative energy of the square is reflected in the terms *power* and *root:* the root is the first power (*OED* "root" 14.) and the second power is the square (*OED* "square" 11.a.). In accordance with the Pythagorean theorem, the diagonal of a square is the root of 2: "Like the vegetal root, the root of 2 contains the power of nature which destroys in order to progress (it severs the initial square) and it also contains the power which instantaneously transforms 1 into 2" (Lawlor 1982: 29). In the mystical geometry of Herbert's poem the diagonal or root of 2 not only multiplies the speaker's and the readers' motions; in this truly magic square, as we have seen, the diagonal has the same length as its sides. Accordingly, the one not only grows into two but also, at the same time, the two grows into one.

The growth of the one-and-double life may furthermore allude to the vine, which is a traditional emblem of life. The Latin paronomasia *vita* and *vitis* is similarly traditional. When Christ says "I am the true vine" (John 15: 1) he also stresses the mutual 'in-being' of Christ and the Christian: "Abide in me, and I in you" (15: 4); in Psalm 80: 8 God's people are the vine. The winding of the vine corresponds to the winding life described in line 6, an analogy which is borne out by the "eye" in line 7, which in a plant is the spot from which shoots develop.[13] The eye directed at the sun finds its counterpart in it.[14] The visual form of the poem, a straight line around which another line is wound, itself alludes to the vine; this spatial representation, which includes the sun in line 2 and "Christ" and "God" in the title on top of it, may seem blemished by the fact that the winding of the verse lines necessarily implies a downward movement towards the bottom. Not quite so necessarily, however. Puttenham, who has already proved helpful for the geometry of this poem, has examples of two pattern-poems which are shaped like spires or obelisks, one of which represents the Queen who aspires "After an hier / Crown & empir" (Puttenham 1936: 96). Accordingly, this poem has to be read from the last line upwards while the other, which represents God's gift of grace coming from above has to be read in the usual way from top to bottom. We cannot read Herbert's poem upwards[15] but in a winding, somewhat irregularly spiralling way we may do so with the hidden text: "My Life Is Hid In Him That Is My Treasure"; but also "My Treasure Is[,] That In Him Is Hid My Life". This upward movement with its apparent regressions looks like a spiral in perspective. It is a variant of the *versus retrogradi* quite common in figured poetry (and of course reminiscent of fugal retrogressions), which is not only a fitting emblem of man's struggling daily life with all its setbacks but also marks the "double motion" of the sun itself. Its daily movement from East to West taken together with the movement along the "Ecliptick line" ("The Church-porch" 137) from one tropic to the other results in an apparent spiral course.[16] This correspondence between the vine and the sun coincides with the correspondence between the diagonal line and the subtitle, which also can be read, in a 'spiralling' way, as a kind of palindrome.

With this retrograde motion another iconic image comes into play, for the "double motion" of the sun may also refer to the famous sundial of King Ahaz (2 Kings 20 and Isaiah 38: 8) on which the shadow was both proceeding and receding, and which was often imitated or rebuilt during the Renaissance. It was a sign to Hezekiah that the Lord was with him and made him "to live" (Is 38: 16). The reference is further corroborated by the much discussed fact that in the Vulgate the sun recedes not ten degrees but ten "lines"[17] — which is of course the exact length of Herbert's poem. The sundial makes the circular movement of the sun visible by means of straight lines, and since this movement and its reflection on earth is the subject of "Coloss. 3.3" we are justified in regarding the diagonal line as an icon of the gnomon or diagonally protruding index of a sundial.[18]

Another reference to the dial (as the sundial was usually called in the Renaissance, see *OED* 'sundial') is also made iconically. We have seen that the iconic technique of enclosure is employed not just in the poem as a whole but also in single words. Embedded in the "diurnall" movement of the sun is an "urn", pointing to death as the necessary complement to the daytime of life (most fittingly an urn is a container defined by its circular shape). What remains of "diurnall" if one takes out the enclosed "urn", is "di-all", another *memento mori* as well as a reference to the circular plane on which the shadow is marked.

Herbert uses the word "diurnall" nowhere else. Semantically and orthographically it is the exact counterpart of "eternall" in the last line. Both words, moreover, are connected by means of internal rhyme: while in our daily lives we may have hopes to 'earn all' (or at least yearn[19] for all), we are gradually realizing that we shall "gain" a "treasure" rather than merely earn our deserved wages, or that we have to die in order to 'earn all'. The very sounds of the words thus echo the relationship between human effort and divine grace, which coincides with the double motion of the speaker's life. The linear movement towards death is complemented by or transformed into a winding, spiralling, circular one towards life. Accordingly, while "diurnall" visibly stresses everyone's death, "eternall" audibly promises a 'turn-all', a final circular movement or conversion.[20]

In Puttenham's explanation of poetic shapes the circle is the most perfect form; as the square represents the earth and the triangle the sky, the "roundell or Speare is appropriate to the heauens". While the square is the most obvious visible icon of the poem and the triangle derives from it, the circle is more "*Hid*". Herbert finds it once more in the smallest parts of language, the letters and their shapes, again confirming that understanding, *intellegere*, means *intus legere* (Cassirer 1987: 57, quoting Campanella). In the diagonal line paraphrasing the biblical text he chooses capitalized initials which are all linear. In his subtitle, to which one eye[21] always glances up in comparison while the other is gradually discovering the hidden text, Herbert, as we have seen, also changes the original. He replaces "Your" with "Our" and thus not only stresses the common course of speaker and listener but arrives at the visual cipher of three capital letters which are all round.[22]

3. Iconic poetry in an iconic world

In conclusion, let us return for a moment to our starting point, the fact that Herbert addresses the metaphysical relationship between outer and inner form, or spirit and matter, not just by drawing attention to the relationship between the form and the content of his poems, presenting the one as expressive of the other. Rather, the shapes and sounds of the words themselves in their relative positions to each other may represent the dialectic of center and periphery, truth and appearance. Iconicity is driven by Herbert to its limits. He does not simply give his poems the outward shape of its central image or its subject matter; there are no cross-shaped poems about the cross, for example (a well-established tradition by Herbert's time, see the examples in Adler and Ernst 1987). Neither does he confine himself to, let us say, an occasional chiasmus when the cross is mentioned. He rather makes the iconic image or iconic diagram part of a verbal texture where meaning is to be discovered in every aspect of the language used.

This iconic method is itself appropriate to the representation of a physical and spiritual world, which, in Sir Thomas Browne's words, is full of "common Hieroglyphicks",[23] i.e. visible and audible signs indicating their hidden meaning by their outward form. This implies the idea of an allegorical Book of Nature or *mundus symbolicus* and, more specifically, the concept of a world in which the significance of things is at one with their shape and structure. 'Likeness' in the sense of analogous relationship or similarity and in the sense of image or portrait[24] thus appears as a key concept both with respect to human existence in relation to the Creator and the religious poet's work in relation to the Word. As the example of "Coloss. 3.3" indicates, it is because of the similarity of man and Christ that "words & thoughts" may "both" express the same "notion", that is to say, outward and inward language may coincide and, accordingly, the linguistic form of the poem may be expressive of its idea. The poem also shows, however, that the relationship between 'outer' and 'inner' is mutual or dialectical rather than simply twofold: while the semantic meaning of a word is found 'inside' the shape and sound of its letters, the opposite is equally true since elementary formal (or geometrical) relationships may underlie the semantic content.

Accordingly, the form of a poem's ordered language not only resembles or is subservient to the subject matter its words denote.[25] It may also represent or embody in a more direct manner the *res* of which the mental concept signified by the word is but an imperfect sign.[26] This can be seen, for example, in "Trinitie Sunday", where the complex "thing" to which the abstraction denoted by the word "trinity" refers is more immediately realized by the all-pervasive interplay of threefold structures on the levels of syntax, rhyme, line and stanza numbers etc. In "Coloss. 3.3" the "double motion" in line 2 is more fully expressed by the spatial and syntactic form to which these words draw attention than by their literal meaning. This kind of paradoxical relationship is not unlike the one existing between literal and metaphorical signification, in which the apparently secondary or removed expression may be more directly expressive of the matter in question than the immediate or literal one (cf. Gombrich 1985: 167). Thus the study of iconic language in Herbert has to be pursued with a view to the history of poetic language in general, to which in turn it also contributes.

Inner form is not realized by means of a simply denotative outer correlative but by means of an outer form which makes visible (and audible) the complexities (or the richness) of the concept or idea or subject-matter of the poem. For example, a chiasmus may serve to do so by suggesting a cross where it is not denoted by the words, as in the famous ending of "Affliction (I)": "Let me not love thee, if I love thee not."[27] Herbert and other Metaphysical Poets (in particular Henry Vaughan) seldom use established, basically non-iconic poetic forms such as the sonnet, nor do they choose blatantly iconic forms which delimit the reader's attention. Herbert's poetic method is, as it were, 'meta-iconic',[28] in that the expressivity of form, hidden upon the surface of each poem in a somewhat different manner, itself indicates a fundamental truth about the created world. With the exception of a few sonnets, Herbert never uses the same poetic form twice. Each subject, each moment, each place requires its very own order of language (the classical stylistic ideal of the *aptum* [Lausberg 1973: § 1055 ff.], but now made to include all formal aspects of language). In this respect, Herbert's poems are icons of the religious poet's most fundamental concern, the relationship between God and man. The human being, body and soul, who is created in the likeness of God, paradoxically shows this likeness by being like nobody else. Perhaps surprisingly, this concept has points of contact with what is discussed in linguistic studies of iconicity under the heading of isomorphism (cf. Haiman 1980, Givón 1995). This particular kind of iconic assumption "serves as the unspoken basis for the commonly accepted axiom that no true synonyms exist" (Haiman 1980: 516). Homonymity, which is often adduced as an exception to the isomorphic principle, in Herbert's poetry depends upon that very principle to be effective. Only if there is a distinctive verbal form for each individual content, inner resemblances may become apparent by means of phonetic or graphic similarity. By gradually discovering hidden resemblances, as well as tensions, between what is said and how it is realized in language the poet makes his readers aware of the relationship between inner and outer form, as well as between the speaker and his Lord. To Herbert, this relationship is a precarious and complex or even paradoxical one, but in the last resort it is to be taken for granted.

Notes

1. For the context see Leimberg (1996), esp. 15–18 and 56–64 ("Der Kunstcharakter des Buches der Natur"). As an example, cf. just one characteristic quotation from Sir Thomas Browne (1964: 58), to whom 'similitude' is the principle that makes individual existence possible: "And thus is Man like God, for in the same things that wee resemble him, wee are utterly different from him. There was never any thing so like another, as in all points to concurre, there will ever some reserved difference slip in, to prevent the Identity, without which two several things would not be alike, but the same, which is impossible" (*Religio Medici* II.2.)
2. Cf. Summers (1954: 140) and Cook (1986: 22). According to *Der Neue Pauly* (1996: 734–38), there were 331 translations of the *Anthologia Planudea* by the middle of the seventeenth century (s.v. "Anthologie").
3. This is confirmed by the etymological reference to John 1: 14 ("And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us"), where the Greek verb *σκηνόω* originally means "to pitch a tent", as was pointed out by Reiter (1966).
4. See Browne (1964: 10): "That allegorical description of *Hermes* [*Sphæra cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nullibi*.] pleaseth mee beyond all the Metaphysicall definitions of Divines" (*Religio Medici* I.10).
5. *Notion* could also mean a "character, relation, form, etc., in which anything is conceived, mentioned, or exists" (*OED* I.†c., with a quotation from a 1631 sermon by Donne as the first example). Taylor (1974: 61–62) sees a contrast between "words & thoughts" which corresponds to the difference between the words of the poem as a whole and the "ten-word cipher hidden among them".
6. Browne (1981: 466): "Thus may we discerne the necessity of its obliquity, and how inconvenient its motion had been upon a circle parallell to the Æquator, or upon the Æquator it selfe" (*Pseudodoxia Epidemica* VI.v.).
7. See, for example, Isidorus (1989) VI.xiv.7: "Versus autem vulgo vocati quia sic scribebant antiqui sicut aratur terra".
8. In his *Trialogus de possest*, Nicholas of Cusa (1989: 334) regards the N graphically as generated by an I which is being led back to itself ("N primo omnium ex simplicissimo I in se ducto generatur"), while acoustically, IN and N are identical ("Unde si I additur ad N non plus vocis habetur").
9. Cf. *OED* 'tend' *v.*[1] 3.c., "To bestow attention upon, attend to; *esp.* foster, cultivate (a plant, etc.) ...."
10. The allusion is to *Naturalis historia* 18.177: "...in arando versum peragi nec strigare in actu spiritus." This is translated by H. Rackham as: "...when ploughing finish the row and do not halt in the middle while taking breath" (Pliny 1961: 301).
11. The proverbial steadiness of earth, together with the fact that "earth" is word number 42 of 84 words in the poem (not counting the ampersand) suggests the hidden paronomasia "forty-two" and "fortitude", especially when seen against the background of a statement like Elyot's in *The*

Governor iii.viii: "Fortitude ... is a Mediocritie or meane between two extremes" (quoted from *OED* 'mediocrity'). For a similar allusion to *fortitudo* in "Lent" see Leimberg 1996: 230. On the significance of the number 42 in Herbert see Christiane Lang-Graumann's discussion of "The Glimpse" (1997: 212–14).

12. Pliny 1961: 300 ("omne arvum rectis sulcis, mox et obliquis subigi debet").

13. Cf. Virgil's "oculos imponere", *Georgica* II.73 and *OED* 'eye' *n.*[1] III.10.a.: "The axillary bud" and the quotation: "1615 LAWSON Orch. & Gard. iii.x. (1668) 26 Let your graff have three or four eyes for readiness to put forth".

14. Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene* I.3.4 ("the eye of heaven") and the topos of the sun-likeness of the eye going back at least to Plato's *Republic* (508b).

15. Wood (1979: 24n10) refers to Puttenham's two-column poem. He does not locate the reversal of movements in the printed space of the poem but points out that "the verse leads us to a larger perspective in which we see that our earthly life is in fact upside down, and to ascend truly we must descend apparently" (Wood 20–21). This is taken up by McMahon, who identifies the daily movement of the sun from east to west with the horizontal verse lines and the diagonal line with the ecliptic (McMahon 1992: 65). As a consequence, he imagines a poet facing south. Following Aristotle's argument "that the southern hemisphere is really at the top of our globe" this, according to McMahon, would mean that "[t]hough the eye descends the page as it reads, the poem directs our spiritual vision upward" (66). McMahon contradicts himself here. If the poem is regarded as an imaginary map or globe on which the east is on the left and the south at the top, the reader still moves *downward* or away from the south.

16. See Freccero (1963: 343). Wood (1979: 20) points out that the movement of the eyes in reading the poem imitates "both the sun's daily motion and its annual, for the resolution of the two motions is, as Dante expressed it in the *Convivio*, a spiral like the turning screw of a great press". Such an implied reference to the wine (or printing) press perfectly agrees with the iconic representation of the vine. McMahon (1992: 62) speaks of "the spiral movement that 'winds toward' Christ as opposed to the life "whose motion is 'straight' and 'tends to earth'". As has been shown, the two motions are in fact intertwined.

17. Cf. Browne, *Pseudodoxia* V.xviii (Browne 1981: 413–14). On the place of the Dial of Ahaz and the miracle of the receding sun in Christian (iconographic) tradition, in particular with regard to Donne, see Frost (1990, especially 65–66, 111–12, 121–22.

18. See also the Latin poem "In Solarium", in which Herbert, punning on *sol* and *solum*, compares man to a sundial linking sun and soil. On this poem, as well as on the implicit image of the sundial in "Vertue", see Leimberg 1996: 224–29.

19. Cf. *OED* 'earn' *v.*[2]

20. Cf. *Paradise Lost* 5.496–97: "And from these corporal nutriments perhaps / Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit, / ...."

21. I agree with Sidney Gottlieb (1981: 177) that the "one eye" of Herbert's poem may be inspired by emblematic representations of single eyes, which would further underscore the iconic dimension of "Coloss. 3.3". The example Gottlieb singles out, however, Thomas Jenner's *The Soules Solace* (1626), also shows a characteristic difference. To Jenner, "That eye must shut,

that useth to survey / Honours, or praise of men, or worldly pelf" (Emblem no. 14, quoted from Gottlieb 177); while Herbert would certainly have agreed with this, he says nothing about closing our eyes to the world. We "live here" but should *all the same* ("still") keep one eye for heaven. Even though they were published only after Herbert's death, the two emblems from Henri Engelgrave's *Lux Evangelica* reproduced in Ong (1959: 427, plates II and III) are also quite suggestive. One of them, illustrating "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 22: 39) shows two free-floating eyes looking in different directions; the other shows a single eye looking up at the stars by means of a telescope forming a diagonal line from the lower right to the upper left. What makes this visual representation particularly interesting for Herbert's poem with its emphasis on enclosure and hiddenness is its motto from the Song of Songs 4: 1: "Absque eo quod intrinsecus latet". At least in the edition I consulted (Antwerp 1652), the parallel is further enhanced by a subscription taken from Colossians 3: "*quæ sursum sunt quærite: quæ sursum sunt sapite, non quæ terram*" (Emblema XL, p. 397); this is adapted from the verses immediately preceding Col. 3.3, in the Authorized Version: "seek those things which are above .... Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

22. Cf. Geofroy Tory (1973: fol. VIII^v) on the I and O as the letters from which all other letters are derived: "I. & O. sõt les deux lettres, desquelles toutes les aultres Attiques sont faictes & formees." Cf. fol. XXIX^v and XLVI^r.
23. Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici* I.16 (Browne 1964: 15), cf. Leimberg (1996: 70–71).
24. Cf. Donne's sermons on Genesis 1: 26 (Donne 1953–62: vol. 9, no. 1 and 2).
25. As, for example, in the sound-symbolism of "quick-piercing minde" ("Vanitie [I]")
26. Cf. Thomas Aquinas' commentary on Aristotle's *De interpretatione, Expositio Libri Peryermenias* I.2 (16a3): "uoces significant intellectus conceptiones inmediate, et eis mediantibus res" (Thomas Aquinas 1989: 11).
27. Cf. the dialogue in heaven in Book III of *Paradise Lost*, where the chiasmus is a characteristic figure in both the Father's and the Son's speeches; e.g. the Son's words in III.227–28 referring to the means of redeeming man: "...man shall find grace; / And shall Grace not find means, ..."; here *chiasmus* is blended with *gradatio*. As regards "Coloss. 3.3", McMahon (1992: 61) has drawn attention to the chiastic ordering of the related syntactic groups "*My Life*"/"*Is Hid*" and "*That Is*"/"*My Treasure*" around the central "*In Him*".
28. Givón (1995: 68) uses the term 'meta-iconic' in a different sense (for the 'markedness principle').

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Iconic Rendering of Motion and Process in the Poetry of William Carlos Williams

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1. The poem on the page

One of the most interesting comments on his characteristic verse form was made by the seventy-three-year old Williams in conversation with Edith Heal. "Free verse", Williams said,

> wasn't verse at all to me. All art is orderly... . As I went through the poems, I noticed many brief poems, always arranged in couplet or quatrain form. I noticed also that I was peculiarly fascinated by another pattern: the dividing of the little paragraphs in lines of three. I remembered writing several poems as quatrains at first, then in the normal process of concentrating the poem, getting rid of redundancies in the line — and in the attempt to make it go faster — the quatrain changed into a three line stanza, or a five line stanza became a quatrain, as in:
>
> **The Nightingales**
>
> | *Original version* | *Revised version* |
> |---|---|
> | My shoes as I lean | My shoes as I lean |
> | unlacing them | unlacing them |
> | stand out upon | stand out upon |
> | flat worsted flowers | flat worsted flowers. |
> | under my feet. | |
> | Nimbly the shadows | Nimbly the shadows |
> | of my fingers play | of my fingers play |
> | unlacing | unlacing |
> | over shoes and flowers. | over shoes and flowers. |
>
> See how much better it conforms to the page, how much better it looks? (Williams 1958: 66–67)

In an excellent essay on "Williams and the Visualization of Poetry", Marjorie Perloff comments on this statement, saying that "[l]ike most of Williams's attempts to account for his own prosodic invention, this one is confusing and contradictory" (1983: 160). Perloff points out that it is curious that Williams, when referring to "The Nightingales" insists, as he so often did, that "Free verse wasn't ... verse to me". "Over and over again, Williams made this declaration", Perloff says, "yet the fact is that "The Nightingales" is written in 'free verse':

> There [is] no measurable recurrence of phonic elements — the stress count ranges from 1 ... to 3 ...; the syllable count from 3 to 6 — [and there is] no definable pattern of word repetition or even of syntactic parallelism.

Perloff also convincingly argues that Williams's reference to tempo does not make much sense either, since "the elimination of a single short line, 'under my feet', from a nine-line poem cannot make it appreciably go faster". What then, Perloff asks, is "the difference that so excites Williams?", and she concludes:

> The *look*, of course. ('See [Williams says] how much better it conforms to the page, how much better it looks?')... . [I]ndeed, in the revised version, we see two quatrains, almost square in shape. This symmetrical form provides stability against which the words of the little poem push and jostle, just as in, say, an Elizabethan sonnet, the actual rhythm is played off against the chosen metrical base and rhyme scheme. (1983: 161)

Perloff is right: In the crucial years between 1916 and 1923 Williams came to realise that in his poetics the grouping of the words on the page was of major importance. However, to group them into little stanzas of three or four lines, for instance, helped not only in terms of conciseness, stability and order; Williams also introduced with the stanza a second major unit beyond the line, which in multiple ways interacted with the other units in terms of tension, contrast, juxtaposition, progression, and so on. This means that in the case of "The Nightingales", for instance, the change is much more than a change that makes the poem just look better on the page. The two stanzas invite us to make sense of the poem by juxtaposing them and reading the poem in terms of their relationship. If this relationship is unresolved, the poem as a whole will leave us dissatisfied. This, I believe, is precisely the problem of the first version of the poem, which Williams indeed substantially improved in the process of revision.

2. Iconic rendering of the perception of objects in space

But why, exactly, is in this case the elimination of one line so important? One reason, I would argue, lies in the iconic dimension, which is only obscurely present in the original version but is much more effective in the final version. The poem contains an iconic dimension in the spatial organisation of the few objects in front of the speaker: As we are reading the poem line by line, the main objects appear in the order in which the eye of the speaker takes them in, from the shoes he is unlacing to the details of the ground on which he standing. In this respect, the relationship between the two stanzas is crucial because the second stanza repeats the first with a slight but essential difference, and it is in this difference that the poem comes alive, that it works.

Both stanzas present the objects in front of the speaker's eyes in terms of a few layers or levels. In the first stanza, the focus is on the shoes of the speaker, who perceives them while leaning over and unlacing them, and the shoes in turn are above — "stand out upon" — the "flat worsted flowers". In the second stanza, the spatial organisation is basically the same, but now the view is somewhat enlarged since the stanza does not start out with the shoes but with what appears above the shoes, namely the poet's fingers — or, more precisely, "the shadows/of [his] fingers play[ing] ... over shoes and flowers". From two layers in the first stanza — shoes over flowers — we move to three levels in the second stanza, namely shadows (fingers) over shoes and flowers.

This small shift in focus changes everything because it brings about an imaginative transformation of the entire little scene. It is only now that the title makes sense, now that the shadows of the fingers are transformed into the shadows of nightingales shooting back and forth across shoes and flowers. In this radical transformation of a mundane little indoor scene the poet celebrates the triumph of the imagination, and it is probably not accidental that he gave his little poem a title evoking Keats's famous "Ode to the Nightingale". Williams thus implies that one can read his own poetry, which he aligns with the efforts of the New York avant-garde to create an indigenous American art, as a counterpart to the great European tradition. "The Nightingales" is indeed a prototypical Williams poem in its total concentration on an intimate space and a few objects that are mundane to the point where devoting a poem to them in 1921 is in itself a daring act. The title of the poem and its allusion to Keats stand at first in marked contrast to the ordinary, even banal character of this little indoor scene, in which the only so-called poetic element, the flowers, are "flat worsted flowers" — nature, in other words, is only present in the flower design of a machine-made carpet or rug. But for Williams the modern American poet has to be "a mirror to this modernity" (1986: 28) and if the nightingale — which is not only the 'romantic' bird *par excellence* but a species that does not occur in America — makes its appearance in the poem, it does so by means of the poet's imagination which, as soon as it comes into play, changes everything. When in the second stanza the literal description is exchanged for the figurative, the static is transformed into the dynamic, the factual into the imaginative or fanciful, the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Let me stress again that it is only in the final version that we have two stanzas which are clearly related on the basis of equivalence, i.e. on the basis of repetition with a difference. In the first version there is a fundamental imbalance between the first and the second stanza in terms of the visual layers. Not only is there no analogy between them but Williams in the first stanza obscures or destroys the iconic dimension: He proceeds from the level of the shoes to that of the flowers, but only to return at the end to the first level because "feet" in line 5 is synonymous with the shoes of line 1. The fifth line in the first version thus introduces a circularity which is totally at odds with the iconic descent from top to bottom.

It is by eliminating this circularity in the final version that Williams aligns the two stanzas in terms of size and overall organisation. By eliminating one line he creates two stanzas that are exact counterparts of each other — analogous in their structure but radically different in their vision.

3. Iconic rendering of the saccadic eye

We do not know at what point in time Williams revised "The Nightingales" but we know that *Spring and All*, published in 1923, contains a fair number of poems written in two, three, or four line stanzas. At this point in his career Williams is obviously very much aware of the importance of the visual dimension, how the poem looks on the page. But this visual dimension comprises much more than the discovery of the stanzaic form, and already the pre-stanzaic poems written between 1916 and 1923 show Williams's growing awareness of the possibilities of the arrangements of the words on the page. These are the crucial years when, inspired by the revolutionary movements in the visual arts and the experiments of the New York avant-garde, Williams breaks through to his own style, and it is no accident that it is also in those years that he begins to introduce iconic elements into his poems. Perhaps the very first of these poems is "Good Night" (1986: 85–86), first published in the magazine *Others* in 1916:

In brilliant gas light
I turn the kitchen spigot
and watch the water plash
into the clean white sink.
On the grooved drain-board
to one side is
a glass filled with parsley —
crisped green.
                                        Waiting
for the water to freshen —
I glance at the spotless floor — :
a pair of rubber sandals
lie side by side
under the wall table
all is in order for the night.

Waiting, with a glass in my hand
— three girls in crimson satin
pass close before me on
the murmurous background of
the crowded opera —
                                        it is
memory playing the clown —
three vague, meaningless girls
full of smells and
the rustling sound of
cloth rubbing on cloth and
little slippers on carpet —
high-school French
spoken in a loud voice!

Parsley in a glass,
still and shining,
brings me back. I take my drink
and yawn deliciously.
I am ready for bed.

In this poem, it is essentially lineation that guides the reader's eye so that "objects stand out, one by one, as in a series of film shots" (Perloff 1983: 176). In the first eight lines, for instance, we have the focus first on the spigot, then on the plash of water, the white sink, the grooved drain-board, and finally the "glass filled with parsley — /crisped green". In its enumeration of the objects as they are seized one by one by the speaker's eye, the poem iconically embodies the process of perception. It exploits the way in which the eye orients us in visual space by incessantly moving from detail to detail. When in the act of reading we move from line to line while the inward eye focuses on object after object, we re-enact the speaker's gradual exploration of the kitchen space in a series of so-called saccades, as theorists of perception call the rapid eye movements ending in brief moments of fixation, all of them pieces of a puzzle that in their sum-total create the field of vision (cf. Collins 1983: 265). "Good Night" is one of the first of a whole number of poems by Williams that iconically reflect such a process of perception.

The saccadic eye can explore space by rapidly moving in all directions, without any apparent order in its movements. This is the mode of perception that for instance underlies Williams's "The Locust Tree in Flower", or the famous opening poem of *Spring and All*, "By the road to the contagious hospital". In other poems the eye often moves more or less orderly along an axis, often from top to bottom. (Well-known examples are "Poem" ["As the cat/climbed over/the top of//the jamcloset ..."] or "Young Woman at a Window", which along with several other poems have been analysed in detail by Nänny [1986: 223–24] and Halter [1994: 205–7]). In "Good Night", too, the eye moves basically along a vertical axis from top to bottom, interrupted at one point (lines 5–8) by a lateral movement. We begin by going down, from spigot to water to sink; from there we move sideways to the drain-board with the glass filled with parsley. In the second part of the first stanza we then move further down, from the water in the sink to the floor with the rubber sandals under the wall-table.

The iconic dimension is not only present in the manner in which the enumeration of objects reflects the sequential nature of seeing, it can also be found in lines that stand out *visually* because they deviate from the norm. The first of these is line 6, "to one side" which is much shorter than all the preceding lines. It is a classic instance of the iconic in so far as it *says* "to one side" and *appears* moved over to one side. The next word that stands out is "waiting", and again it iconically embodies what it denotes, although this time it is not space but time that is at stake. The speaker is waiting as the water runs from the tap, and so "Waiting" gets a line to itself. The pause implied is visually accentuated by the fact that "Waiting" is moved over to the right, so that there is more space around it than there would be if the word were aligned on the left with all the other lines of the poem.

Two other words in the poem are moved over to the right and given a prominent line to themselves, namely the two little words "it is" in the second stanza (line 21) which are part of the clause "it is/memory playing the clown — ". These words, too, can be read iconically. If the isolation of "Waiting" in the first stanza embodies a moment of contemplation, the singling out of "it is" implies a moment of hesitation. However, it is only when we read on that we learn why the speaker should hesitate. There is, we realize, something that disturbs him about this image of the "three girls in crimson satin" flitting through his mind, and for a moment he seems at a loss how to define it. It is — yes, "memory playing the clown". This is a special moment in the poem, signalled also by the fact that it contains one of the rare shifts from the literal to the metaphorical. By visually displacing and isolating the two words "it is" Williams introduces a kind of hiatus or pause before defining the mental image of the three high school girls that disrupts and undermines the domestic peace: "it is/memory playing the clown".

"Good Night" thus contains three lines which ask to be read visually, and all three of them contain an iconic element, although not of the same kind. In the first instance (line 6) the iconicity is spatial, marking the moment when the saccadic eye singling out objects changes it direction from the vertical to the horizontal axis. The second iconic instance (in line 9) is not spatial but temporal, with the isolated and displaced word "Waiting" acting as a kind of brake and thus slowing down the reading. The third instance is also temporal, since it again marks a slowing down of the process of thinking or speaking, but this time the reason is psychological, and the iconic element highlights a process that is predominantly mental and emotional.

4. Iconic rendering of (e)motion

Comparing these and other passages in Williams's poems that invite an iconic reading, we realise that they often can be read on both a physical and a psychological level, and that often in fact the two levels interact in kinetic processes that are psycho-physical rather than purely mental or physical. These poems put us again in touch with the truism that emotion and motion are not only etymologically connected, that if something moves us we are involved with both brain and heart and that there is nothing that affects us mentally that does not also affect our bodies, or vice versa. Many of the iconic passages in Williams are concerned with motion, and the motion depicted is very often directly connected to the specific *emotion* that the poems centrally deal with. A good example is another early poem, "Canthara" (1986: 78), published for the first time in *Al Que Quiere!* in 1917:

The old black-man showed me
how he had been shocked
in his youth
by six women, dancing
a set-dance, stark naked below
the skirts raised round
their breasts:
        bellies flung forward
knees flying!
                        — while
his gestures, against the
tiled wall of the dingy bathroom,
swished with ecstasy to
the familiar music of
                        his old emotion.

Again there are three lines that deviate from the norm, namely lines 8, 10, and 15, the norm here being the convention that lines are aligned on the left hand side. The first of these, line 8, marks the climax of the dancing. The line that says "bellies flung forward" appears almost literally flung forward or propelled to the right, which creates the impression that the following line is moved back to the left, although it is aligned and thus in place, strictly speaking.

Notice, by the way, that the first six lines of the poem are all violently enjambed. We may take this as a reflection of the old man's urge to tell and show what he had seen, which propels the poem forward, as it were. Lines 7– 9, on the other hand, i.e. the lines in which the dancing described reaches its climax, are end-stopped lines which lack the dynamic pressure of the first seven lines. The poem thus sets the first seven lines in more than one respect in contrast with the two lines following them. Lines 1–7 are characterised by that peculiar tension between lineation and syntax that Williams masters from almost the very moment he finds his own distinct voice and style. It is around this time, i.e. 1916/17, that he rapidly becomes what much later his publisher James Laughlin will call "the best/Line-breaker of his time" (1995: 46). Sentences couched in a simple diction with a sparse use of metaphors and similes are often extended over dozens of lines or several stanzas, not seldom over the entire poem. On closer inspection these sentences are often complicated affairs, with subclauses clapped over other subclauses in long passages of run-on lines with hardly an instance in which an individual line makes sense all by itself because it is a complete syntactic unit.

Such a rare instance occurs in our poem in lines 8 and 9. Now that the dance reaches its climax, we are invited to enjoy the iconic rendering of movement, to enjoy the moment, that is, when the lines themselves begin to dance. It is appropriate that at this point they become syntactically self-sufficient and are no longer fragments in need of the surrounding lines to make sense.

Williams also uses the iconic in "Canthara" as a means to structure the poem as a whole. Strictly speaking, the poem contains one stanza only, but by means of the iconic "while" in line 10 he visually and thematically sets off the last six lines against the first nine lines. The single and isolated "while", preceded by a dash, once again marks a pause and suggests that what follows is related to what precedes it, temporally and psychologically. Of course the conjunction "while" in the first place foregrounds the simultaneity or concurrence of two phenomena. In "Canthara" this concurrence is that of a specific motion with a specific *e*motion. The first part is devoted to the dancing, whereas the last six lines are centered on the old man's emotion, the word with which Williams not only concludes the poem but which he additionally foregrounds by moving the last line to the right, too. Dancing is set against the feeling caused by it, the outside against the inside, in a poem that posits the two as counterparts but also as two aspects of an indivisible whole.

5. Iconicity in stanzaic poems

Another poem that makes use of the iconic in connection with the complex interaction of motion and emotion is "The Jungle" (1986: 241–42), published in the *Collected Poems* of 1934:

It is not the still weight
of the trees, the
breathless interior of the wood,
tangled with wrist-thick

vines, the flies, reptiles,
the forever fearful monkeys
screaming and running
in the branches —

                    but
a girl waiting
shy, brown, soft-eyed —
to guide you
            Upstairs, sir.

It is evident that the stanzaic form that Williams used for the majority of his poems since the early twenties makes it easier for the reader to subliminally respond to and appreciate the use of iconic elements. In these poems, the difference between the standard form and its modification is visible at first sight. In "The Jungle", for instance, the standard form consists of quatrains, strictly applied in the first two stanzas but modified in the third and last one, which is irregular in more than one sense, with its five lines instead of the usual four and with its displaced and isolated words in the first and last line.

The floating word "but" at the beginning of the third stanza has a function that is very similar to the isolated "while" in the poem "Canthara": it relates the previous stanzas to what follows, although in "The Jungle" the concluding stanza comes as a surprise. The isolated word "but" prepares us for the radical change of scene from a day dream to the surroundings which triggered off this dream in the first place. Technically the word "but" is part of the last stanza but not only is it supernumerary — without it, the last stanza is again a quatrain — but it is moved to the side in such a way that the last stanza, in point of fact, seems only to begin with the line "a girl waiting".

The other detail that is visually foregrounded is the last line with its displaced and isolated "Upstairs, sir". This is an instance of both temporal and spatial iconicity. Temporally, it marks the tiny shock of recollection when the speaker's reverie is interrupted by the voice saying "Upstairs, sir", spatially it suggests that this call to order, as we could call it, also marks a moment of physical reorientation. Once again, it seems essential to me that Williams brings together the outward and the inward. The poem as a whole is based on this tension, since the first two stanzas are an elaborate metaphor or conceit for the speaker's momentary loss of emotional poise or composure when he sees the "shy, brown, soft-eyed girl" in what seems to be the hall of a guest house. For a moment all hell breaks loose, as it were, outward composure is juxtaposed with inward turmoil, the veneer of civilization with the atavistic impulses that can only be given form in an extended series of jungle images. The poem exploits this basic clash in a number of details that also lift it to an ironical and almost whimsical level, details such as the fact that the girl triggering off these riotous images is "shy, brown" and "soft-eyed", or that it is she who is waiting to "guide" the speaker upstairs. Even the very last word of the poem, "sir", rings ironically in this context.

We could also regard it as ironical that the first two stanzas, which are full of the frenzy of the jungle, appear in neat and tidy quatrains, whereas the last stanza with the quiet details of the little parlour scene is irregular and shows it in a state of partial dissolution. This, too, can be interpreted on an iconic level. It makes sense that it is the last stanza with its focus on the girl that in its outward form reflects the speaker's inward agitation. The jungle qua jungle, evocatively described in the first two stanzas, is not the problem. The problem is Civilization and its discontents, the here and now that requires that so many instincts constantly have to be driven underground and continue to bother us, whether we like it or not.

6. Iconic rendering of turns

Williams, as we have seen, tends to make a covert or oblique use of iconicity at crucial moments in his poems: moments of hesitation, re-orientation, turns, changes of direction. Often in those cases the poem oscillates between the literal and the metaphorical, or then iconically exploits the metaphorical roots of psychic processes, roots that we have all but forgotten but find re-activated in those moments. The language itself that we have at our disposal for those psychic processes, we realize, firmly anchors them in space and time: Actually, the very terms that I have used to define those psychic phenomena in Williams are all hidden metaphors, terms such as process, re-orientation, recollection, contemplation, etc. There are indeed, as Williams says in *Paterson*, "No ideas but in things" (1992: 6).

A good example for this fusion of the realms of the literal and the metaphorical, the exterior and the interior in iconic elements can be found in one of the late short lyrics called "Poem" (1962: 39):

The rose fades
and is renewed again
by its seed, naturally
but where

save in the poem
shall it go
to suffer no diminution
of its splendor

The movement from stanza one to stanza two, that is from the first to the second part of the poem, could be called a movement from rose — the noun in the first line — to poem — the noun in the first line of the second stanza. This is a movement from nature to art, from the transient to the permanent, the time bound to the timeless. In terms of iconicity, there are two moments in the poem that are of interest. First, we could say that we find an iconic element in the progression from line 1 to line 2, since in Peirce's (1932: 2.247, 277–82), Jakobson's (1971: 352) and Haiman's (1980: 515) sense of the diagrammatic[1] the poem in this progression simultaneously speaks of and enacts the fading and renewed flowering of the rose. Secondly, there is an iconic dimension in the line "but where" at the end of the first stanza. It draws attention to itself for several reasons: it is shorter than the three preceding lines, and it is the first conspicuously incomplete line, coming after the neat and stately progression of the first three end-stopped lines. The line "but where", like some of the other instances of iconicity we have looked at, marks a moment of reflection and reorientation. Using a technical expression, we could say that it marks a turn. This would be yet another word signalling that Williams here consciously or unconsciously exploits the metaphorical root of the word "where" in the phrase "where ... shall it go". The reasoning mind, it seems, cannot create order and meaning unless it finds its way in an imaginary time-space continuum.

In the case of "Poem", too, it is interesting to look at the particular function that the iconic occupies in a stanzaic poem. It is important to note, for instance, that the turn does not appear at the beginning of the second stanza but at the end of the first. The first stanza ends with an interrogative, and we have to cope with the white space of the truncated line and the hiatus of the stanza break before we arrive at the reassuring first line of the second stanza,

save in the poem

Compared with the first stanza, the second is relatively self-contained. Devoted to the realm of art that alone will save the rose, it ends with the word "splendor", in contrast to the searching "but where" of the first stanza. Charles O. Hartman, who notices this asymmetry in a very perceptive analysis of the poem, argues that it serves at least two purposes. First, it thematically "reinforces the interdependence of art and nature" since it prevents the two halves from standing alone. Secondly, since "art is a matter of order", it is "fitting that the stanza representing art should have a formal symmetry denied the stanza representing nature. It not only completes the incomplete four-line pattern of the first stanza but also gains additional coherence by consistently alliterating on sibilants [and] by employing a subtly but distinctively elevated or archaic diction" (1980: 100–101).

The second stanza thus not only *speaks* of the qualities of art, it also *embodies* them. It is, in other words, an emblem or an icon of those qualities, an icon, however, that is not self-sufficient since the meaning or impact of the second stanza emerges essentially out of its juxtaposition with the first.

7. Conclusion

In this sense the short lyric called "Poem" could help us to define the place of the iconic in Williams's poetry: in iconic moments the words become what they say, they do not only *evoke* absent things or feelings but *contain* them — *are* them — in their very constellations or configurations. We can regard these configurations as distilled moments in the poetic text, moments in which language is as concrete as it can be. But at second sight the language used to construct them turns out to be as "abstract" as it is everywhere else in the poems. Williams was certainly aware of this; he would have been the first to admit that language in the poem "must be abstract", as Wallace Stevens put it in "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" (1959: 380), that all elements of poetry are part of that crucial design that Williams found so tangibly present in modern painting, as he said late in his life in the interview with Walter Sutton:

> The design of the painting and of the poem I've attempted to fuse. [...] I don't care if it's representational or not. But to give a design. A design in the poem and a design in the picture should make them more or less the same thing. (Sutton 1961: 321–22)

The iconic elements in Williams are exemplary in this respect: In them, things and processes are not only referred to but are present in their very configuration, and yet always only present as a "design" of black words on the white page. As an arch-modernist Williams knew that all poetry always referred both to the world and to itself, the world at large and the work of art. We are never more aware of this ineluctable tension than when we try to understand the place and function of the iconic in his poems.

Notes

1. "An iconic diagram", writes Haiman, "is a systematic arrangement of signs, none of which necessarily resembles its referent, but *whose relationships to each other mirror the relationships of their referents*" (Haiman 1980: 515; my emphasis).

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Graphological Iconicity in Print Advertising

A Typology

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1. Introduction

The firmly established conventions of the Roman alphabet and its uses are responsible for the fact that graphological iconicity, the iconic use of the written or printed word, is a comparatively rare phenomenon, the main exceptions being experimental prose and poetry on the one hand, and advertising on the other. Writing by means of the Roman alphabet is governed by a series of conventions which are taken for granted so much that they are hardly ever questioned, let alone violated.[1] Some of these conventions serve certain practical purposes (writing from left to right favours right-handed people, spaces between sequences of letters correspond to folk-linguistic notions concerning words and facilitate reading, etc.), others are due to the technical limitations of typesetting (lines of print, unlike lines of handwriting are usually straight),[2] but the fact that they are by no means universal highlights their conventionality. On the other hand these very conventions also contain an iconic potential which is dormant under normal circumstances, but which becomes foregrounded as soon as a convention is flouted. Print advertising, which aims at attracting a reader's attention and at getting a message across as effectively as possible, exploits such violations to great effect.

Over the last few years I have collected striking examples of advertisements that employ graphological iconicity,[3] and this paper constitutes a preliminary attempt at ordering the material. It is not a top-down typology based on absolutely all the conventions of writing and typesetting,[4] but a bottom-up, data-driven one of only those that are 'used' (foregrounded, played with, disregarded, reversed) in the examples at hand. The first six subsections (1–6) in Section 2 contain examples that play with conventions of the Roman alphabet, of orthography including punctuation, and of typesetting, while the last four (7–10) present cases where writing is combined with, or merges into, non-alphabetical icons of various kinds. The ten subsections that follow are preliminary; different or finer subdivisions are doubtlessly possible, and further examples may bring to light conventions that are not 'used' in the examples presented here.[5] Each subsection falls into two parts: the convention is spelled out first, followed by a presentation and discussion of advertisements playing with it.

2. Types of graphological iconicity

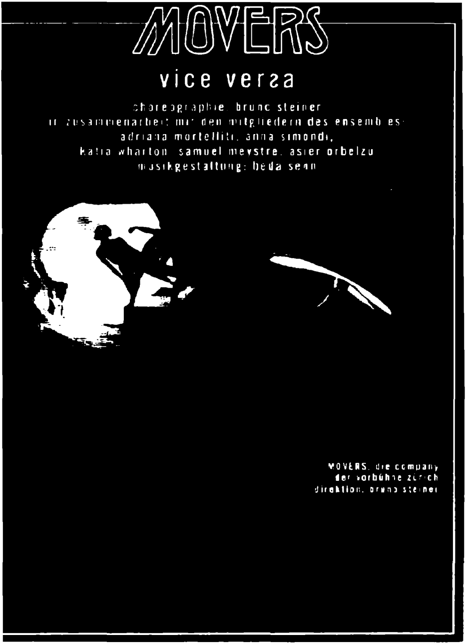
1. Writing proceeds (horizontally) from left to right. A change of direction (in the form of reversed letters, words, phrases or whole sentences) signifies change, reversal or return.

Thus the single reversed *S* in the poster of the dance company "Movers" illustrates the 'meaning' of *Vice Versa*, the title of their programme [Figure 1].

The second example is part of a joint campaign by a free daily newspaper (*Tagblatt der Stadt Zürich*) and Zürich's public transport company ("VBZ Züri Linie") [Figure 2]. The aim is to encourage passengers to deposit the paper in a special container and so make it available to other passengers. This turns the *Tagblatt* into a "Mehrwegzeitung" (re-usable newspaper) that can be read on the way somewhere ("Auf dem Hinweg") and on the way back ("Auf dem Rückweg", printed iconically in reverse).

2. The primary direction of writing is horizontal (from left to right), the secondary one vertical (from top to bottom). Writing 'up' from bottom to top (vertically or diagonally) iconically indicates upward movement, taking off etc. and is usually associated with positive notions, while writing 'down' from top to bottom signifies the opposite. This convention is part of the up-down spatialization metaphors discussed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980).[6]

Two posters from a campaign by the insurance company "Providentia" make use of this aspect of iconicity. In the first, the positive notion of "Einsteigen" (stepping on to a bus, train etc., associatively linked with the 'positive step' of taking out life-insurance) is conveyed by the word printed in the form of



gure 1. *Movers: poster, 1996*

igure 2. *Tagblatt der Stadt Zürich, VBZ Züri Linie: advertisement in Tagblatt der Stadt Zürich (Zürich), 6 March 1997; also posters etc.*

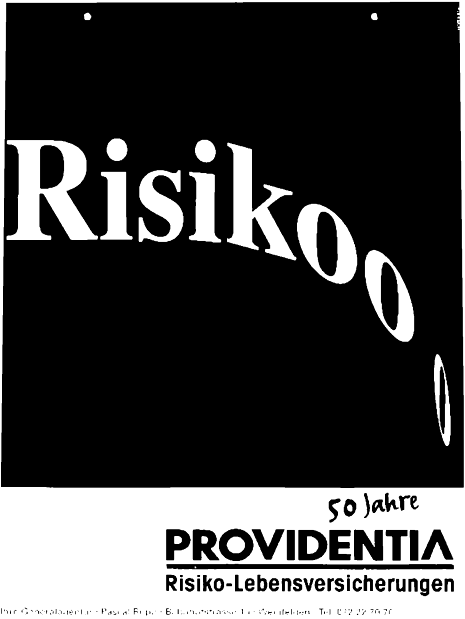
airs or steps leading upwards [Figure 3]. The negative notion of "Risiko" (risk), y contrast, is illustrated with the end of the word literally 'falling' into the void ·igure 4]. Multiple letters ("Risikooo") intensify the effect through another ›rm of iconicity (see 4. below).

Inversion is also a play with the vertical dimension: an advertisement by ₹ediffusion" claims that "Zürich steht Kopf" (the city of Zürich is on its head, e. beside itself) over a sale of TV sets and other electronic equipment, and to nderscore the message the word "Zürich" is stood on its head [Figure 5].

. A text is usually written in the same font, with capitals, italics, bold type etc. sed as conventional means to emphasize single letters, words and sentences or ven a whole passage. Advertising makes use of conventional and less conventonal means of emphasis in novel ways.

The brilliantly simple advertisement for "schreIBMaschinen" (typewriters) ses capitals to highlight the name of IBM, the company producing them ·igure 6]. The Courier font so typical of traditional typewriters provides a

gure 3. *Providentia: poster, undated*



igure 4. *Providentia: poster, undated*

Figure 5. *Rediffusion: flyer, January 1998*

schreIBMaschinen

Figure 6. *IBM: advertisement, undated; reproduced in Der Spiegel (Hamburg), January 1997 (Sonderausgabe 1947–1997)*

second kind of iconicity and intensifies the overall effect. Two further examples show other forms and uses of emphasis. The official logo of "Stadtentwässerung" (the sewage department of the city of Zürich) uses diminishing bold type to symbolize drainage [Figure 7] and the Frankfurt firm of "Laut & Leise" (Loudly & Softly) employs filled and unfilled letters to symbolize loudness versus softness of sound [Figure 8].

Similar effects are achieved by combining very large with very small letters

Tiefbauamt der Stadt Zürich

Stadtentwässerung

Bändlistrasse 108
8064 Zürich

Telefon 01 / 435 51 11
Telefax 01 / 435 53 99

Figure 7. *Stadtentwässerung: official logo, used on stationery, vehicles etc., 1995*

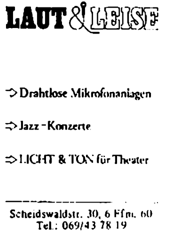


Figure 8. *Laut & Leise: advertisement, undated*

or by varying the relationship of printed text and the space available for it (length and spacing of lines). This is illustrated by two advertisements for United Airlines, both iconically announcing the fact that the Boeing 777, its new plane, offers more space. One advertisement prints the imperative "Platz da!" (Make room!) in unusually large letters surrounded by lots of white space [Figure 9], the other says "Las-sen Sie sich nicht ein-eng-en. / Fliegen Sie mit der neuen B 777 nach Washington." (Don't let yourself be cramped. / Fly the new B 777 to Washington.) in excessively short and widely spaced lines [Figure 10]. The overall arrangement of text in the latter advertisement may be intended, additionally, to suggest the shape of an aeroplane (fuselage and wings), but the downward movement of the 'plane' with its negative associations of falling (see 2. above) cannot be intentional.

4. Doubled letters are conventionally used to indicate the quantity (and sometimes quality) of phonemes in many languages: the phoneme /aː/ in German, for example, may be spelled *aa* (*Saal*) in addition to *a* (*Tal*) and *ah* (*Mahl*), and the phoneme /iː/ in English is mostly represented by double spellings such as *ea* or *ee* (*meat*, *meet*). In advertising, unconventionally used double or multiple letters often indicate great length, slowness, volume etc. As the examples show,

Figure 9. *United Airlines: advertisement in TIME (European ed.), 28 October 1996*

Las-

sen

Sie

sich

nicht

ein-

eng-

en.

Fliegen Sie mit der neuen B 777 nach Washington.

Haben Sie genug von der drangvollen Enge beim Fliegen? Dann nehmen Sie die neue Boeing, die B 777.
Kein anderes Flugzeug dieser Klasse bietet Ihnen so viel Platz. Sie können ganz bequem entspannen, schlafen oder arbeiten.
Wie Sie wollen. Täglich nonstop nach Washington. Mit United Airlines und unserem Kooperationspartner Lufthansa.
Das verstehen wir unter einem angenehmen Flug. Mehr darüber unter Tel.-Nr. 0 [illegible] 50 20 oder Fax-Nr. 0 [illegible] 50 23 99.
Come fly the airline that's uniting the world. Come fly our friendly skies.

UNITED AIRLINES

http://www.ual.com

Figure 10. *United Airlines: advertisement in TIME (European ed.), 11 November 1996*

multiplying letters is an ideal means to visualize excess (of any kind) iconically.

The "Risikooo" advertisement by "Providentia" discussed above [Figure 4] makes modest use of this strategy, but bolder examples can also be found. In an advertisement for its Power Macintosh, Apple ridicules the speed of older computers ("Soooo laaaangsaaaam ...", i.e. sooo slooow) [Figure 11], and the Swiss tabloid *Blick* announces a series on the Spice Girls with an iconic rendering of the prolonged screaming used by fans to welcome their favourite pop group: "Kreiiiii[...]iiiiisch" (screeeee[...]eeeeeam) [Figure 12].[7]

The excessive repetition of words or whole phrases may also represent duration or long life, as is illustrated by what is probably the most famous advertisement ever for the VW Beetle (not illustrated here): a series of pictures of the back of a Beetle (getting smaller and smaller as the car is moving away from the foreground towards the horizon) is accompanied by the slogan "Der VW läuft ... und läuft ... und läuft [...]" (The VW is running ... and running ... und runnning).

5. Conventionally, words are set off from each other by empty spaces, while syntactic units such as clauses and sentences are set off from each other by punctuation marks. The omission of spaces between words or of punctuation marks signifies uninterrupted, 'nonstop', smooth progression, while deliberately excessive punctuation indicates interruption(s).

Two advertisements for United Airlines use both strategies in a complementary way to announce new non-stop flights from Düsseldorf to Chicago. One says "Unitedairlinesfliegtjetztohneunterbrechungvondüsseldorfnachchicago." (Unitedairlinesnowfliesnonstopfromdüsseldorftochicago.) [Figure 13], the other "Düsseldorf.Stop.Chicago.Stop.United.Nonstop" [Figure 14].

6. Words and sentences are usually complete, and the margins given by the layout of a page are respected. 'Cut off' letters, words or sentences and disregarded margins may signify transgression and (welcome or unwelcome) lack of restraint.

Out of the many iconic possibilities offered by these conventions the two advertisements presented here exploit only one, namely to use the 'negative' force of truncated words for a positive message. One, for the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, implicitly contrasts newspapers with radio and television, saying that "Lesen kennt keinen Sendeschlu[ss]" (reading is not affected by the closing down of broadcasting) [Figure 15],[8] while the other, for "Providentia", encourages people to "Weiterdenken" (think ahead, go on thinking), implying that

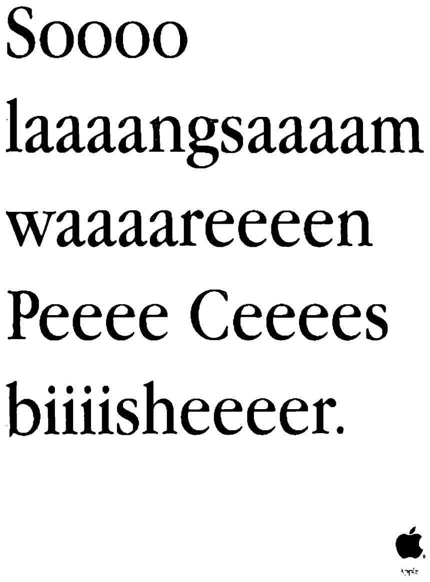


Figure 11. *Apple: advertisement, undated*

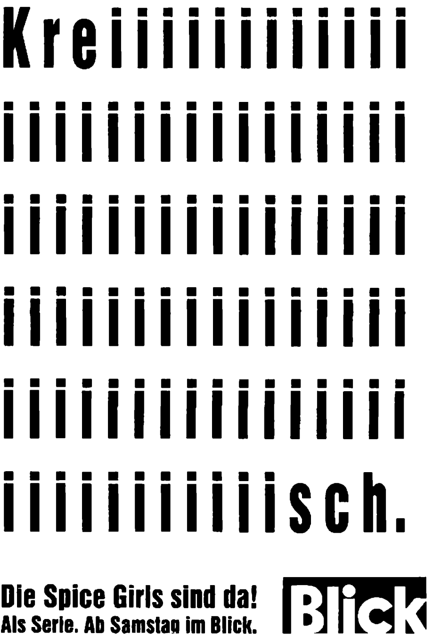


Figure 12. *Blick: advertisement in Tages-Anzeiger (Zürich), 18 February 1998*

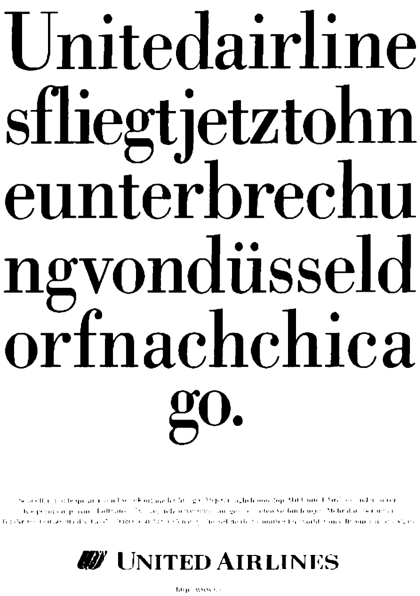


Figure 13. *United Airlines: advertisement in TIME (European ed.), 23 September 1996*

Düsseldorf. Stop.
Chicago. Stop.
United. Nonstop.

Ab jetzt können Sie ohne umständliche Zwischenstops von Düsseldorf nach Chicago fliegen. Täglich. Mit United Airlines und unserem Kooperationspartner Lufthansa. Das verstehen wir unter einzigartigen Verbindungen. Mehr darüber unter Tel.-Nr. 0 69/60 50 20 oder Fax-Nr. 0 69/60 50 23 90. Come fly the airline that's uniting the world. Come fly our friendly skies

UNITED AIRLINES

http://www.ual.de

Figure 14. *United Airlines: advertisement in TIME (European ed.), 23 December 1996*

gure 15. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung: advertisement in Neue Zürcher Zeitung (Zürich), 10 January 1989*

thinking ahead will make people take out life insurance [Figure 16]. The unwelcome abruptness of "Sendeschlu[ss]" is indicated iconically by the missing final *-ss*, while the truncated initial and final letters of "Weiterdenken" by contrast suggest the virtues of unlimited, unrestrained thinking.

7. In the above examples it is the margins that truncate letters and words, but there are many other ways of 'deleting' or 'damaging' them to indicate notions such as absence or loss, unwelcome termination (hostile interruption, death, etc.), suppression, taboo-ing, and the like.

Three examples illustrate some of the possibilities. A "Providentia" advertisement offering a special discount to non-smokers draws attention to itself by 'double marking' the key word, both non-iconically as "Nicht Raucher" and iconically by crossing out the word "Raucher" [Figure 17]. More boldly, another advertisement by the same company offers insurance against the 'tabooed' risks of "Tod und Invalidität" (death and disability). "Tod" and "Invalidität" are literally suppressed or blacked out, and it takes some creative guesswork on the part of the reader to recover them [Figure 18].[9]

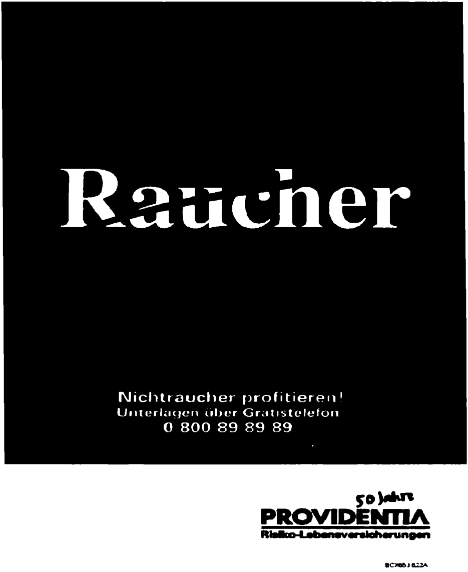
Another Apple advertisement for the Power Macintosh, finally, says "So kompatibel waren PCs bisher" (This is how compatible PCs have been in the past). The implicit question put by the incomplete statement (How compatible have they been?) is answered, iconically, by the broken, that is incompatible, letters of the slogan [Figure 19].

8. In cultures where the Roman alphabet is the norm, letters, words or whole sentences written in non-Roman alphabets (Greek, Cyrillic, etc.) may be used to iconically indicate the presence of the culture identified with that alphabet. The contents of such messages in non-Roman lettering cannot be interpreted by the ordinary reader, and so a translation must be given unless the non-Roman letters are meant to 'speak for themselves'.

In the first example presented here the Zürich department store "Globus" advertises Greek food not only with text accompanied by a picture, but also with the word *philoxenia* in Greek spelling as an iconic eye-catcher [Figure 20]. The line underneath explains that the word means 'hospitality in Greek'.[10] In the second, for "Russische Kommerzial Bank", the word "Business" in Cyrillic letters has the same function [Figure 21]. The Courier font used for the IBM "schreIBMaschinen" advertisement [Figure 6] could be classed here as well.

9. Words or letters contained in business logos may be used like (and in

gure 16. *Providentia: poster, undated*



gure 17. *Providentia: advertisement in Neue Zürcher Zeitung (Zürich), 23 September 1996*

Figure 18. *Providentia: advertisement in Crosstalk (Crossair's inflight magazine), October 1988*

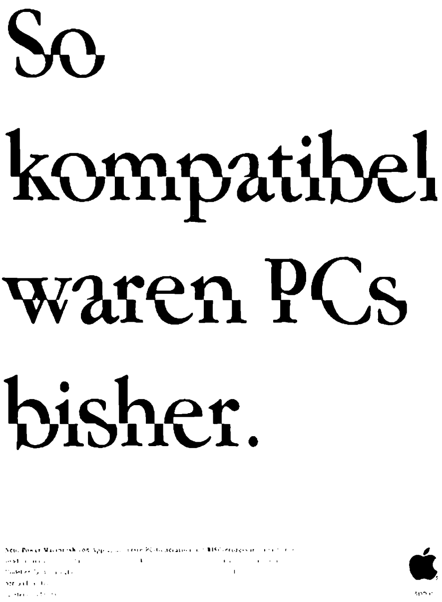


Figure 19. *Apple: advertisement, undated*

igure 20. *Globus: advertisement in Tages-Anzeiger (Zürich), 17 August 1989*

БИЗНЕС ?

(Business)

Russische Kommerzial Bank Zürich

Trade Finance • Investments • Consulting

RUSSISCHE KOMMERZIAL BANK AG

Schützengasse 1, 8001 Zürich,
Tel. +41 1 218 11 11, Fax +41 1 221 07 79

Ein Unternehmen der Bank for Foreign Trade
VNESHTORGBANK – Moskau

Figure 21. *Russische Kommerzial Bank Zürich: advertisement in NZZ-FOLIO (Zürich), April 1998*

combination with) ordinary letters. In advertising copy they thus iconically evoke the firm or product they represent.

The "schreIBMaschinen" advertisement for IBM typewriters discussed above [Figure 6] shows one instance of this strategy. Another is provided by a small advertisement on the first page of the business section of *The Sunday Times*, which draws attention to second-hand Rolls Royces and Bentleys advertised elsewhere the same paper [Figure 22]. In keeping with the luxury image of the cars in question the advertisement speaks of "resale" rather than "second-hand" motor cars. This image is further emphasized by the most prominent device of the advertisement, the reproduced "waRRanted" plaque, which ingeniously combines the promise of warranted/guaranteed quality with the Rolls Royce logo.

Figure 22. *Rolls Royce: advertisement in The Sunday Times (London), 14 February 1988 (business section, page D1, referring to classified advertisements on page B10)*

10. Pictures of objects that resemble letters may replace these letters and thus, like the logos just mentioned, iconically evoke the object in question together with the letter. All letters of the alphabet can be used in this fashion, but the examples show that certain letters such as the round O lend themselves to iconic modifications more easily than others.[11] The following is a selection out of many examples.

In the widely acclaimed Swiss anti-aids campaign with its main slogan "STOP AIDS" the O of STOP is represented by a wedding ring reinforcing the message "bliib treu" (be faithful, in Swiss German), or by a rolled-up condom [Figs. 23 and 24].[12] The advertisement for Krüger's "Boot Auto Moto Show" (boat, car, motorcycle exhibition) underscores its message with no fewer than six

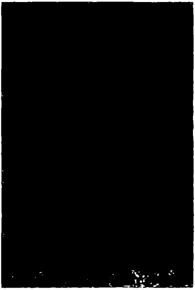
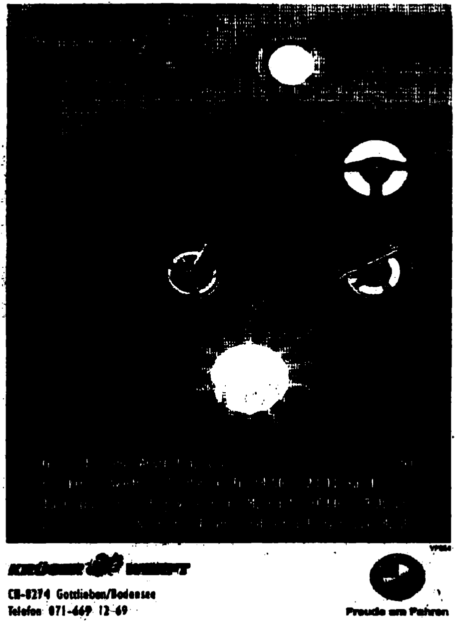


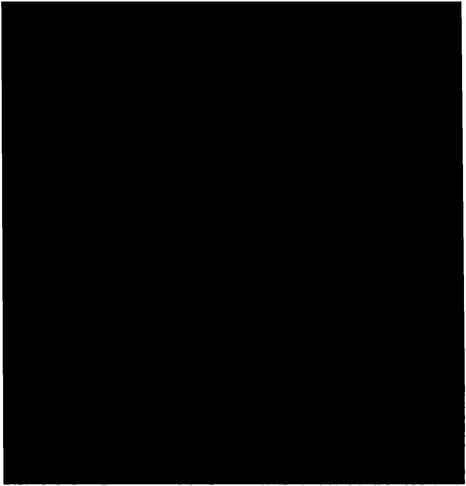
Figure 23. *Stop Aids: poster/advertisement 1987; reproduced in Tages-Anzeiger (Zürich), 28 January 1997*

pictorial icons: a compass and a life buoy, a (car) steering wheel, two motorcycle wheels and a sun [Figure 25]. In advertisements for "Pro-optik", an optician's, the two o's which are linked by a hyphen suggest spectacles [Figure 26]. In the official logo (usually printed in colour) of the alpine resort Davos the triangular, light blue A evokes a snow-covered mountain and the round, yellow O the sun [Figure 27]. In the logo of Richters bookshop in Dresden, finally, the E ('broken up' and printed in red to contrast with the other — black — letters) suggests a pile of books; by implication the whole word with its many verticals may be read as a section of a bookshelf [Figure 28].

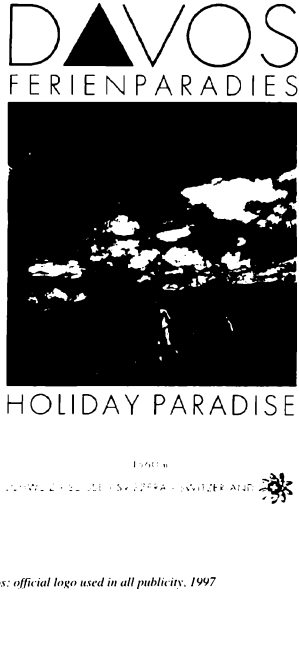
Figure 24. *Stop Aids: advertisement, undated*



gure 25. *Krüger Werft: advertisement in Tages-Anzeiger (Zürich), 24 April 1997*



igure 26. *Pro-optik, Zürich: advertisement in ZüriWoche (Zürich), 13 March 1997*



gure 27. *Davos: official logo used in all publicity, 1997*

RICHTERS

Buchhandlung

lesenmachtschön

Förstereistraße 44 • 01099 Dresden • (0351) 8 02 27 70
Albertinum • Georg-Treu-Platz 1 • 01067 Dresden • (0351) 4 91 47 64
Gemäldegalerie • Theaterplatz • 01067 Dresden • (0351) 4 91 46 48

Figure 28. *Richters Buchhandlung, Dresden: logo used on stationery, paper bags etc., 1996*

Notes

1. Throughout this paper 'writing' refers to printed text and not to handwriting.
2. Many of the technical limitations of mechanical typesetting have disappeared in the age of computerized typesetting and desktop publishing.
3. It will be seen that some firms (or rather the advertising agencies in charge of the account) use graphological iconicity methodically throughout a campaign; see Providentia (Figs. 3, 4, 16, 17, 18), United Airlines (Figs. 9, 10, 13, 14), or Apple (Figs. 11, 19).
4. For such an overall typology, see, for example, Gerstner (1990).
5. The author would be grateful for comments and for further examples.
6. In their chapter on "Orientational Metaphors" Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 14) make the point that "[t]hough the polar oppositions up-down, in-out, etc., are physical in nature, the orientational metaphors based on them can vary from culture to culture". In practically all the up-down spatialization metaphors they quote, however, up is associated with positive notions and down with negative ones. Some examples: HAPPY IS UP, SAD IS DOWN; HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP, SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN; HAVING CONTROL or FORCE IS UP, BEING SUBJECT TO CONTROL or FORCE IS DOWN; MORE IS UP, LESS IS DOWN.
7. German *ei* represents the diphthong /ai/ of *kreisch*, English *ea* the long monophthong /iː/ of *scream*.
8. This advertisement dates from 1989. The slogan has lost some of its punch since many radio and television stations nowadays broadcast for 24 hours, making "Sendeschluss" a thing of the past.
9. This creative guesswork is made easier by the fact that "Tod und Invalidität" is a frequent collocation in German insurance terminology. Moreover, the two deleted words are actually given at the bottom of the page, albeit in smaller print.
10. Piller (this volume) discusses the use of Greek etc. sounding words (not letters) to convey the same aspect.
11. Nänny (this volume) looks at the iconic uses of the letter O in literary texts.
12. The condom-icon has become closely associated with the STOP AIDS campaign. The wedding band-icon, however, like an early poster showing a provocatively dressed woman, was criticized and then given up because it was felt that the campaign should be inclusive and should not target special groups (such as married people, or prostitutes and their clients).

References

Gerstner, Karl. 1990. *Kompendium für Alphabeten: Eine Systematik der Schrift*. 3rd ed. Heiden: Verlag Arthur Niggli.

Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. 1980. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Iconicity in the Digital World

An Opportunity to Create a Personal Image?

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University of Zurich

> Popular culture is always in process; its meanings can never be identified in a text, for texts are activated, or made meaningful, only in social relations and in intertextual relations. This activation of the meaning potential of a text can occur only in the social and cultural relationship into which it enters. (Fiske, 1991a: 3)

1. Introduction

New media and new technologies are creating an openness which allows their users to establish new forms of interpersonal communication. Some of these communication forms are usually grouped together under the term 'Internet communication'.[1] Internet communication means the possibility to interact over great distances, to communicate transculturally without considerable effort and across national borders – but it is also used in communication from one office room to the next.[2] Internet communication is a tool that surmounts physical distances (often not well-distinguished from cultural ones). On the other hand, interpersonal communication on the Internet *lacks* non-verbal information, it is 'reduced' to the verbal level only, for by now most users obviously communicate by means of texts or line by line. Internet users often are considered quasi-anonymous interlocutors, because Internet communication is not as close as face-to-face communication. For this reason, Internet communication is at the centre of attention at the moment. It is found interesting not only because of the novelty of the medium, but because of its inherent contradiction: its similarity to oral face-to-face communication that stands against the fact that it is *written* communication (cf. Krämer 1997: 88f.). The more common the use of Internet communication becomes, the more the written word (and the characteristics hitherto associated with: its artificiality, consciousness, definitiveness and visual fixity [cf. Ong 1982: 81]) will lose the importance that it has traditionally had.

2. Linguistic characteristics of Internet communication

Electronic mail is a communication tool that was instituted for interpersonal communication when the first node of the network ARPANET was installed at UCLA in 1969. By 1972, thirty-seven universities and government research organisations in the U.S. had joined the network, and today, all continents and fifty-seven million Internet users (January 1997) are connected by satellite links, fiber optic cables and telephone lines creating the network commonly called the 'Internet' (cf. Reid 1994; statistics from Quarterman 1997). Due to the great interest in interpersonal communication – the first users of the network spent most of their time in writing and reading electronic mail (e-mail)[3] – other tools were invented: USENET, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), Multi User Dungeon (MUD), Multi User Dungeon Object Orientated (MOO), etc. (cf. Reid 1994, see note 1).

These inventions may be regarded as totally or partly new forms of communication that define and demand new modes and styles of communication (Cf. Collot and Belmore 1996), different manners, rules and rituals – and therefore also new text types. When we compare Internet communication with oral and written text types we are already familiar with, the talk/phone chats may be regarded as written phone calls; the IRCs as written informal discussions (cf. Werry 1996, Feldweg et al. 1995); e-mail messages may be anything from informal notes to official letters (cf. Günther and Wyss 1996); Mailing Lists resemble notice-board messages or advertisement sections in papers and magazines. Newsgroup communication is akin to written and public group discussions, but it also resembles a notice-board on which advertisements are posted. The communication in a MUD resembles the communication found in board and adventure games. Despite these similarities, which may be defined as intertextual relations, there is not yet an accepted linguistic explanation of the inherent conflict between orality and literacy.

Herring (1996b) makes us understand why it is not surprising that the users of Internet facilities call some forms of computer mediated communication (e.g.

IRC and Newsgroup communication) 'discussions' or 'conversations'. She describes the new communication habits from a sociolinguistic point of view: Relying on a corpus of two different types of discussion forums, she shows that quite a lot of e-mail-messages (87%) lack a greeting that is conventional in letters. This lack could show that the users consider the individual message as a conversational turn. But on the other hand, the new text types show a high level of written coherence features such as the creation of intertextuality by the use of quotations and linkings to other messages as well as in addressing other users. This induces Herring to call the texts interactive not only on the intratextual but also on the intertextual level. She concludes:

> The pure exchange of information, narrowly defined, is of secondary importance [...] The basic electronic message schema thus more closely resembles that of interactional text types such as personal letters and conversational turns than that of expository texts, although moves of the expository schema are sometimes found in the message body. (Herring 1996b: 92)

As Yates (1996: 40–45) shows, similarities to oral communication can also be observed on a quantitative lexical level. In comparing the lexical peculiarity of three corpora, one consisting of oral, one of written and one of Internet communication, he observes that Internet communication has such features of orality as, for example, a higher frequency of personal references (1st and 2nd person) and modal auxiliaries.

The very special feature of this visual medium is that it enables the user to communicate without paper 'on screen': the messages are both written and read on the screen. Because there usually is no fixation of a text on a hardcopy, communication takes on an aura of volatility as we know it from face-to-face dialogue. The fact that there is no paper involved could be a reason why oral features can be found in the written texts. But the misspellings, the elliptic style, the lack of greeting formulas, the interlinear writing into existing messages are also phenomena comparable to handwritten notes and memos. They are proof of a colloquial and an informal yet written style in asynchronous communication.

Although computer mediated communication is often understood by help of the paradigm of face-to-face communication, the typing (and reading) of messages in all the facilities mentioned above characterises the communication as *written* communication. The more the communication is synchronous – as it is in Internet Relay Chat and MUD – the more the features of Internet Communication are considered to be aspects of orality. The features of *informal* written language with its conversational links or references lead us to conclude that the Internet is not so much a means to exchange information as it is a medium to communicate (Cf. Herring 1996). When we look at Internet communication against the background of face-to-face communication, all new features become compensations or surrogates for the four characteristics that Kiesler et al. (1984: 1125) mention: absence of regulation feedback, dramaturgical weakness, few social status cues and social anonymity.

There could indeed be an interrelation between, for example, smiley faces and the lack of regulation feedback. But it is also necessary to consider the smiley faces as an Internet code, as a medium specific symbolic performance, which should show us (and indeed does) the communicator's knowledge of the (insider) Internet codes as well.[4] To account for this polyfunctionality and historicity of symbolic signs it seems much more interesting not to offer the simple explanation that 'virtual' communication is really synchronous, face-to-face communication, but rather to accept them as new text-types and to describe their linguistic features (cf. Table 1). I believe, therefore, that we should understand Internet Communication as a new mode of communication which uses the medium Internet as a means or as a space of communication (cf. Reid 1994) where written text-types *and* oral interactional modes and rituals are brought into contact with each other.

Table 1. *Internet communication facilities*

	'talk'/ 'phone'	IRC	E-mail	Mailing List	Newsgroup	MUD/MOO
synchronous	+	+	+/–	–	+/–	+
computer as space	+	+	–	–	–	+
computer as means	+	+	+	+	+	+
similarity to written and oral text-types	phone call	conference phone call, discussion	from informal notes to official letters, direct mail	(message) board, journal ads	board, (public) group discussions	game, role-play, drama
subjects/ topics fixed	–	+/–		+	+/–	+/–
communication is controlled by a (system) operator		+		+	+	+

3. Writing restrictions on the Internet

There are some restrictions in writing that should be mentioned. All keys of the keyboard can be used: different characters, alphabetical and alpha-numeric symbols, and even punctuation. To avoid transmission errors because of different coding schemes, interlocutors can only use the following U.S.-American standard, the ASCII character set (American Standard Code for Information Interchange, cf. Table 2):

Table 2. *ASCII Character Set*

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
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
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
! " # $ % & '() = — ~ ^| \ { } [ ] _ ' @ + ; * : < > . , ? /

The writer usually cannot use character formatting like bold or italics, or such fonts – proportional types – as Times and Helvetica. There is no possibility of choosing larger or smaller letters, or different colours. The choice of the medium is not left to the writer, as is possible when writing letters on paper.

The electronic message (sent to individual people, sometimes posted to Usenet-discussion-Groups or to a list-server as public messages, where they are forwarded to multiple subscribers of a mailing list) has two or sometimes three parts. First, there is the *header*, where the writer or the e-mail software puts the necessary information to send the message to the right place. Name and address are separated by the commercial 'at' character, also called ape-sign. The header also contains the *subject* of the message. After the header there is the *message text* (also called the *body*). The third part is the *signature*. This is a short message (kept in a separate file in some e-mail software) and tacked onto the end of the message. The signature usually consists of one to four (or more) lines of text and contains the sender's e-mail address, his/her employer or university, a favourite quote and other personal information.

There are other rules that can be seen as restrictions: the lack of space and time to write. In IRC – a very fast tool – the messages or turns are usually not longer than one line. E-mail messages should not exceed the monitor width. At this point, the typographic standards overlap standards of politeness, the Internet-Etiquette called 'Netiquette'.

4. Iconicity in Internet communication

Quite a lot of written iconic features are used to fulfill one or another function to overcome the above mentioned medium specific restrictions. This limitation of one's individual creativity could be one reason why Internet communication contains so much iconicity of such varied types. But it should also be taken into account that the computer is primarily a visual, iconic medium.

Thus, Internet Communication features many types of iconicity. We find iconic forms well known from avant-garde poetry, from the language of comics and from urban graffiti. Smiley faces – an allusion to the Seventies – or emoticons, special abbreviations and ASCII-art are the best known icons and iconic codes of Internet Communication. But also simple typographical features, text structuring features and layouts may be seen as forms of iconicity. The examples that I will discuss below will illustrate those iconic features that can be said to show the personality of their user.[5] Iconicity is here considered as visualized or visualizing (and also often metaphorical) presentation of function and meaning using alphabetical and alpha-numeric signs.

4.1 *Typography*

The repetition of characters, the use of capitals, the space between letters, underlining, and other forms of typography may be interpreted as iconic forms used to emphasise important information, to show what is important.

(1)
```
========================================
Note: Please do not reply to FName-SName
                ^^^
but to the addresses below.
========================================
```

In this note (1) the important word 'not' is underlined with interlinear carets. The whole information is emphasized by a band of equation marks (=) over and under the written text.

(2)
```
@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
@                                                                   @
@ Vxxxx Lxxxxx              e-mail: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.hfi.hr          @
@ Xxxxxxxxx 19                      xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.ffzg.hr         @
@ 41000 Zagreb               v-net: 000 00 000-000 (home)           @
@ CROATIA                           IRCnick: Xxxxxxxx               @
@                                                                   @
@                 HELP! I'm surrounded by apes!                     @
@                                                                   @
@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@
```

In this signature (2), a more ornamental way of text-structuration is shown. The band around the address is made up of 'apes' or '@'s, a colloquial name for the commercial 'at'-sign. The apes here iconically reflect the cry: "Help! I'm surrounded by apes!" which has an obvious double meaning because it refers to the war in Croatia where the writer lives. The interrelation between text and typographical band transforms the border into a visualisation of the final line. Iconicity is more than a text-structuring device here. For the writer it is a possibility to express and show her emotional feeling of powerlessness. At the same time, it presents an artistic satirical picture of reality, a possibility to dissociate herself from the situation.

4.2 *Smiley faces*

Another form of iconicity is represented by the more famous smiley faces. (You have to read them as an image turning the paper ninety degrees to the right.) The smileys are combinations of punctuation marks. The colon shows the eyes, the hyphen the nose, the closed or open brackets the mouth (cf. Sanderson 1993). They are ASCII-versions of the decals of the Seventies and very similar to the visual grammar of comic-strip faces. And of course one could establish a reference to conventional or even stereotypical human mimic expressions of western society. Commonly they are used as a commentary on the text (e.g. the winky smiley) or even as supplementary non-verbal information. They are often called 'Emoticons',[6] as they give some information about the emotional tone of the verbal text.

```
(3)  :-) Your basic smiley. This smiley is used to inflect a sarcastic or
         joking statement since we can't hear voice inflection over Unix.
     ;-) Winky smiley. User just made a flirtatious and/or sarcastic remark.
         More of a 'don't hit me for what I just said' smiley.
     :-( Frowning smiley. User did not like that last statement or is upset
         or depressed about something.
     :-I Indifferent smiley. Better than a Frowning smiley but not quite as
         good as a happy smiley

     :< – what?
     :{ – what?
     :O – Yelling
     :C – what?
     :Q – what?
     :,( – Crying
     {} – Hugs and
     :* – Kisses                    (Collected by whenry@lindy.stanford.edu)
```

Example (4) shows the place of smiley faces. Very often they are put at the end of an utterance or a speech act, as a sort of a final act or final observation. The contextualisation though is ambiguous. The smiley could refer to the ironical "little", or to the whole humourous ironical sentence, "Actually, I think the header says a little too much!" It could be read after the sentence, paraphrased as 'laughs and laughs and laughs and laughs', or as a commentary on the text: 'it's very funny'.

```
(4)   Date: Wed, 9 Aug 1995 10: 29: 27 -0600
      Reply-To: "Interpreting (and) translation" <LANTRA-L@SEARN.SUNET.SE>
      Sender: "Interpreting (and) translation" <LANTRA-L@SEARN.SUNET.SE>
      From: Cx Dxxx <CCDESANTIS%ISD022%XFER%UTLVAX%YVAX%WPGATE@YVAX.BYU.EDU>
      Organization: Bxxx Yxxxx University
      Subject: "Molly screw" => French? -Reply
      To: Multiple recipients of list LANTRA-L <LANTRA-L@SEARN.SUNET.SE>

      Actually, I think the header says a little too much! : ))))

      -ccd
```

Although the term 'emoticons' used for smileys would imply that they supply para- and non-verbal information, it is very rarely possible to read them as para-verbal information because they come 'too late': The smiley is placed at the end of the sentence, so it will be read after the relevant words. Example (4) also shows a morphological principle of the smileys. The quadruple repetition of a unit – here the mouth – expresses a sort of emphasis. Thus, smileys are productive because they are seen as morphologically structured. The writer makes use of this structuring feature as if he used verbal expressions, as if he used letters and words to write. It would be an over-interpretation to read this use only as a demonstration of the knowledge of Internet codes for he creates an individual expression by playing with the structuring mode. The range of the expressions achieved by means of smileys is continually expanding to further levels because the whole character set may be used. Smiley faces may even become a one-line form of ASCII-art. Depicting faces – constructed in the same way as emoticons – of public, historical and mythological persons or figures (5) is more a work of smiley fans than part of the e-mail messages.

```
(5)   7:^]      Ronald Reagan
      C]:-=     Charlie Chaplin
      4:-)      George Washington
      @-)       cyclops
```

What we earlier called a limitation or a restriction must now be seen as a very productive feature of the Internet code. With regard to the presentation of personal images, there is an interplay between codification and personal expression. It is sometimes problematic to separate common use from a demonstration of Internet code knowledge because of the fact that many new users (called 'Newbies') spread smiley faces over their text to show their knowledge of Internet discourse, whereas insiders often do not use them in e-mail messages, or only sparingly.

4.3 *Language of comics and onomatopoeics*

Iconicity may be used as a means to transfer features of speech to written language as is known from the language of comic-strips (cf. McCloud 1994). These features are essentially onomatopoeic in nature.

The writer conveys an everyday exclamation in example (6). The 'o' could stand for length or loudness, shouting or yelling. The accumulation of the letters therefore is ambiguous. The expression of emphasis by a repetition of characters (see also Section 4.1.), as it is used in the language of comics to imitate spoken language, here also indicates the writer's ironical attitude to the succeeding humorous and hyperbolical statement.

```
(6)  [...]
     Well, not to brag or anything, but Donahue went to my High School (as
     if it makes a difference)... even played clarinet in Band.

     Oooooh. Excitement overcomes us all.
     [...]
```

Without context the "brrr..." in (7) would not make sense. It indicates disgust, but it is also used in comics and everyday language to indicate shivering:

```
(7)  Subject: brrr...
```

With the help of the context in the body of the message it is possible to find out how to read the text in the subject line, for in the message below it the writer mentions the cold weather.

In the same way, emphasis is iconically expressed in (8) by means of the repetition of the exclamation mark. The exclamation marks and the capitals as they are used in Internet Culture are stereotypical language features of comics.

```
(8)  FirstName!!!!! Are you there? I am, finally ON-LINE. Send a line if you
     get this message.
```

4.4 *Reduplication*

Reduplication phenomena can be considered as a form of iconicity. Reduplication indicates a double or secondary coding, which in colloquial style indicates an intensification of what is meant by the word, e.g.: oldold = very old. It may also indicate plurality or a collective; or increase, continuation or completion; or diminution (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

```
(9)   Subject: Re: kinokinokino
      (Engl. cinemacinemacinema)
```

The triple use of "kino" (cinema) in (9) is a good example of intensification. The sender was writing an e-mail message about her longing to go to the cinema. Note that the interpretation of the reduplication sign in this case is provided by the context and not by the repetition itself.

```
(10)   liebe FirstName, welcome welcome
       (Engl. dear FirstName, welcome welcome)
```

The repetition of „welcome" in (10) could be seen as a plural form (a lot of welcomes), an intensification (very welcome) or a continuation (welcome now, welcome tomorrow), or even simply as an idiomatic phrase. Only the context can give a clue to its meaning.

4.5 *Images and ASCII-art in signatures and text*

A playful and sometimes truly imagic iconicity in e-mail messages are the images used in signatures, in texts as illustrations, and in ASCII-art collections and exhibitions on the Internet.[7] The *images* or *drawings* are also made up of characters and punctuation marks.

For love mails, the well-known rose on one line (11) may be useful:

```
(11)   @-'-,-'-
```

But more often, images are not as standardized as abbreviations and smiley faces. In (12) the writer creates two highly individual lines, which he calls "fog". The image here is only comprehensible with the explanation given in the text.

```
(12)   [_] Good luck, and here's some symbolic fog: ( ( () ( ) ) ) )
                                                    ) ) ) (( ) )) (
```

As the *signature* has the function of a letterhead attached at the end of the e-mail message, one could expect iconically created personal images. However, most

Internet users do not use the signature option. When they use it, they often put in name, institution, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail address in a purely formal style. Humorous, informal or artistic signatures are not very common. Most of them can be found in Usenet Newsgroups where signatures also reflect the social affiliation to a group.

The signature (13) depicts firework from the left – from the west – in four lines. The picture itself is connected to the quotation from the Polish poet and satirist Lec. "Ex oriente lux, ex occidente luxus". This quotation is satirical rather than simply humorous. The pun is more like a political statement and it is represented in the image as well.

```
(13)   ___. .'*''.*      Pxxxx Pxxxx     xxxxxx@              Ex oriente lux,
      !___.'* '.'*' ' .  Pxxxxxx 00 X    xxxxxxx.oulu.fi ex occidente luxus.
           ' *' .* '*    FIN-90650 OULU  xxxxxx@
              *' * .*    FINLAND         xx.oulu.fi      - Stanislaw Jerzy Lec
```

The signatures in (14) and (15) depict the hobbies of the writers, but they are also related to the newsgroup where the message has been posted. In this way, the writers demonstrate their 'membership' of the newsgroup as well as of the group of tennis-players or surfers.

```
(14)  +----------------------------+---------------------------+
      | Cxxxxx X. Cxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx | Phone: (XXX) XXX-XXXX     |
      | Nxxxxx Xxxx                | Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxx.xxx |
      | Mxxxxx xx Xxxxxxxxxx Xxxxx |                           |
      +----------------------------+---------------------------+
      | The comments stated above are mine and mine alone.     |
      +--------------------------------------------------------+

                                 _
                                (      o
                                |
                              0/
                            --|
                      9       |      8
                      |      / \     |
              . . .   |      ^  ^    |    . . .
                      |              |
                 -------------------------

                          Gora Pilota !!
```

(Newsgroups: rec.sport.tennis, alt.tennis, Subject: Need help finding racquet!!, Date: Fri, 26 Sep 1997 10: 32: 03 -0500)

```
(15)          .-''.       Xxx Xxxxx, Xxxxx Xxxxxxxxxx Xxxxx, Xxxx
            .' .'-            http: //www.xxx.xxx.xxx/-xxxxxxxxx/
        _.-' '._   "From the essence of pure stoke springs all creation."
```

(Newsgroups: alt.surfing, Subject: Re: A wink's as good as a nod to a blind Nora, Date: 29 Sep 1997 19: 46: 50 GMT)

Another form of ASCII-art in message signatures is the *self portrait*. In the signature of (16) the writer gives us a portrait of herself. Picture and signature are fused together. It shows a childlike, friendly face, and the symmetric formation of the shape signals harmony. Due to this form the informal, conventional greeting formula "love and hugs" acquires a special, funny and ironical meaning if we consider the face's margins to consist of kiss-smileys ':*'.

```
(16)   *: Love and hugs:*
        *:            :*
         *:Jennierose:*
          *:  @   @ :*
           *:   J  :*
            *:\__/:*
             *:   :*
              *::*
```

The participants in the alt.ascii-art newsgroup though show themselves to be amateurs of ASCII-art or even ASCII-artists. Their aim is to create pictures (17). In these pictures one encounters effects that are similar to those found in the art-works of such movements as Op-art, Fluxus and Lettrism in the Sixties.

(17) 'the kiss'

(Newsgroups: alt.ascii-art, Date: Tue, 30 Sep 1997 13: 38: 25 -0700)

In this newsgroup some members – unlike other newsgroup discussants – change their e-mail signature very often (see 18 and 19, the signatures of Joan Stark), some even do so in relation to the subject of the message (in 19). The subject of this message is 'Donald Duck', and in her signature, Joan Stark puts another Disney character, Mickey Mouse.

```
(18)   'Flying Elephants'

     {\{\         ,                                          /}/}
     { \ \.--.  \\  -=I will have seen everything  ,       / / }
     {  /' , "\_//   when I see an elephant fly=-  \\    .-=.( (   }
     {  \__\ ,--'                                  \'--"   '\\_.---,='
      {_/    _ ;-.           joan stark             '-,  \__/       \___
       /  '.___/        <xxxxxxxxx@xxxx.com>         .-'.-.'      \___.'
       |   __ /                                     / // /-..___,-'--'
     '=\     \'\           ASCII ART GALLERY:        '" '"
        '/  / / <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/7373/>
    jgs  './ ./
```

(Newsgroups: alt.ascii-art, Subject: Re: need a signature, Date: 25 Sep 1997 21: 12: 14 GMT)

```
(19)   'Donald Duck'

In article <xxxxxx@xxxxx.xxxxx.xx>, xxxx@xxxx.xx (Firstname2 Name2) writes:

>    .------._
>   /         \.-.
>   \_-_:====';  _.)
>    .'/''..''\', \\
>   | '   ||   '.|
>   | |   ||   | |
>   | | 0 || 0 | |
>  .'_ __.--.__ _'.
> (__. _.----._ .__)
>    '--=======--'          dlK
>
>

This is GREAT!  Wow-- I wish I would've made this one!
-Firstname1
--
             .-"""-.
            /       \
            \       /             joan stark
     .-"""-.-'.-.-.<  _        <xxxxxxxxx@xxxx.xxx>
    /      _,-\ ()()_/:)
    \     / ,  '     '|
     '-..-| \-.,___,  /           ASCII ART GALLERY:
           \ '-.__/  / <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/7373/>
       jgs  '-.__.-''
```

(Newsgroups: alt.ascii-art, Subject: Re: Donald Duck, Date: 25 Sep 1997 21: 14: 14 GMT)

The frequent change of signatures (18 and 19) shows that the group's or members' ideals or goals of 'creativity' are treated in an informal manner. So in this context the signing of the pictures ("jgs" or "dlK") is no longer astonishing for the creators of the pictures would like to be recognized. This may be compared to a painter signing his or her artwork. The newsgroup-member hence performs as an artist. In this context of artistic iconicity, the signature is a means of expressing one's originality or creativity, a way of distinguishing oneself.

On the other hand, ASCII-art may also serve in a very conventional way as (20) makes clear. It shows a stereotypical icon of an Easter-bunny in order to refer to Easter ("ostern") mentioned in the message:

```
(20)
                      __                  ____
                    .'  \               //'.  \
                    \ / \\             //   |\ \
                    \/'. \\           //    ||''
                      '.  '\\__v__\\     //
                        '.             .'
                         | o   o  |
                       .'    O     '.
                      (              )        . - .
                       '.    TTT    .'      '______'
                         '---------'       '########'
                          /         \     /-----------\
                         /           \    \/\/\/\/\/\/
                        ( )         ( )   .           .
                        \             /   |\/\/\/\/\/|
                         \ __     __ /    '.********.'
                          /__\--/__\       '.____.'

wir waren zu ostern in kaernten.
wie gehts? wann ist die pruefung? wir freuen uns schon aufs feiern.

alles liebe
claudia

(Engl: at easter we were in kaernten.
how are you doing? when is the date of your exam? we're looking forward to the
party.

love
claudia)
```

5. Conclusion: Types and functions of iconicity

Cyberculture considered as a new form of popular culture shows that iconicity is strongly connected with the context, its intra- or even intertextual relations of pictorial and verbal elements. We have seen that in different Internet communication facilities, one may observe many different types of iconicity:

There is a frequent use of typography – comparable to the olden times when the mechanical typewriter was used to write letters – to emphasize words or even parts of a text. Typographical iconicity gives a gestalt to the text itself, it structures the text in a fundamental way. This type of iconicity also interrelates with proverbs and quotations in signatures, with the body text, with the subject of the message, with the topic of the newsgroup, and even with previous messages or questions. Some features of typography (e.g. the repetition of characters) resemble the onomatopoeic expressions in comics – expressions derived from spoken language and other features of orality. The simple typographic features (e.g. underlining) are used in everyday machine-written texts, whereas the more artistic features – they do not occur that often in e-mail messages – are also typical of the language of modern poetry as exemplified by Mallarmé, the Futurists, the Dadaists and the representatives of constructivist contemporary poetry.

Smiley faces are often considered to infuse explicit para- and non-verbal behaviour into the written text. Whether a smiley is put at the end of an utterance and whether it may be read as a commentary on the text or as supplementary non-verbal information, does not depend only on the position of the 'emoticon' but also on whether it is a winky smiley or a yelling or a what-smiley. The latter replaces a word, the others replace non-verbal behaviour. In interpreting smiley faces one has to take into consideration that even smileys have different ways of referring. Smileys are also features of popular culture. They are used in different languages, and of course in advertising language too.[8]

The language of comics and onomatopoeics are very common in Internet Culture. They establish intertextual relations to other popular texts (cf. Fiske 1991b). The 'Cyberese' is not only nourished by the language of comics but also by features from fantasy and science fiction stories, which are also widespread in the Comics Culture and present all over the Internet. The language of comics and the their use of onomatopoeic sounds often indicate insider knowledge as well as the fun of mixing different codes within the text proper.

In a way, a colloquial style is established by using the iconic feature of reduplication, which is not only playful and 'borrowed' from everyday language, but creates at the same time the possibility of intensifying semantic meaning.

ASCII-art represents purely visual iconicity in Internet Communication. ASCII-art means drawing with limited tools, the ASCII character set. Some drawings use only few lines, some use more lines. The writers/painters use this art form in signatures in order to illustrate their personal slogan; some prefer to create an iconic representation of their hobby and others draw their own portrait. This form of iconicity, as part of a text, also has an ornamental function, which is shown in the decoration motifs of 'virtual' greeting cards. The ASCII-artists, however, give a demonstration of their originality and creativity within their newsgroup.

Iconic elements spread (even sparingly) over the text may be used to create an informal style. As parts of the whole, iconic elements and features show and visualize verbal information. Used in this way, they confirm and offer a visual context to embed information.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, iconicity in general shows that even with restricted possibilities it is a means to create a playful (productive) artistic environment (cf. Fiske 1991b). It means that quite a number of people overcome, or intend to overcome, formal conventions of stereotyped written communication, and their use of iconicity shows their huge pleasure in creating (written) texts. And, of course, there are new features, new conventions, new text-types cyber-people create and learn.

The phenomenon of iconicity may also be seen as an attempt to create a personal image. There are many different iconic ways to generate a personal image in a text, as has been mentioned before. The most imagic iconicity are the e-mail signatures. Signatures illustrate the personal profile of a writer. By means of distinctive slogans the signature expresses a writer's attitude, gives us information about his or her personal interests, and political opinions. A final remark should be made concerning signatures: In signatures, the personal image of writers may be condensed. The signature's intensified visual literacy is a virtual 'materialization' of its function. In terms of the iconicity of signatures it could be called an auto-icon: the Internet signature is *the* signature.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Olga Fischer, Max Nänny, and Steven Wedema for their help with the English translation.

   For this article, I have considered the following facilities as Internet communication: e-mail, Internet Relay Chat (IRC), phone/talk, Usenet Newsgroups, Mailing Lists, Multi User Dungeons (MUD) and Multi User Dungeons Object Orientated (MOO). (See also Section 2.) Although the World Wide Web (WWW) is an Internet communication tool, it must be excluded here, because it uses a whole new set of technological features for visual and verbal communication.

2. Although English ought to be called the *lingua franca* of the Internet, the interlocutors are using other languages, i.e. Greek, German, French – some of which are difficult to reproduce when using only the ASCII Signs. The chosen language for translingual or transcultural communication depends on the language knowledge of the interlocutors and of course the knowledge they have of each other's language knowledge.
3. A standard spelling for the term 'e-mail' has not yet been established. On the Internet and in scientific publications the forms 'email' and 'e mail' are other commonly used spellings.
4. As time goes by, codes are changing, and using smileys is no longer a sign of being an insider.
5. The validity and reliability of data collections from the Internet remains a problem. For this paper I chose Glaser and Strauss's theoretical sampling (cf. Strauss 1987) I have collected over three thousand private, official and public electronic messages (e-mail, newsgroup, mailing list) to obtain categories of iconicity. In addition, I specifically searched through newsgroup postings and messages from mailing lists to extend the first categories and to illustrate the types of iconicity discussed here. I have decided to mask all identities (e-mail addresses) of Internet communication participants by the use of 'x' or 'Firstname', 'Name', even if they were published in open-access electronic forums, as the Usenet newsgroups are. (For some ethical observations on Internet data collecting, cf. Herring 1996a: 5f., Introduction).
6. A portmanteau word derived from 'emotion icon'. In FAQ-files (Frequently Asked Questions) or Netiquette information on the Internet the most common smiley faces are explained. (Netiquette /net'ee-ket/ or /net'i-ket/ [portemanteau word based on 'network etiquette'] are conventions of politeness recognized and published on the Internet or Usenet, cf. Rinaldi 1996, Shea 1996, Templeton n.d.)
7. Cf. the USENET newsgroups alt.ascii-art and alt.ascii-art.animation.
8. It is a characteristic feature of commercial language that all the peculiarities of popular language are used both in print and tv-advertising.

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Part IV

Word-Formation

Diagrammatic Iconicity in Word-Formation

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1. Introduction

The creation of new words seems to be affected by iconicity in several ways. The most obvious examples are provided by onomatopoeic forms, such as *bowwow* and *cuckoo*, where the word-forms are based on the imitation of 'natural' animal sounds and the like. More widespread but also less tangible are coinings which rely on the sound symbolic effects of certain vowels and consonant clusters (Marchand 1969: ch.7, Jakobson and Waugh 1987: 187ff., Waugh and Newfield 1995; see also A. Fischer, Fónagy, Meier, this volume). Yet all these phenomena, which are covered by Peirce's category of 'image', become rather marginal when we approach the classical area of word-formation, the creation of new words from existing (and mostly non-onomatopoeic) items to form compounds, derivations, blends, acronyms, etc. If we want to claim iconicity for word-formation proper, we must consider Peirce's second type of iconicity, the diagram, which, so far, has been associated with grammar and text structure rather than with words (Haiman 1985a, Haiman 1985b, Landsberg 1995, but see Piller, this volume).

Pursuing this idea, but leaving aside some minor instances (Ungerer, forthcoming), the paper will focus on two kinds of diagrammatic iconicity. The first is what is often regarded as the basic isomorphic principle, the one-to-one correlation between form and content, or to borrow Bolinger's more elaborate explanation "the natural condition of a language is to preserve one form for one meaning, and one meaning for one form" (Bolinger 1977: x) . The second kind of iconicity involved is an instance of what Haiman (1985a) has called 'motivation': Although the label 'motivation' is not particularly helpful here and its use has been disputed (Givón 1985: 188, Greenberg 1995: 57), Haiman's definition "that diagrams exhibit the same relationship among their parts as their referents do among their parts" (Haiman 1985a: 11) can be readily applied to word-formation processes, where the rearrangement of word forms can be said to mirror conceptual developments.

Starting with isomorphic iconicity in the above sense, we may assume that, first and foremost, it applies to words, especially if we take the minimalist position of regarding words as lexical units, described by Cruse (1986: 71) as a combination of a "single sense" and a "lexical form", the latter including inflectional variants. Indeed, the form/content isomorphism seems so natural on the lexical level that one might wonder whether it is worth discussing at all. However, the issue becomes more interesting when we approach it from a cognitive stance und try to see this isomorphism as the result of a painful process of pairing cognitive concepts with suitable word forms. Anybody who has watched the attempts of first or second language learners to master the linguistic forms of words which permit them to express their thoughts and needs will appreciate that the establishment of each isomorphic pair is an achievement both for the individual speaker and — on a more general level — for the speech community, an achievement that is definitely worth preserving. This is why language users are quite naturally interested in keeping isomorphic pairs intact.

Another aspect that emerges in a cognitive analysis is that the two elements involved in the isomorphic correlation are not equally stable or equally discrete. Admittedly, the word forms of English and any other language vary in time and also synchronically, depending on speaker background and the purpose of the exchange. Yet one might claim that in the eyes of the language user the linguistic form is the more stable and more discrete component of the isomorphic pair. By contrast, the cognitive concept or category tied to the linguistic form is less tangible. It is now generally accepted among cognitive linguists that concrete object concepts and organism concepts have a prototype structure (Ungerer and Schmid 1996: ch.1), and this also means that the category boundaries are vague and difficult to define — people are pretty sure of what counts as a good car, but less so whether amphibious vehicles should be included in the category. Other more abstract concepts like emotion concepts may have a different structure, but are no less evasive. The result seems to be twofold: On the one hand, language users cling to the discreteness of the linguistic form; parents, teachers and self-monitoring speakers are particular about the correct pronunciation and spelling of word forms. Any serious deviation is as it were registered as a violation of the isomorphic one-to-one correspondence. On the other hand, we are much more tolerant about the conceptual deviations of our conversational partners whenever we realise them (which we often don't), e.g. that they have a different concept of hairstyle or breakfast or pyjamas. We are also used to the slow conceptual shifts that are going on in our society all the time, the way our ideas of clothing, of cars, houses, TV programmes are changing, and we do not feel that these changes affect the isomorphic correspondences with accepted word forms.

This is probably one of the reasons why, apart from foreign language learners, language users seem to have much fewer problems with polysemy than many lexicographers and linguists; see Lipka's discussion of some of the problems involved (Lipka 1992: 135ff). Since language users are continuously exposed to conceptual variation, it takes a long time before the break-off point is reached and a polysemous item is replaced by two distinct pairs of word form and concept, or to use linguistic terminology, where the division of the lexeme into several lexical units is stored in the mental lexicon.

Yet as already suggested, this tolerance is not accorded to variation of the linguistic form. Any change of the word form is a potential threat to the precarious isomorphism maintained with a notoriously evasive cognitive concept. This is why word-formation, which overwhelmingly involves a change of word form, must necessarily interfere with the isomorphic correspondence between the word form and concepts of its base items. As one might put it, word-formation starts out from a violation of the form/concept correlation, but it does so with the aim of re-establishing exactly this kind of isomorphism because its goal is to create new viable words. In the following I will try to describe this process and pinpoint some of the strategies used to achieve a new form/concept isomorphism. Emphasis will be on compounds, blends and acronyms, but a few remarks on derivations and clippings will be added.

Let us now turn to the second kind of iconicity involved. As already indicated, this has something to do with the processual aspect of word-formation. Compounding can be seen as the clustering of lexical items, blending as the mixing of two forms, acronyms involve a reduction of the linguistic material, and these processes seem to reflect conceptual processes of accumulation, fusion and reduction. This process-related iconicity (as I will call it) interacts with the first type of iconicity, the item-related form/concept correlation. Yet contrary to what one might expect, the process-related type does not necessarily support the re-establishment of the form/concept isomorphism. The details will become clearer when we enter into the analysis of specific word-formation processes, starting with compounds.

2. Compounds

2.1 *Building-block compounds and scaffolding compounds*

Perhaps this is a little unfair, but the first set of examples discussed under the heading of compounds are not really compounds at all, but syntactic groups consisting of adjective and noun such as *red paprika* or *green paprika*. Traditionally, these examples have been seen as an accumulation of two items, one denoting 'paprika' and the other one denoting the colour. To use a suitable metaphor (Langacker 1987: 45), the word *red* (or *green*) and the word *paprika* have been understood as the two 'building blocks' assembled in the phrase. If one takes this stance, there is no reason to doubt that such a process of composition leaves the isomorphic correspondence within the two constituents largely unscathed. And since this building-block process is still held up to us as the model of compounding by many traditional linguists, the question is whether compounds are in fact to be seen as a threat to the form/concept isomorphism of words as suggested above. Indeed, one might argue that two-constituent sets like *red paprika* keep the cognitive content of the phrase analysable by faithfully reflecting the number of cognitive concepts involved and can thus be seen as an example of process-related iconicity.

However, this is a rather simplistic view even for adjective-noun combinations: a number of linguistic approaches have offered more sophisticated solutions, most recently cognitive linguistics, which considers all types of compositionality in terms of conceptual blending of frames (Fauconnier 1997, Sweetser, forthcoming). Yet even if we stick to the cruder picture that goes with the building block model, we can easily see that it does not work at all with real compounds — this was also the reason why we started off with phrases. If we take morphologically related compounds like *blackbird* or *darkroom*, we find that neither of them can be explained as a mere accumulation of two isomorphic form/concept pairs. A *blackbird* is not just a black bird, but a special kind of bird with many characteristic features; a *darkroom* is, of course, not just a badly-lit room but a photographic laboratory. If adjectival concepts like BLACK and DARK do not just add a single attribute to the nominal concept, this is even more so if two nominal concepts are combined — compare the *chair*-compounds *kitchen chair, armchair* and *wheelchair*. As empirical tests with informants have shown (Ungerer and Schmid 1998), the concept KITCHEN does not just add the place where the chair is positioned, it suggests additional attributes concerning the shape, the material and the durability of the chair. Conversely an *armchair* is not regarded as a kitchen chair with arms, it consists of different material and has a different function. With *wheelchair*, the range of conceptual material involved is even more diverse, as illustrated in Figure 1.

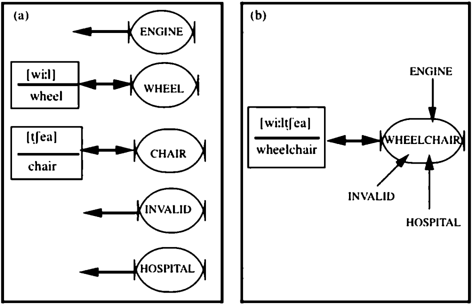

Figure 1. *Development of the form/concept correlation for the compound 'wheelchair'.*

As the figure shows, there is an obvious imbalance between the small number of linguistic elements (two word forms, indicated by the square boxes) and the cognitive material, which is somewhat schematically represented by its major concepts (the rounded boxes). Even if we accept CHAIR as the basic concept and regard its isomorphic link with the word form *chair* as central, the only other concept that is linguistically expressed, i.e. the concept WHEEL, can just be seen as one of several additional cognitive components. Between them, the items *wheel* and *chair* provide a more or less helpful 'scaffolding', as Langacker (1987: 461) calls it, but not the complete cognitive structure. As a result, the isomorphic one-to-one correspondence of the base items is lost. If we remind ourselves of our initial discussion, this is an undesirable state, and I will now look at some of the strategies employed to restore the desired form/concept correlation in compounds.

2.2 *Fusion of concepts, reduction of word forms and iconicity*

Theoretically, one possibility to stabilize the form/concept link would be to apply process-related iconicity more consistently and to represent all the major cognitive elements involved by linguistic forms. For the item *wheelchair* the consequence would be that all the empty arrows in Figure 1a would have to be complemented by the respective word forms. This would not only produce awkward multi-word forms violating the principle of linguistic economy and mental processing capacity (think of something like 'hospital invalid motor wheel chair'), it would never be satisfactory simply because the number of conceptual sources is not really limited (as perhaps wrongly suggested in the figure) and the complexity of the sources is often beyond the level of simple concepts (Thus HOSPITAL might have to be regarded as a composite cognitive model rather than a mere concept).

Practically, one can only pursue the opposite path. This means that instead of keeping apart the many concepts contributing to the conceptualization of a wheel chair, the conceptual material provided by them will have to be fused into a single concept if the isomorphic balance is to be restored. And this is what seems to be happening in the case of *wheelchair*: As more and more cognitive concepts are involved in the conceptualization of a compound, it becomes increasingly cumbersome to call them up individually, and they are replaced by a unified concept (Ungerer and Schmid 1996: 92ff). Compare Figure 1b, where the arrows approaching the rounded box indicate this process of 'conceptual fusion' (which may be regarded as a very special case of the entrenched type of Fauconnier's (1997) conceptual blending). As with many other compounds it is difficult to decide whether the word form *wheelchair* (the square box in Figure 1b) is still considered as a two-element item by the language user or whether it is already experienced as a single element. This is why in Figure 2 *wheelchair* and similar cases are evaluated not as full, but as partial restoration of the isomorphic correspondence of the item.

Compared with *wheelchair* the other examples listed in Figure 2, i.e. *newspaper, airplane* and *motor car*, take the restoration process one step further by shedding their first element. In this way the word forms are reduced to their original simplex shape, which is, however, no longer related to the original

SCAFFOLDING COMPOUND (two word forms/many concepts) correspondence violated	-->	CONCEPTUAL FUSION (two word forms/one concept) partial restoration	-->	FORMAL REDUCTION (one word form/one concept) total restoration
wheel + chair	-->	wheelchair		
news + paper	-->	newspaper	-->	paper
air + plane	-->	airplane	-->	plane
motor + car	-->	motor car	-->	car

Figure 2. *Word forms, concepts and isomorphic correspondences of compounds*

concept (e.g. the material 'paper' in the case of *paper*). Instead the simplex word form is now safely linked to its new conceptualization (i.e.'newspaper') inside a new lexical unit, which lexicographers might call $paper_2$ in our example. In other words, the isomorphic correspondence between word form and concept has been restored, though for a different lexical unit. $Paper_2$ now coexists with the original simplex item $paper_1$ in a relationship which, from the point of view of the language user, should be regarded as 'psychological homonymy' rather than polysemy. This new homonymy and the risk of mixing up the homonyms it involves is the price that has to be paid for this iconically satisfactory solution.

However, the final stage of reducing the compound into a new simplex item is rather the exception than the rule in the development of compounds. One of the reasons why the *wheelchair* type is much more frequent is probably that leaving the linguistic scaffolding of the compound intact helps to preserve a certain, though not the full degree of analysability and motivation. And since the word form of these compounds has, as we have seen, an iconic function as well (i.e. the process-related iconicity of combining two elements), we might claim that in a way these compounds are supported by two kinds of iconicity: the process-related iconicity just described and an emerging new isomorphism between the form of the compound as a whole and its new unified concept.

3. Blends

3.1 *Fused word form, uncertain cognitive concept*

Turning from compounds to (word-formation) blends we encounter a similar initial situation, but the word-formation process employed is totally different, especially if viewed in terms of iconicity. If we take one of the stock examples of blending, the item *smog*, it is based on the two items *smoke* and *fog*, each supported by an isomorphic form/concept pair. On the surface the word-formation process to which these two items are subjected looks like a perfect example of how iconicity should be handled: The two original isomorphic pairs are replaced by a single new isomorphic pair, the blend *smog*, "through mutual adhesion of simple words" (Jakobson 1965: 32). This is done by fusing the two word forms into a single new form, and an equivalent fusion is assumed to be happening between the two cognitive concepts. Even more impressive, the observable fusion of the word forms can be interpreted as an iconic reflection of the process of conceptual fusion.

The problem is that what we can actually observe is only the fusion of the linguistic forms. Whether it is accompanied by a simultaneous, complete and entrenched (i.e. conventionalized) fusion of the cognitive concepts and the establishment of a new concept, i.e. whether the process-related iconicity really works, is less certain. Figure 3 contrasts two instances of blending which between them illustrate the problem. Sections (a) and (b) show the initial and the final stage of a successful blending process resulting in the item *smog*, while sections (c) and (d) describe the development of a probably less successful combination, the item *stagflation*, which has never been as widely accepted as *smog*.

As the lack of acceptance and the short lifetime of many blends have shown, the entrenchment of the conceptual fusion seems to be successful only under certain conditions:

(1) The conceptual content of the two base elements must belong to closely related cognitive domains, and they should both be either nominal, adjectival or verbal concepts. This contrasts with the flexibility of compounds, which freely assemble concepts from diverse cognitive domains and of different word class status as long as they are supported by suitable scaffolding concepts.

(2) The cognitive concepts must be suitable for a mixing procedure, such as *fog* and *smoke* or meals like *breakfast* and *lunch* (yielding the indefatigable *brunch*). Another rather extreme case are cross-breedings of animals (e.g. *shoat* from *sheep* and *goat*). For blends based on more abstract concepts such as *infotainment* (from *information* and *entertainment*), it may be more difficult to assess whether the base concepts are suitable for mixing or not.

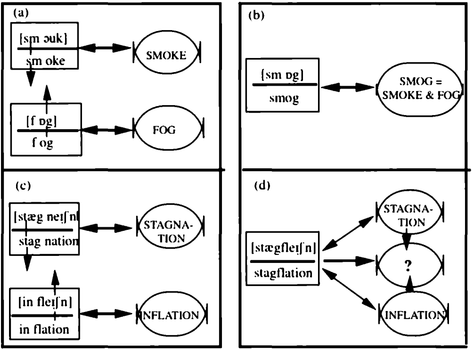

Figure 3. *Development of successful and less successful blends*

(3) There must be an essential need for the language users to employ the blend if the new cognitive concept is to be stored in the mental lexicon without the help of the scaffolding concepts available for compounds.

Apart from the conceptual aspects on which I have concentrated so far, the linguistic form of blends must also meet certain standards. In particular, it must be in accordance with the accepted syllable and stress patterns of English, a condition normally met by relying on one of the two base word forms as phonological frame for the blend (Cannon 1986: 741).

3.2 *Playing the iconicity game*

Why have these conditions for successful blends been listed here? The reason is that, apart from production errors, blends do not just come into existence, they are made, or better made up — much more so than other word-formation items. What motivates their creators? Whatever the ultimate goals of the people inventing blends (one might think of journalists, advertising copy-writers or simply language-conscious speakers), there seems to be a common fascination with the iconicity of the process: the way two items can be shown to mix and to create a new and interesting combination. This is definitely true of more recent coinings such as the above mentioned *infotainment* or the related blend *infomercial* (from *information* and *commercial*), i.e. advertising disguised as information, or more recent still, *ebonics* (from *ebony* and *phonics*), a term denoting the speech of Black Americans. Yet when playing the iconicity game at the level of word-formation, the item-related isomorphic correspondence between the word form and the cognitive concept, which is constitutive for words, is often neglected. Think of an item like *swimsation* (from *swimming* and *sensation*), which is probably no longer commonly understood correctly, or *sportianity* (from *sport* and *Christianity*), which proved unanalysable for 80% of the test subjects in a recent empirical investigation conducted by Adrienne Lehrer (Lehrer 1996). These and other examples show how difficult it is to observe the conditions for successful blends and provide for the establishment of a lasting isomorphic correspondence. Yet perhaps this means taking language too seriously. One could well imagine that many journalists and advertisers are only interested in the immediate effect and do not care about the long-term prospects of their coinings.

4. Acronyms

4.1 *The destructive phase*

The third word-formation process discussed here concerns acronyms, which, in our wider definition, include both 'alphabetisms' pronounced as a sequence of individual letters and items pronounced like normal words. (For alternative terminology cf. Cannon 1989: 106ff.) While blends promise an easy and immediate solution to the problems of form/concept isomorphism, yet without always living up to this promise, acronyms seem bound to play havoc with this iconic link — but as it will emerge, they are perhaps better suited for the establishment of a new isomorphism.

The results of the first stage of acronyming are indeed devastating. The first most noticeable aspect of acronyms is that the linguistic form of each element is cut down to the absolute minimum representation, the initial letter — compare

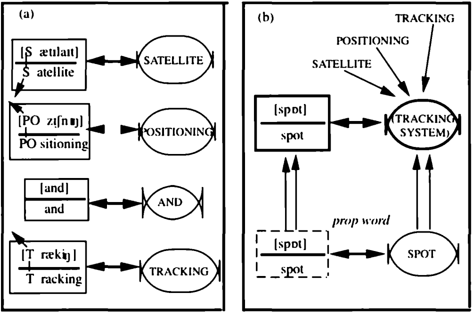

Figure 4. *The prop-word-assisted development of an acronym: SPOT*

the visual representation in Figure 4, section (a), which shows what a tiny part of the linguistic form is actually taken over into the acronym.

With regard to the phonological shape, it may be almost completely lost because there are letters that are pronounced differently in isolation. An example is provided by *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, where the initial *k*-sound of the item *Concise* is turned into a [siː]-sound in the acronym *COD* , the [ɒ] of *Oxford* is replaced by the [əu]-pronunciation of the letter ⟨o⟩ and the [d] of Dictionary by the [diː]-pronunciation of the letter ⟨d⟩.

If we accept that the main purpose of acronyming is to reduce and compress information, the process of reducing the linguistic form may again be seen as an iconic reflection of the process, this time a reflection of the reduction of the conceptual content (not of conceptual fusion as with blends). Yet this does not remove the difficulties confronting the language user in handling letter sequences of three, five or even more letters — an extreme example is the 9–letter-acronym *NRIPMVLIC* (from *Non-Resident Inter-Province Motor Vehicle Liability Insurance Card*, a document allegedly needed for travel in Canada). Even if, theoretically, the alphabetic pronunciation of letters helps to establish a new phonological shape for the acronym, how does this work with a nine-syllable combination like the one just quoted?

And more importantly, how can we be sure that the conceptual reduction of the complex issues on hand actually takes place in the mental lexicon, however tempting and suggestive the process-related iconicity may be? Can we really leave it to chance and wait whether the thousands and thousands of acronyms that are being produced are accepted by the speech community as new words, a process presupposing the restoration of a reliable isomorphic form/concept link? This is obviously the policy pursued by many administrative bodies like the creator of the Canadian example above (if one can call it a policy at all).

However, there are many inventors of acronyms who want their coinings to succeed, individuals, scientists, public organizations, business corporations, not to mention advertising agencies, actually a much wider range of people than those interested in the creation of blends. What they do is to try to shape acronyms in a way that makes them memorable and memorizable, that gives them the quality of simplex words, including a newly tailored isomorphic correspondence.

4.2 *Restructuring the linguistic form*

Starting with the linguistic form, acronym makers can rely on a procedure that language users apply quite unconsciously. Whenever an acronym has a certain length (three or more letters) and provides a suitable sequence of vowels and consonants, there is a tendency to pronounce it as a normal English word rather than an alphabetical sequence. This points the way to how the unnatural alphabetical pronunciation can be overcome. To approach this issue more systematically, one can say that normal English pronunciation of acronyms can be achieved in two ways:

(1) by adapting one's acronym to the syllable structure and stress patterns of English — and this includes, for instance, an alternation between stressed and unstressed syllables (as in *laser* or *yuppie*).

(2) by modelling the linguistic form on an existing English word, the time-honoured example is *CARE*, other well-known examples are *BASIC* or *WASP* .

To meet the conditions for a normal phonological shape, a number of strategies are available — some of them are illustrated in example (1)–(6):

(1) SPOT < Satellite POsitioning and Tracking

(2) PEN < Poets, Playwrights, Editors, Essayists, Novelists)

(3) RADAR < RAdio Detection And Ranging

(4) STOPP < Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment

(5) SNICC < Student National + <i> + Coordinating Committee

(6) CD-ROM < Compact Disc Read Only Memory

Thus example (1) shows that acronym makers sometimes use more than just the initial letters (here by taking the first two letters of the second element *positioning*). Example (2) illustrates the opposite strategy of using duplicate initials only once (the Ps of *poets* and *playwrights* and the Es of *editors* and *essayists* are fused into one letter each in the acronym). Examples (3) and (4) show how minor words like conjunctions and prepositions can be represented or omitted in the acronym. Example (5) illustrates the rare strategy of inserting a vowel where none is supplied by the initial letters of the base constituents. Finally, example (6) shows how alphabetical and 'natural' pronunciation are combined in one and the same item.

Evaluating these attempts to establish a new linguistic form, one could say that most of them have been successful, some of them to such an extent that the acronyms have developed into simplex words, e.g. *laser* , *radar* or *AIDS*. Where this has not been the case the stabilizing effect of a pseudo-natural linguistic form is still formidable; perhaps we should here remind ourselves of the initial observation that if the word form is safely established, the isomorphic link will function even where there is a considerable degree of conceptual vagueness. Think of an acronym like *yuppie*, which most language users apply without difficulty even if they have no knowledge of the base elements of this acronym, i.e. *young urban (or upward-moving) professional people*.

4.3 *The function of prop words*

As we have just seen, one method of achieving a normal English phonological shape for acronyms is to model the linguistic form on an existing word. Of course, such 'prop words' (*CARE, CROP, BASIC* or *SPOT* — compare (7) to (10)) do not just have a word form, they also have their cognitive concept and the two are linked by an isomorphic one-to-one correspondence.

(7)	care		CARE	(< Cooperative for American Relief to Europe)
(8)	crop		CROP	(< Christian Rural Overseas Program)
(9)	basic	supporting	BASIC	(< Beginner's All-Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code)
(10)	spot		SPOT	(< see (1) above)
(11)	war		WAR	(< Women Against Rape)
(12)	wasp	supporting	WASP	(< White Anglo-Saxon Protestant)

This is illustrated for our example *SPOT* in Figure 4, section (b), where arrows pointing from the prop word, the verb *to spot*, to the representation of the acronym *SPOT* indicate how this setup can be profitably used to support the acronym. The conceptual support is particularly strong where the concept of the prop word is close to the intended conceptual content of the acronym, as with *SPOT* or *CARE* or *CROP*. But even with examples where the contribution of the prop concept is more on the level of associations, this may be helpful. Look at the examples (11) and (12). Though the conceptual content expressed by the common noun *war* is not identical with 'rape', the associations of fighting support the women's campaign. In the case of *WASP* the conceptual effect of the insect wasp may rouse conflicting feelings and is therefore more difficult to pin down; part of what is transferred are certain negative emotions, perhaps a feeling of annoyance or even fear of the wasp's dangerous sting, but also the ironical effect produced by the contrast between the tiny insect and the formidable power exerted by the people designated (Hansen 1959/60: 386; Ungerer 1991: 140).

To sum up, like the obvious conceptual support discussed above even these looser associative ties seem to encourage the language user to carry some of the strength of the isomorphic link in the prop word over to the acronym. It goes without saying that this treatment does not turn the acronym into a unit that is on a par with accepted simplex words. But given the initial state from which acronyming starts out, the achievement is quite impressive.

5. Isomorphism preserved: some remarks on derivations and clippings

After what has been said about compounds, blends and acronyms, it is perhaps surprising to find that there are word-formation processes where the isomorphic correspondence of the base seems to stand up to observable changes of the linguistic form. This applies to derivations and clippings though for very different reasons.

To start with derivations, the word form is, of course, changed by the addition of a prefix or suffix, but at least in modern English these additions are short, they predominantly carry secondary stress or no stress at all and often have reduced vowels, which means they do not change the overall stress pattern of the linguistic form. With regard to conceptualization, prefixes mostly add very general concepts like TIME, LOCATION, ORDER, DEGREE and NEGATION (Quirk et al. 1985: 1540ff.), which readily combine with a large range of head concepts, yet without really changing them — think of *pre-historic*, *ex-husband*, *hypermarket*, *non-resident* where the head concepts remain largely unaffected. Suffixes suggest diminutives, but more often a change in word class, or in a more cognitive terminology, they indicate a switch in the conceptual approach from an action view to a person perspective, an object perspective, a quality perspective or vice versa; examples are *employer* and *employee*, *readable*, *socialism*, etc. The general impression, then, is that, just as the word form is not distorted by derivations, the cognitive concepts also remain largely untouched, and this is why the isomorphic form/concept link is more likely to survive than not. This also fits the traditional practice of regarding derivations as members of word families, a status not naturally accorded to compounds, let alone blends and acronyms.

Clippings, our second candidate for the preservation of the isomorphic link, are a different case. Here the linguistic form is indeed reduced in the clipped form, no matter whether the front section, the central section or the final section are retained, as in *coll*, *flu* or *chute* (from *parachute*). Yet these cuts are made with the proviso that the full word form can be recovered any time. Most clippings are not accepted in writing or more formal oral communication. Looking at the conceptual content, one gets the impression that it does not change at all in the clipping process. As a result, the original form/concept correspondence is maintained for most clippings, the short form is simply used as a label, a stand-in for the full linguistic form.

This labelling function may also be claimed for a number of items which are commonly included among acronyms. Examples are *hifi*, *Stabi* and *Stasi*, which, unlike typical acronyms, inherit more than one letter from each base constituent. Here again the full linguistic form seems to remain intact and recoverable. In addition, these 'acronymic clippings' are not officially accepted. This is nicely illustrated by the fact that in a number of cases two abbreviations have developed, a genuine acronym and an acronymic clipping. Thus *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek* is officially abbreviated as *BSB*, but commonly known as *Stabi*, or to revive the ominous former East German *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*, we find that the official abbreviation *MfS* contrasts with the all-pervasive clipping *Stasi*.

Taking the notion of acronymic clipping one step further, one might wonder whether some of the short genuine acronyms, especially two-letter combinations used in technical in-group speech, should not be seen as labels for the full linguistic form rather than instances of the acronyming process described above. One application for which this is definitely true is the area of two-letter (and also one-letter) ad hoc abbreviations in scientific papers, such as *CP* for *compound*, *A* for *acronym*. Welcome as these acronymic clippings may be as a space-saving device, they are often frustrating for the reader.

If we finally return once more to clippings proper, it is to admit that there are, of course, cases where the full form is not just complemented, but actually replaced by the short form, in particular with first names like *Bob* (from *Robert*) or *Liz* (from *Elizabeth*), but also with some general nouns such as *pram* (from *perambulator*), *phone* and *advert* — and one should perhaps add the reduced compounds *paper*, *plane* and *car* discussed above. But seen in the general context, these clippings are the exception and the change has been the result of a long coexistence between clipped and full forms, so there was enough time to develop an additional isomorphic correspondence between concept and short form.

6. Conclusion

If we accept that the isomorphic form/concept correlation is an important characteristic of successful words but at the same time a rather delicate relationship, we may also find it easier to understand why derivation and composition are the two most successful word-formation processes.

As for derivation, it leaves the isomorphism of the lexical base element largely untouched. Compounding strives for a new isomorphic correlation, often comes close to it, but does not always achieve it. While the early stages of compounding are supported by the process-related iconicity of the two-element set-up (e.g. in *blueberry*), this may become less helpful as the conceptual fusion advances (cf. *wheelchair*), but this disadvantage can be overcome by shedding one of the linguistic elements (as in *[news]paper*).

By contrast, blends and acronyms strongly rely on the linguistic representation of the word-formation process (fusion or reduction respectively), i.e. on process-related iconicity. Whether the process-related iconicity works, remains uncertain, at least in the case of blends. With regard to acronyms its effect is destructive rather than constructive and has to be remedied by, among other things, the use of prop words. In either case it is more difficult to achieve the desired new isomorphic form/concept correlation than through compounding and derivation.

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Iconicity in Brand Names*

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1. Introduction

Why are brand names a promising area for research into iconicity? What is meaning in consumer products, and their designations? In the following, I will address these questions, arguing that it is connotational meaning that is much more important for effective 'branding' than denotational meaning. I will then distinguish three types of iconicity in brand names, and discuss them in some detail in the following sections: foreign-sounding names, names evoking a particular register of English, and the syntax of brand names.

The terms *brand name, business name, certification name, collective name, corporate name, house name, product name, proprietary name, registered name, service name* and *trade name* are widely used as synonyms, and the second element *name* may also be substituted by *mark*. The two most frequently used terms *brand name/mark* and *trade name/mark* are used somewhat generically to "refer to any name created for the specific purpose of furthering trade" (Praninskas 1968: 12). Section 45 of the U.S. Federal Trademark Statute defines *trademark* as,

> a word, name, symbol or device or any combination thereof which is used to identify and distinguish the goods of one person from goods manufactured or sold by others and to indicate the source of the services, even if the source is unknown (quoted from http: //www.tmpatentlaw.com/tmlaw.htm).

Brand name/mark is often said to be a colloquial term for *trade name/mark* (cf. e.g. Crowley 1979: vii), and these terms will be used interchangeably here. The words and symbols which are specifically created and used to further trade are often registered with the Patent and Trademark Office and then enjoy particular legal protection against similar marks that might be used fraudulently. Currently, well over one million trade marks are registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office and their number is rising by about 30.000 a year (cf. Bryson 1994: 288). In Germany more than 400.000 were registered in 1992 (cf. Horrmann 1992: 3), and their number has also been rising constantly. One can conclude from these figures that it is becoming increasingly difficult to register new names. It has become a familiar complaint among creators of trade names that new names that have not already been registered in an identical or similar form are difficult to come up with. However, a commercial name used to designate and promote a product is still considered a trade name even if it is not registered. Indeed, the vast majority of trade names are not legally registered. According to the U.S. Federal Trademark Statute, simple use of a commercial name establishes a common-law claim to the name:

> No registration of any form is required for ownership of a trademark under the common law. A business may claim common law ownership as soon as the mark is used in commerce (quoted from http: //www.tmpatentlaw.com/tmlaw.htm).

This means that unregistered trade names are also protected under the law. Of the so-called *trademark symbols*, *TM* (for 'trade mark'), *SM* (for 'service mark') and ® (for 'registered trademark') only the latter, least frequently used, shows that a brand name has been registered. The fact that not all trade names are registered is important because it means that the legal restrictions to registration only apply to a rather limited number of names. The U.S. Federal Trademark Statute lists the following legal restrictions to registration: descriptive and deceptively misdescriptive, generic, geographically descriptive and deceptively misdescriptive, scandalous and immoral, deceptive names, and surnames cannot be registered (cf. http: //www.tmpatentlaw.com/tmlaw.htm)

Part of the above-quoted definition of brand names (from Praninskas 1968: 12) is that they are "*created* for the specific purpose of furthering trade" (my emphasis). If indeed iconicity is prevalent in circumstances in which language is created, as the introduction argues (cf. Fischer and Nänny, this volume), brand names will be a most promising area of research. Brand names, which are in large part a phenomenon of the twentieth century, are continuously being created to name new products, or to distinguish them from similar ones. The creative and financial efforts spent on a new brand name are considerable as the brand name is of prime importance in the marketing of a product and because the above-mentioned legal restrictions apply. Generally, it can be said that brand names are only rarely arbitrary linguistic signs. In a corpus of more than 2000 automobile names I analysed, only a minority of them were symbols in Peirce's sense, i.e. signs in which the link between signifier and signified is purely conventional. The vast majority are iconic, or indexical in some way: 36% of the names were based upon a metonymic relationship (e.g. *Aspen, Bel Air, Biarritz*), i.e. they are indexical signs, in which the signifier is closely associated with the signified. The remainder are icons, for which there is a similarity between the signifier and the signified (cf. Saeed 1997: 5, on Peirce's classification of signs; and Piller 1996a: 173f, on the analysis of a corpus of automobile names). According to Bencze (1991: 157), secondary motivation that is iconic can be an image (i.e. there is a topological similarity between the sign and the denotatum), a diagram (i.e. the relations of the sign are similar to the relations of the denotatum), or a metaphor (i.e. there is a similarity between the signified and the denotatum). In my corpus of automobile names, 28% of the names are metaphorically iconic in this sense (e.g. *Eagle, Falcon, Hawk*), and 24% are diagrams (e.g. *MT, S10, SX/4*). There are no images.

Thus, the word *Eagle* used for a brand of car is motivated by its primary meaning. While in metaphorically iconic brand names like *Eagle* the secondary motivation derives from a similarity in meaning, we look for a similarity between form and meaning in strictly iconic ones. Strictly iconic signs are either images or diagrams. Although they are somewhat rarer than metaphorically iconic brand names, advertising experts have always been aware of the persuasive force of phonetic symbolism or the 'physionomy of language' (cf. e.g. Klickow 1963 and 1964). Truly iconic brand names, 'images', are onomatopoeic names like *CatChow* for a cat food, which to my mind imitates the sound a satisfied cat might make,[1] or those names coined on a recurrent pattern of sound symbolism (cf. Fónagy; A. Fischer, Meier; all in this volume). The close front vowel, for instance, is often associated with smallness and endearment, and occurs in *Huggies*, a brand of baby wipes, or *Crunchie*, a brand of breakfast cereal. Initial *cr-* is associated with 'crispiness', the sensation of eating firm and fresh food, and occurs in the names of various food products, e.g. *Crunchie, Crispie*, or *Crisco*. After this brief glance at brand names that are images, I shall concentrate on diagrammatic iconicity in the following, i.e. on brand names that are characterised by a similarity between the relation of signs and the relation of denotata. I am going to discuss three different types of diagrammatic iconicity in brand names:

1. The brand name is part of another language, or seems to be part of another language, and therefore the name suggests that the product so named is also part of another culture and has the qualities stereotypically associated with speakers of that language. These brand names are diagrammatically iconic because the product is related to another culture just as the name is related to another code.
2. The brand name is not linked to another language but to a particular register of English, and thus connotes for instance the exactness, and the technological and scientific marvels usually associated with the language of technology. Again, these brand names are diagrammatically iconic because the product is related to a certain field of action just as the name is related to the code of that field of action.
3. The syntax of brand names is modelled as an iconic structure. While in general English the determinant usually precedes the determinatum, word order in brand names is usually the other way round. In *Ford Escort*, for instance, the more general designation precedes the more specific one and thus the structure of the name mirrors the relative importance of the two (or more) denotata.

2. Meaning in brand names

Before discussing these three types of brand names in further detail let me address a theoretical issue that makes the study of iconicity in brand names particularly tricky: in modern consumer society various products from one product group differ little in their functionality. Any old car is a means of transport but only some are "Built to set you free" (Chrysler advertising slogan), are "Driven by passion" (Fiat slogan), are "Engineered to be enjoyed" (Peugeot slogan), or are "The American Legend" (Jeep slogan). The same goes for banks. All of them can do money transactions but what consumers can reasonably expect these days is "More than just a bank" (NatWest slogan), "Not just banking. Citibanking" (Citibank slogan), "The new global perspective" (State Bank of India slogan), or "Global strength. Local presence" (Hong Kong Bank of Australia slogan). It is usually not a product's utilitarian character that is being advertised but products are invested with additional emotional values such as freedom, comfort, prestige, modernity, power etc. A study of branded products bluntly heads one of its chapters *Zur Irrelevanz des Grundnutzens in der aktuellen Konsumkultur* ('on the irrelevance of a product's main use in contemporary consumer culture'; Fritz 1994: 167). According to two psychologists, a car in modern Western consumer society is no longer a means of transport but

> an expression of Eros in the broadest sense, a need to demonstrate that one is alive, that one matters, that one makes a difference in the world (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981: 27).

Really 'good' brand names, i.e. those with a powerful sales appeal, connote these secondary product properties and not the functional ones. Thus, when we look for similarity between form and meaning in brand names, we are looking for something quite intangible. Let me exemplify this by comparing two standard examples of iconicity from non-commercial language with iconic brand names: the title page of Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* is printed in the shape of a bomb (cf. Figure 1) — the typographic form of the title page mirrors the shape of the denotatum of the word *bomb* 'a hollow metal container filled with explosive, or with other chemicals of a stated type or effect' (*LDELC*), and both, the title page, and the concept of *bomb* may additionally be invested with connotational meanings such as 'destructive', 'causes suffering', 'WW II' etc. Comparing this with *CatChow*, the name of a brand of cat food, we see, or rather can hear, that *chow* does neither imitate any sound that might pertain to the food nor the sound a cat might make while eating: there is no similarity between this form and the denotatum of the words 'food' or 'eating' but rather with a connotational meaning of them, 'satisfaction'. This similarity is 'suggested' to the consumer because we all know that food does not necessarily produce satisfaction. Thus, in the first example there is an iconic relationship between the form of the title page and the denotational meaning of *bomb*, while in the second example the form of the brand names does not mime, or pretend to mime, denotational, but connotational meaning.

An example of diagrammatic iconicity should further clarify my point: in the (regular) English plural forms a 'more' in form is related to a 'more' in content. So, just as we get a longer form in *cars* than in *car* we get a similar quantitative relationship between the denotata of these two items. Illustration 2 details these relationships: the relationship between the signifier *car* and its signified, and the signifier *cars* and its signified is established by convention. The symbolic nature of these relationships is marked by dotted lines. The continuous lines, however, indicate a direct relationship. The signifier *car* is directly

Slaughterhouse-Five

OR

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

A DUTY-DANCE WITH DEATH

BY

Kurt Vonnegut

A FOURTH-GENERATION GERMAN-AMERICAN
NOW LIVING IN EASY CIRCUMSTANCES
ON CAPE COD
[AND SMOKING TOO MUCH],
WHO, AS AN AMERICAN INFANTRY SCOUT
HORS DE COMBAT,
AS A PRISONER OF WAR,
WITNESSED THE FIRE-BOMBING
OF DRESDEN, GERMANY,
"THE FLORENCE OF THE ELBE,"
A LONG TIME AGO,
AND SURVIVED TO TELL THE TALE.
THIS IS A NOVEL
SOMEWHAT IN THE TELEGRAPHIC SCHIZOPHRENIC
MANNER OF TALES
OF THE PLANET TRALFAMADORE,
WHERE THE FLYING SAUCERS
COME FROM.
PEACE.

Figure 1. *The title of* Slaughterhouse-Five*; source: Vonnegut 1966*

related to its plural form, and one car is directly related to a larger quantity of cars. The relation between the two signifiers, *car* and *cars*, directly reflects the relation between their two signifieds ('diagrammatic iconicity').

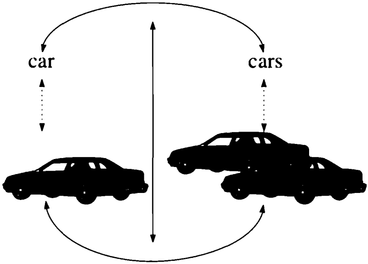


Figure 2. *Example of diagrammatic iconicity*

Compare this to *LaFemme*, the name of a 1955 trim option on the Dodge Custom Royal. The model is noteworthy for being the automobile industry's first appeal to women with a special pink and white colour combination on the car and matching cape, boots, umbrella, shoulder bag and floral upholstery fabrics (cf. Gunnell 1992: 278). Although there is no objective relationship whatsoever between this car and France, although none of its parts was manufactured in France, and although no French couturier was involved in the design, the name implies that just as *LaFemme* is a French phrase, so the automobile is part of French fashion.[2] Illustration 3 details this relationship: the signifier *LaFemme* is conventionally related to its denotation, a particular type of American car. It is also directly related to the sign system in which it usually works: it *is* a French sign in an English context. As a French sign in a French context, *LaFemme* is conventionally related to its denotation, 'the woman'. As a French sign in an English context, however, it is conventionally related to connotational meanings such as 'fashion', 'elegance', or 'femininity'. So, through the relation between the sign *LaFemme* and the sign system 'the French language' that exists in English (represented through a continuous line in Illustration 3), a relation is *suggested* diagrammatically. This relationship between the two signifieds, that makes the car attractive for female customers, is represented through the bottom dotted line. The difference between the two examples is clear: in the first case, an objectively existing relationship is mirrored iconically; in the second case, it is *created* iconically.

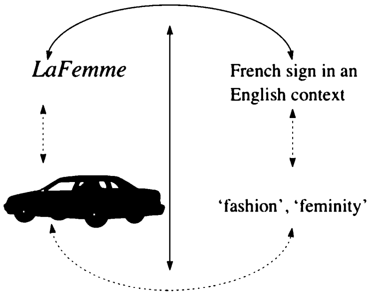


Figure 3. *Example of diagrammatic iconicity in brand names*

This creation and suggestion of similarities does not only apply to strictly iconic and diagrammatically iconic names but also goes for metaphorically iconic (Peirce's sense) names: to be admitted for registration, metaphors cannot focus on essential features as that would make them descriptive (cf. Ephratt 1996) but they may nevertheless be iconic. To take the well-known brand name for a computer company and their products, *Apple*: to compare a computer to a typewriter, or a counting machine would be ridiculous because the grounds of comparison 'can type', 'can do calculations' are too basic, and a must on whatever type of computer. But if you compare it to an apple, you are doing something really creative: you compare it to the archetypal fruit of northern climes — so the metaphorically evoked message is 'this PC is an archetype'; you compare it to the fruit of temptation in the Bible: 'You won't be able to resist this computer'; an apple is a basic shape/fruit: 'this computer serves your basic needs, and you won't be confused by technical gibberish', etc. This is the 'information' the name *Apple* metaphorically creates and sells — although it may not necessarily be an actual property of the product. This creation of similarities on the level of connotational rather than denotational meaning is typical of commercial language and should be borne in mind during the following discussion of the three types of diagrammatic iconicity in brand names I outlined above.

3. Foreign brand names

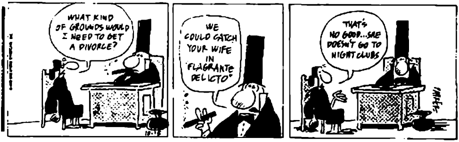
Brand names that are taken from another language than English, or are invented but comply with certain expectations people hold about the sounds of words of another language suggest the 'foreignness' of a product: "Sometimes it pays *not* to translate" (Crystal 1987: 348; emphasis in the original). Consumers are invited to assume that the stereotype/s they hold about the language in question, the area where it is spoken and its speakers will also apply to the product. Thus, brand names based on a foreign language will typically be taken from prestige languages, from languages that are, and whose speakers are, positively stereotyped. This iconic use of words from another language as a prestige marker in commercial language has been described most thoroughly for Japan, and its use of Latin inscriptions (cf. e.g. Haarmann 1984, 1986; Wienold 1995). These inscriptions are typically English or English-sounding words.

In British and American culture, a commonly held stereotype about France, for instance, is the attractiveness of French fashion and cuisine. And, sure enough, there are cosmetic products called *clinique* or *Voile Parfumé*, hosiery called *L'Eggs*, food products called *LaYogurt* or *Courvoisier*, or cars called *d'Elegance*, *La Comtesse*, or *Parisienne*. French is also spoken in Switzerland and here the stereotype differs: watchmakers and jewellers want to connote precision and reliability together with elegance and high value. In order not to confuse the consumer they usually print *Suisse* and/or *Genève* (not 'Switzerland' or 'Geneva'!) a couple of times prominently somewhere in the ad. Examples are *Corum, Maîtres Artisans d'Horlogerie, Suisse; Chopard Genève*, or *Piaget, Maitre Joaillier à Genève*. It is also interesting to note that in the last example none of the diacritics that we would expect in *maître*, *à*, and *Genève* is printed — it is not linguistic precision that counts but linguistic impression. Spanish, on the other hand, is the language of the American Southwest, and all the stereotypes about freedom, adventure, masculinity etc. are suggested to hold true for the product, too: in car names like *Bravada*, *Caballero*, *El Camino*, or *La Espada*. Obviously brand namers are very confident that consumers will pick the 'correct', i.e. the positive stereotype because, besides the positive stereotype, there is also a negative stereotype about Spanish as it is at the same time the language of a poor, discriminated minority. Italian is often used to connote luxury and elegance as in the perfume name *Dolce Vita Duo Prestige*, or in *Pronto*, the name of a calling card. For fans of automobile racing Italian is also the language of men like Ettore Bugatti, Tazio Nuvolari, or Alberto Ascari, and it comes as no surprise that we get car names like *Avanti*, *Corsa*, *Gran Turismo*, or *La Tosca*. Most of the American brand names of this type are taken from Romance languages (cf. Piller 1996b: 183, on the figures for American automobile names), but the meditative mantra of Hinduism *Om* can also be found on cosmetic products: it seems to promise a superior sense of perception as the slogan "the sixth scent" indicates.

As soon as a language has prestige status, the 'borrowings' from that language often turn out to be no 'real' borrowings at all. From a native speaker's point-of-view they are mistakes or oddities (cf. also Wienold 1995: 28). Thus, brand names sometimes are not really words of one or the other language. It is a common strategy to 'turn English words into Romance ones' by prefixing them with a *le* or *la* or *el* etc. Thus, *L'Eggs* (the hosiery comes in egg-shaped packages and obviously plays on *legs*), *LaYogurt*, or *El Morrocco* (a car) turn perfectly English words into foreign ones. In some instances, this play with foreign languages gets really confusing as in *Mikasa*, the name of a furniture retailer, which I would identify as a spelling variant of Spanish *mi casa* 'my house' but which a number of Americans I asked thought of as a Japanese name. Illustrations 4 and 5 demonstrate the point I am trying to make nicely: any utterance with a certain sound structure qualifies as Spanish if you've just almost choked yourself to death with hot enchilada sauce. (cf. Illustration 4), and certain products — like night clubs in Illustration 5 — are so strongly connected to the use of foreign-sounding names that the name of a night club is all the cartoon character can think of upon hearing the foreign-sounding phrase.

It is important to note that even the easy-to-register invented names may take on these connotations, and may thus become diagrammatically iconic.

ɿure 4. *A 'Blondie' cartoon (© King Features Syndicate Inc. 1996)*



gure 5. *A 'Wizard of ID' cartoon (© Creators Syndicate Inc. 1996)*

ODAK, for instance, was created by George Eastman with the help of a stack ' children's letter cards shifted around until he came up with the name (cf. olan 1961). He liked the name because of its 'perfect shape' — symmetry — ıd because of its full vowels that are so attractive to speakers of languages with Germanic stress-pattern, and the accompanying reduction of unstressed vowels the schwa. Languages with full vowels are spoken in more pleasant climes — ith brighter colours.[3] *XEDOS*, a car produced by Mazda, is an artificial ımputer coinage that sounds very Greek because of the initial 'X' and the ıding '-os' — and, sure enough, in ads the car is placed in front of Doric ılumns and other classical sites, and its 'classical features' are stressed.

It should also be noted that stereotypes are not identical throughout the English-ıeaking world but may differ from one culture to another. Thus, Audi makes use ' a stereotype about Germany and technological reliability with its German-speaking ogan *Vorsprung durch Technik* ('ahead because of technology') in Britain but ɔt in the US, where the slogan 'driving at its most advanced' is used.

4. Brand names taken from a particular register

A similar strategy of diagrammatic iconicity is employed in brand names that are part of a particular register of English. Just as acronyms are typical of the language for the specific purpose of technology, so the products they denote are suggested to be technologically and scientifically reliable and advanced. Most speakers of English have no clue what *DECpc Lpv 433dx* or *17GLsi* on computers, *JVC Compact VHS GR-AX210U* on a camcorder, *JVC Personal XL-P42* on a CD-player, or *LN7, RT/10, SL 2* or *XR-7* on cars stand for but they assume that these names stand for something, and probably something sophisticated. Names of this type suggest to the non-specialist that the product so named (usually a machine about which the consumer has little or no expert knowledge) is distinguished from others by its technological sophistication like the sign used as a name differs from other words by its specific character.

Table 1. *Brand names that are number-letter-combinations together with a price list (source: the on-line catalogue at http: //www.pcplnt.com/ advance/)*

JVC Compact VHS Camcorder	GR-AX210U	$549.50
	GR-AX410U	$609.50
	GR-AX510U	$669.50
	GR-AX710U	$689.50
	GR-AX810U	$719.50
	GR-AX910U	$769.50
	GR-DV1U	$2449.50
JVC Stereo Cassette Deck	TDR272BK	$144.50
	TDR462BK	$208.50
	TDV662BK	$291.50
JVC Slimline Tuner/Cassette/CD	RC-QS10	$144.50
	RC-QW20	$161.50
	RC-QW35	$168.50
	RC-NX1	$216.50
JVC Detachable Tuner/Cassette/CD	PC-X55	$144.50
	PCX-X75	$178.50
	PC-X103	$178.50
	PC-X106	$194.50
	PC-XC7	$194.50
	PC-XC70	$276.50

If these names are taken in groups, at least the numerals make some sense in relation to each other (cf. Table 1). Table 1 shows the designations for various products manufactured by JVC in relation to their prices. 'The higher the number the higher the price' is a clearly noticeable pattern for all products but it is the only one. The numbers themselves do not form regular patterns: the names of the camcorders (*210–410–510–710–810–910*), for instance, sometimes differ by one hundred from the next advanced product, sometimes by two hundred. The same goes for all the other products: for the names of the stereo cassette decks it is *272* that falls out of the pattern, for the names of Slimline Tuner/Cassette/CDs it is *35*, and the names of Detachable Tuner/Cassette/CDs only form pairs but no overall pattern. The use of the letters seems to be even less motivated. To the average consumer they look like acronyms of which they do not know the base. In fact, most of these brand names do not have a base, i.e. they do not stand for anything. Only the assumption that they stand for something motivates them and makes them iconic. Enders (1974) calls these acronym-like brand names 'magic signs' that tell the lay consumer that the product they refer to are more sophisticated than they can ever hope to understand.

Certain product groups, particularly in the electronics sector, about which consumers have little or no expert knowledge but which they expect to be technologically sophisticated, bear virtually no trade names but number-letter-combinations. Out of 126 loudspeakers by 71 producers reviewed on the website http: //www.best.com/~mtbr/audio/reviews/speakers.shtml, only 17 (=13.5%) (*Aerius, Alpha Speakers, Centaur Minor, Cornwall, Ensemble, Focus, Heritage, Infinity Beta Speakers, Isis, Nucleus Reference, One, Quintet, Sapphire Speakers, Stratus Silver, Subwoofer, True Subwoofer, Zeta*) are word names while all the others are number-letter-combinations (e.g. *1B, 300ti, 800 ASW, C10, CDM-1, DM 601, ES22, KG 3.5, KX-212, S-35, SC-IV, VS-100*), numbers-only names (e.g. *5.0, 302, 407, 602, 731, 733, 1000, 12600*), or combinations of words, numbers and/or letters (e.g. *Energy C-8, Impact 20, Kappa 6.1, Lynnfield 500L, Matrix 804, Mirage 3si, PowerField 12*).

Some of the above word names like *Alpha, Beta, Kappa* and *Zeta* combine the iconic representation of a high standard of technology that a letter suggests with being Greek, the language of learning par excellence. Many of the other names of loudspeakers rely on the prestige of Latin (e.g. *Aerius, Focus, Matrix, Nucleus, Stratus*) or antiquity in general (*Centaur Minor, Heritage, Isis*). As Latinate words are much more frequent in most registers of English for Specific Purposes than in everyday vocabulary, this is a further indicator that brand namers try to suggest these particular registers of English to the consumers of technically advanced products like loudspeakers. As 'classical' words they are particularly appealing to consumers with 'classical' tastes, in music or elsewhere.

5. The syntax of brand names

A further interesting aspect of iconicity in brand names is their syntax: the typical combination of 'name of producer' followed by 'name of series, type, model etc.' as in *Ford Escort, Saab Aero, Mercury Sable* (cars), *DECpc Lpv 433dx, Samsung SyncMaster 17GLsi* (computers), *Trump TAJ Mahal* (gambling place in Atlantic City owned by Donald J. Trump), or *Christian Dior Dolce Vita Duo Prestige* (perfume) is extremely uncommon in the system of general English word order: combinations such as *attorney general, president elect*, or *notary public* are exceptions from the usual pattern, in which the more general item follows the more specific one. The *Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk et al. 1985: 1296) says about this pattern:

> Though virtually confined to cuisine (rather than mere cooking), it is moderately productive within these limits, perhaps especially in Am[erican] E[nglish]. In Br[itish] E[nglish] one finds *veal paprika* and many others, but there is some resistance to this type of postposition with other than French lexical items, as in *pâté maison, sole bonne femme*.

If we take brand names into account, this minor type is no longer restricted to 'cuisine words' but it turns out to be the major pattern in the formation of phrasal brand names (for figures on the frequency of this pattern in American automobile names, cf. Piller 1995).

How can we explain this surprising frequency of an uncommon syntactic pattern? I suggest that this uncommon structure in brand names mirrors the fact that the name of the producer is supposed to stay around for far longer than the name of a certain line or make, and that it therefore has to take precedence over the latter in the mind of the consumer. If it comes to buying the product the first thing is that you enter the Saab instead of the Mercury dealership, or choose the DEC over the Samsung display area — choosing a particular Mercury or Samsung or whatever is secondary. The structure of the names mirrors these action sequences, and is thus diagrammatically iconic.

6. Conclusion

It has been shown that brand names are artificially coined language items with the express purpose of furthering trade. The brand name is of vital importance in the marketing of a product as the words of two brand namers from the early 60s, which are still valid even today, show:

> Change the advertising, change the distribution, change the promotion, change even the product itself, and you may have lost nothing but instead gained in sales appeal. But change the product name, and you are starting all over again (Lippincott and Margulies 1961: 47).

Therefore a great deal of creativity and money is invested in the creation of brand names, which makes them a suitable field for investigation into iconicity. At the same time it is a very difficult field as the properties of the products that are mirrored iconically are rarely of the tangible sort. The product characteristics advertised in modern consumer society are no longer the central uses a product can be put to but rather secondary values they are invested with. So it is often quite difficult, if not impossible, to state what it is exactly that a certain name mirrors.

Notes

* I am very much indebted to Olga Fischer and Max Nänny for extensive comments on a previous draft of this paper.

1. There is (or was: *CIDE*: 'dated') a US slang noun *chow* for 'food', which might derive from Chinese Pidgin English *chowchow* (cf. Romaine 1994: 166); the zero-derived verb *chow* (according to *LDELC* also American English slang) means 'to eat as though one is very hungry, and showing pleasure'.
2. Generally, the implication could be 'part of French culture' but fashion is the stereotypical aspect of French culture that is most frequently invoked in brand names.
3. Eastman went to the trouble of documenting that *KODAK* sounded good even to speakers of African languages as a picture in the George Eastman House, a museum devoted to him and his enterprise, in Rochester, New York, shows.

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PART V

Syntax and Discourse

On the Role Played by Iconicity in Grammaticalisation Processes*

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1. Introduction: The iconic and symbolic poles in language

It seems to be accepted by most linguists that the iconic drive or instinct is very strong in language users and that indeed language, both phylogenetically and ontogenetically, started/starts off iconically. Thus, Slobin (1985) in an article on "The child as a linguistic icon-maker" shows that many of the 'mistakes' that children make are iconically motivated, and Givón (1995a: 406), among others, characterises the rules of what he calls the 'proto-grammar' of pidgins — which are emergent, not fully evolved languages — as having as a "common denominator ... that they are extremely iconic". Thus, what is concrete takes priority. This can also be seen in the fact that children acquire the lexicon much earlier than the grammar, and that the grammars of pidgins evolve from the lexicon. Givón notes too that animals can be taught lexical code labels but that teaching them "the natural use of anything remotely resembling human grammar — morphology and syntax — ... has been almost a uniform failure" (Givón 1995a: 401). It has also been widely noted that iconicity is not confined to the initial stages of language, or indeed to language itself. Plank (1979: 131) writes, "der frühkindliche Spracherwerb zeichnet sich durch eine ausgeprägte Präferenz zu ikonischer Zeichenbildung aus, *die als 'natürliches' Substrat jeder Zeichenbildung zumindest latent wirksam bleiben dürfte*, wenn auch nach Maßgabe von Symbolisierungsnotwendigkeiten" ('language acquisition in young children is characterised by a very strong preference for the formation of iconic signs, which, as a natural substratum of all sign-formation probably remains at least latently active, even though tempered by the need to symbolise', italics added), and Givón writes in an article (1995b: 61), in which one of his concerns is to illustrate the long antecedence of isomorphic coding in biology, that "one must consider the pervasive iconicity of human language merely the latest manifestation of a pervasive preference for isomorphic coding in bio-organisms".

On the other hand, it is also generally accepted that "human language is shaped by competing functional imperatives" (Givón 1995a: 393), i.e. what Haiman (1983) has referred to as iconic and economic motivation. In other words, language is subject to corrosive pressures, which are due to the need for processing speed and the general erosion (the loss of expressivity) caused by diachronic change. One could say then that language moves or is situated along an axis with two poles: an iconic, concrete pole at one end, and a symbolic (perhaps 'arbitrary' or 'conventional' is a less confusing term here), abstract one at the other (cf. also Plank 1979). One could also refer to the iconic pole as original and creative (less confined to language *per se*) and to the symbolic as derivative and mechanistic. But this division into iconic and symbolic, should not lead us away from the fact that even the symbolic is to some extent iconic (after all it is derived): it shows an iconicity of a more abstract order. It is here that the distinction between imagic iconicity and diagrammatic iconicity (first made by Peirce and Jakobson, and further elaborated upon by Haiman, Givón and others) has become so important. The mechanism in both is the same, but only in imagic iconicity, is there a straight iconic link between the verbal sign and the image or object (the 'signans' and the 'signatum'), as for instance in onomatopoeia. Diagrammatic iconicity is more like a topographic map, where the relation between objects or concepts in the real world (as we see it) can be deduced from the relations indicated on the map. Thus, the idea of space in the real world is proportionally reflected in the map.

But even within diagrammatic iconicity, there are differences in terms of concreteness. It is interesting to observe, for instance, when Max Nänny applies the various types of diagrammatic iconicity distinguished by Haiman (1980) to poetry, that the use made of it there is more concrete than the examples that Haiman gives from the more conventional syntax of everyday speech. Let me illustrate this with one diagrammatic type, i.e. the 'distance principle', which Haiman (1983: 782) has characterised as follows: "the linguistic distance between expressions corresponds to the conceptual distance between them". He gives as an example the difference between the following causative expressions,

(1) a. I caused the chicken to die.
b. I killed the chicken.

The distance between the causative verb *cause* and the infinitive *to die* makes the activity — which is expressed by one verb, *kill*, in the second example (so with zero distance between agent and act) — less instantaneous, providing a possible slot for an intermediate agency (as Haiman adds, there might be an element of magic involved).[1] Other often quoted examples where the distance principle is at work are,

(2) a. He sprayed the door with green paint.
b. He sprayed green paint on the door.

and

(3) a. Who has taught the children French?
b. Who has taught French to the children?

Here the distance between the verb and the two objects in each clause is an indication of the degree in which an object is affected by the verb: the closer it stands to the verb the more affected it is.[2] Thus, the (a) example in each pair implies that the objects, *the door* and *the children*, have been totally affected, i.e. that *the door* is completely green, and that *the children* indeed know French, which is not implied by the (b) examples, because the same object is now distanced from the verb by the intervention of another. In Nänny's (1986: 204) example of 'distance' from Wordsworth's *Prelude* (Bk V, ll. 79–80),

(4) ... underneath one arm
A stone, and in the opposite hand, a shell

the distance between the position of *stone* and *shell* is also expressed diagrammatically, or proportionally, by the distance between them on the page, but at the same time this distance is still concrete, it expresses *spatial* distance. This is similar to an example Nänny gives of another type of diagrammatic iconicity, i.e. the 'principle of sequence', where the order of the signs not only reflects the sequential order of realities referred to in the world, as in the well-known *veni, vidi, vici*, but again is more concrete in that a sign placed first, often contains the word *first*, and a sign placed at the end of the clause contains the word *last* or *end* or *adieu* etc. (Nänny 1986: 205–5).

It seems to me important to emphasise that the creative and the mechanistic, or the iconic and the symbolic, go hand in hand, that they are as it were always present at the same time in everyday language use. Although at certain points we, as speakers, may rely more on the one or the other, i.e. we are more iconic when creating language afresh (as children, creators of a pidgin, poets), and are more mechanistic when conveying a message in everyday communicatory circumstances, we are still always at the crossroads of both possibilities. Fónagy has referred to the simultaneity of these two codes (he calls it 'the dual encoding procedure') in a large number of his articles (e.g. Fónagy 1982, 1995, and this volume). He refers to the arbitrary, symbolic structures as the primary message or code (i.e. the rules of grammar) and to the iconic mode as the secondary message. One could argue about the labels 'primary' and 'secondary'. Which is seen as primary and which as secondary, depends on one's point of view. The rules of Fónagy's secondary code are primary in terms of language history; that is "they can be regarded as the vestiges of a pre-linguistic system of communication" (Fónagy 1982: 93); they are motivated and therefore easier to recognise. But they are also secondary because each time they are used they are "created through the meaningful modulation or distortion of the primary message generated by the grammar" and are "superimposed upon the primary message" (Fónagy 1982: 92). Another aspect that Fónagy stresses again and again is the playfulness of linguistic behaviour (see also Haiman 1994, and Lecercle 1990): we just love kicking over the traces, bending the rules. Indeed the 'rules' that Lecercle gives for the secondary or iconic code (which he calls the 'remainder') consist for a large part of overturning the rules of grammar "through either excess or lack" (Lecercle 1990: 122). It is clear that the iconic rules arise partly on the basis of the primary code.

Having touched upon our iconic needs, our iconic instincts, I would now like to turn to the process of grammaticalisation with this dual encoding system in the back of our minds. First some general points about grammaticalisation. One of the problems I have with the way grammaticalisation has been dealt with in the literature is that the mechanistic side of it has been overemphasised, with the result, I think, that the mechanism has become too powerful as an explanatory tool or a description of a diachronic process of linguistic change.[3] Let us first look at the way the process has been described. Grammaticalisation is generally seen as a gradual diachronic process which is characterised as unidirectional, i.e. it always shows the "evolution of substance from the more specific to the more general and abstract" (Bybee et al. 1994: 13). The unidirectionality applies on all levels, the semantic, the syntactic and the phonological. Almost without exception, the process is seen as semantically driven, with bleaching of meaning playing a primary role.[4] Rubba (1994: 81), for instance, describes it as primarily a process of semantic change. Bybee et al. (1994: 17–18) even suggest that we can reconstruct the path of grammaticalisation with the help of the "hypothesis that semantic change is predictable". The notion of graduality implies that grammaticalisation is seen as "an evolutional continuum. Any attempt at segmenting it into discrete units must remain arbitrary to some extent" (Heine and Reh 1984: 15, and see also Heine et al (1991b: 68, 165 and passim). In this light it is not surprising to read that the mechanisms at work in, and the causes of, grammaticalisation are also seen as basically semantic/pragmatic in nature. For most linguists writing on grammaticalisation, the main mechanisms involved are metaphoric and metonymic in nature.[5] Metaphoric change can be related to analogy; it is a type of paradigmatic change whereby a word-sign used for a concrete object (i.e. the word *back* as part of the body) can be reinterpreted on a more abstract level as an indication of 'location', because of some element that these concepts have in common, and then further interpreted along the metaphorical axis as an indication of 'time'. Again the type of metaphor used here different from metaphors used in poetry, the shift is less concrete, it is less daring, more predictable.[6] Metonymic change can be related to re-analysis and functions on the syntagmatic plain. It takes place mainly via the "semanticization [or grammaticalisation] of conversational implicatures" (Hopper and Traugott 1993: 84). As far as cause in grammaticalisation is concerned, this is usually seen as being pragmatic in nature. Bybee et al. (1994: 300) write: "the push for grammaticization ... originates in the need to be more specific, in the tendency to infer as much as possible from the input, and in the necessity of interpreting items in context". Likewise Hopper and Traugott (1993: 86) concur with Heine et al. (1991a: 150–51) that "grammaticalization can be interpreted as the result of a process which has **problem-solving** as its main goal". It is the result of a "search for ways to regulate communication and negotiate speaker-hearer interaction".

Although I would agree with the views discussed in the previous section that re-analysis and analogy, or metonymic and metaphorical processes, are important in language change, and also that grammaticalisation may be caused by the need for expressivity and routinisation (but I also feel that attention ought to be paid to the much less controllable element of 'play' mentioned above), I still cannot see that there is room for a separate or 'independent' process of grammaticalisation.[7] Where most linguists see a unidirectional process from concrete to abstract, a process that cannot be cut up into segments, I can only see a more or less accidental concurrence: the processes underlying grammaticalisation may lead one way as well as another, i.e. there is no necessary link between one segment of the chain of grammaticalisation and another.[8] Grammaticalisation processes can only be discovered with hindsight, which means that if we have a preconceived notion of what grammaticalisation *is*, we will indeed discover mainly those processes that have run a full or 'fullish' course, and we will not realise that there may be many cases where the path of grammaticalisation proceeded differently. So it may only *seem* that grammaticalisation usually follows the same channel. Aborted and reversed processes are very difficult to find when one looks backwards in this way.[9] The similarities in known cases of grammaticalisation may have led to an overemphasis on a common core, and through that the idea may have arisen that grammaticalisation is an explanatory parameter in itself. To my mind it is the subprocesses that *explain* the change. I agree with linguists such as Lightfoot (1979, 1991) and Joseph (1992) that, logically, diachronic processes cannot exist because diachronic grammars do not exist. Each speaker makes up his own grammar afresh on the basis of data surrounding him, and on the basis of his general cognitive abilities or strategies. So why should a grammaticalisation process necessarily run from a to b to c etc.? Why should there be unidirectionality? With Harris and Campbell (1995: 20, 336ff.) (and see also Fischer 1997b) I would tend to accept that grammaticalisation has no independent status, no explanatory value in itself.

What I would like to do in the remainder of this study is to show how strongly iconic the forces are that may lead to a process of grammaticalisation or its abortion, to further routinisation or to recreation.

2. Grammaticalisation and iconicity: General

In this section, I will discuss some general aspects of the relation between grammaticalisation and iconicity. Within diagrammatic iconicity, Haiman (1980) makes a distinction between isomorphism and iconicity of motivation (the latter comprising sequential ordering, markedness, centrality vs peripherality, distance vs proximity, repetition). Haiman states that isomorphism is the more general principle, and is universal, while the other types are not. I believe that isomorphism is also more basic in that it underlies some or perhaps all of Haiman's motivation types, and it is also the foundation of metaphor and/or analogy (the mechanisms important, as we have seen, in grammaticalisation processes).

The principle of isomorphism (or 'one form — one meaning'[10]) predicts that synonymity on the one hand, and polysemy and homonymy on the other, are not allowed, or at least avoided as much as possible. In other words, if α (in (5)) represents the signans and x the signatum, then there exists the basic principle that one α (one language sign) should relate to only one x (one concept or object in the world as we view it). Thus the relationship between signans and signatum will preferably be as in (5a), and forms like (5b) should not be allowed:

(5) a. $\dfrac{\alpha}{\mathrm{x}}$ (isomorphism

b. $\dfrac{\alpha\alpha}{\mathrm{x}}$ (synonymy) $\dfrac{\alpha}{\mathrm{xx}}$ (polysemy/homonymy)

This isomorphic or relational diagram (a term used by Hiraga 1994, who offers a lucid discussion of this) is also the basis for metaphor since metaphor arises through analogy of meaning; i.e. when another meaning, y, comes to be related to x, so that they share or become one x, it is felt that likewise a single sign, α, is enough to express the signans/signatum relationship. Itkonen (1994: 45–46) shows how basic the "urge to analogize" is. He writes that analogy is a way of patterning and interpreting the world; a child must analogise in order to acquire knowledge of the external world and to survive in it. Itkonen shows how analogical inference is in fact a generalisation involving the properties of cooccurrence and succession. Thus, we observe by experience that a fire is hot, and infer by analogical generalisation that (every instance of) fire is hot. We can see then that Haiman's iconicity of motivation types show a similar analogy (making use again of cooccurrence and succession); sequence, for instance, being represented by (6a) and repetition by (6b).

(6) a. $\dfrac{\alpha \rightarrow \beta \rightarrow \gamma}{\mathrm{x} \rightarrow \mathrm{y} \rightarrow \mathrm{z}}$ b. $\dfrac{\alpha\ \alpha}{\mathrm{x\ x}}$

This very basic, iconic analogy can be seen to be at work in grammaticalisation. It should not come as a surprise that I would claim (pace Heine et al 1991b: 25, and Hopper and Traugott 1993: 32ff.) that analogy is a *cause* and not merely a mechanism in grammaticalisation processes (for a discussion of analogy as both 'cause' and 'mechanism' see also Fischer 1989: 163–166). Analogy (or isomorphism, as a special type of analogy) then, can be seen to be responsible for the following factors in grammaticalisation, showing the influence of iconicity on grammaticalisation processes:

(7) i. metaphorical shift
ii. 'renewal' and 'layering'
iii. erosion or phonetic reduction
iv. 'persistence': the preservation of original meaning

ad (i): Metaphorical shift. This, I believe, needs no further elaboration in that I have already discussed the role played by metaphor in grammaticalisation processes in Section 1. The metaphorical shift from (more) concrete to (more) abstract also underlies a number of clines and/or hierarchies that have been distinguished in grammaticalisation studies, such as Heine et al. (1991a: 157) who make use of a 'categorial hierarchy',

(8) person > object > process > space > time > quality

which in turn is related to various other hierarchies in grammaticalisation, such as the 'case-hierarchy' (agent > benefactive > dative > accusative > locative > instrument); 'word-type hierarchy' (noun > verb > adverb/adposition > adjective) and the 'animacy hierarchy' (human > animate > inanimate > abstract) (see e.g. Heine et al. 1991a: 159–60; 1991b; Hopper and Traugott 1993: 157).

ad (ii): Renewal. Through grammaticalisation the isomorphic or transparent relation between signs and concepts often becomes obscured, which may then be 'repaired' by renewal. This may be cyclical in so far as the renewed form may again become grammaticalised. The renewal may even speed up the process of grammaticalisation, when the new and old forms are in competition (cf. Hopper and Traugott 1993: 123). Thus, for example, the opacity of strong past tense forms in English is being repaired by the emergence of new weak tenses, in which pastness (represented by *y* in (9)) is isomorphically related to a separate linguistic sign , *-ed* (which may go back to a cognate of the full verb *do*),

(9) *holp > help + ed* $\frac{\alpha}{x + y} > \frac{\alpha + \beta}{x + y}$

Renewal cannot be explained by the process of grammaticalisation itself, but is due to a constant pressure for a more iconic (more transparent) isomorphic structure. Harris and Campbell (1995: 72–75) show in a discussion of what they call 'exploratory expressions', how new expressions are always floating around in language. They may become grammaticalised if the need arises but they may also disappear or remain as lexical idioms outside the grammar. Again I believe that many of these exploratory expressions can be explained iconically, i.e. they are motivated.

ad (iii): The process of phonetic reduction has often been shown to be explainable by the iconic principle of quantity, which according to Givón is also an instance of isomorphism. Thus, "a larger chunk of information will be given a larger chunk of code or on a more abstract level, less predictable or more important information will be given more coding material (Givón 1995b: 49).[11]

ad (iv): With reference to persistence, Bybee et al. (1994: 16) write that "certain more specific nuances of the source construction can be retained long after grammaticalisation has begun" (cf. also Hopper and Traugott 1993: 91, 120). I think it is important to note that this is especially the case (as the discussion in the literature shows) in circumstances of layering, i.e. when older and newer forms coexist expressing more or less the same function. For instance in English, a variety of more or less grammaticalised forms is used to express future time (the zero form, *will, shall, to be going to/gonna*), but the expressions are not synonymous. Their specific nuances can be explained diachronically, on the basis of their original meaning. In other words, the original relation between the signans and the signatum has remained *in spite of* grammaticalisation, preserving isomorphism.

3. Grammaticalisation and iconicity: special cases

I have on purpose emphasised the words *in spite of* in the last paragraph because I believe there are often forces within grammaticalisation that run counter to what is expected (cf. the description of grammaticalisation as given in Section 1). This, for instance, pertains to the idea that grammaticalisation is driven semantically, that it is unidirectional, and that generalisation or bleaching of meaning is a necessary element to start off the process (but cf. note 4). As I said before, looking at a case of grammaticalisation in more detail may show that not all developments proceed in the same direction and follow the general principles set out above. So I would like to conclude with an investigation of two cases in the history of English which have generally been interpreted as more or less paradigm cases of grammaticalisation, comparable to similar processes of grammaticalisation taking place in other languages. The discussion of the first case — the grammaticalisation of *have to* from a full verb into a semi-modal auxiliary — will be brief since I have already described that at some length in Fischer (1994b) and (1997b). The other case concerns the grammaticalisation of *to* before the infinitive.

3.1 *The grammaticalisation of* have to

In line with similar developments involving a possessive verb like *have*, where *have* in combination with an infinitive grammaticalised from a full verb into an auxiliary (e.g. as happened in the Romance languages, cf. Fleischman 1982), it has usually been taken for granted that English *have to* represented a 'regular' case of grammaticalisation. Thus, van der Gaaf (1931), Visser (1969: §1396ff.), and Brinton (1991) all more or less accept the following developmental stages for the construction, *I have my work to do/I have to do my work*:

(10)
- *have* at first is used as a full verb, meaning 'to possess'
- the NP functions as the direct object of *have*
- the *to*–infinitive is not obligatory
- the infinitive functions as an adjunct dependent on the NP
- word order is not relevant, it does not influence meaning

In subsequent stages of the development, the meaning of *have* slowly generalises and it acquires modal colouring in combination with the *to*-infinitive, which now becomes obligatory. The infinitive no longer functions as an adjunct to the NP but as an object complement of the matrix verb *have*, and the original object of *have* becomes an argument of the infinitive. This object need not be concrete or 'possessible' any longer (i.e. it goes down the 'category hierarchy', referred to in Section 2). In the final stage we see the appearance of inanimate subjects (possessive *have* + infinitive always had animate subjects: so here we follow the 'animacy hierarchy' discussed above), and of intransitive infinitives, i.e. the original object can now be dropped altogether. Re-analysis or rebracketing from (11a) to (11b) now follows,

(11) a. I have [my work to do]
b. I [have to do] my work

resulting in a fixed *have* + *to*-infinitive + NP word order (note the sudden shift in word order between (11) a and b, which is difficult to account for satisfactorily within this framework).

It is quite clear in this sketch of the putative development of *have to* that the grammaticalisation proceeds along a path of semantic change, and that the syntactic changes are subordinate to it, following hard on the heels of the semantic change. Because the development is seen as gradual (as we have seen, one of the tenets of the grammaticalisation hypothesis), the various stages are extremely difficult to disentangle. This is noticeable also from the fact that van der Gaaf, Visser and Brinton do not agree as to when the different stages occur.

In my own investigation of this case (Fischer 1994b), I considered all the instances in which *have* is followed by a *to*-infinitive in the so-called Helsinki corpus (which covers the Old, Middle and early Modern periods).[12] Looking at a total of 643 examples, I came to the conclusion that there is no evidence for a gradual semantic change as envisaged by the studies reported on above. The generalised meaning of *have* (mentioned under the development in (10)) already existed in the earliest recorded (Old English) period, and modal colouring of *have* was possible (but not necessarily with obligative meaning) in Old English too. Similarly, the object could be concrete or abstract from earliest times. All the more firm syntactic evidence for the change is very late (i.e. only from the early Modern Period). In fact, it can be shown that the syntactic changes follow upon a (general) word order change. The basic SOV word order of Old English, which persisted quite long in infinitival constructions in Middle English, ensured that the order of the three basic elements was in normal circumstances (so when no movement rules were involved) almost always *have* + NP + *to*-infinitive. The medially positioned NP could function equally well as an object of the main verb *have* (due to the V2 rule in main clauses, which would move *have* to a position before the NP object), and as an object of the infinitive. When the word order in late Middle, early Modern English became generalised to SVO everywhere, this kind of ambiguity was no longer possible: that is, the object NP had to shift to a postverbal position with respect to the verb which gave it its semantic role. Since *have* usually had a generalised meaning in this construction, the usual position for the object became the one *after* the infinitive with which it had a stronger semantic bond. So it was the SOV > SVO word order change that fixed the order of the *have to* construction, and which ultimately led to the re-analysis described in (11). Or, to put it differently, the word order change caused the adjacency of *have* and the *to*-infinitive, which in turn led to a semantic change.

in which *have* and the *to*-infinitive were considered one semantic unit. The data show quite clearly that all the clear grammaticalisation facts (intransitive infinitives, inanimate subjects, the use of 'double' *have to have*, the development of *have to* into an epistemic modal) date from *after* the word order change.

So what is notable about this case? What makes it different from the common or garden kind of grammaticalisation? We see,

(i) no gradual generalisation in meaning, no intertwining with gradual syntactic adaptations;

(ii) a quite sudden, unlinked syntactic change which sets the process towards auxiliary status rolling;[13]

(iii) a semantic change in *have* to a modal auxiliary which is probably the result of the (syntactic) word order shift and of metonymic forces (conversational implicatures), caused by the inherent meaning of *to* (for which see below) and the occasional modal colouring that could be present all along in these *have* constructions depending on the other lexical items in the clause.

Further support for this sketch of the development may be found in the fact that in Dutch and German (closely related languages) the auxiliarisation of the cognates of *have to* did not take place, and neither did the SOV > SVO change, which, I believe, is behind the development. Why is it that the word order shift sets off this process? I believe it is iconic factors that are responsible here. In Fischer (1997b) I propose a reversal of Givón's (1985: 202) 'proximity principle' to account for this, which in turn is derived from what he calls an iconic meta-principle,

(12) The closer together two concepts are semantically or functionally, the more likely they are to be put adjacent to each other lexically, morpho-tactically or syntactically

One would expect the proximity principle also to be valid the other way around, i.e. the moment two elements are placed together syntactically or formally, it is likely that they will begin to function together semantically or functionally. Compare in this respect also Bolinger's (1980: 297) remark: "the moment a verb is given an infinitive complement, that verb starts down the road of auxiliariness".[14]

3.2 *The case of infinitival* to

There is a widespread belief that the development of the original preposition *to* before the infinitive into a meaningless infinitival marker follows a well-known grammaticalisation channel. This is clear from Haspelmath's (1989) study, the essence of which is expressed in his title, "From purposive to infinitive — a universal path of grammaticization". He shows that in many languages in the world the allative preposition (*to* in English), which expresses location, or rather the goal of motion, also comes to express goal or purpose more abstractly; and that in combination with the infinitive, the preposition begins to lose its original purposive function, ending up as a purely grammatical element to indicate that the verbal form is an infinitive. This interpretation of the development is already given in Jespersen (cf. also Mustanoja 1960: 514):

> In ... the *to*-infinitive, *to* had at first its ordinary prepositional meaning of direction, as still in "he goes to fetch it" [...] But gradually an enormous extension of the application of this *to*-infinitive has taken place: the meaning of the preposition has been weakened and in some cases totally extinguished, so that now the *to*-infinitive must be considered the normal English infinitive, the naked infinitive being reserved for comparatively few employments, which are the solitary survivals of the old use of the infinitive. This development is not confined to English: we find it more or less in all the Gothonic languages, though with this preposition only in the West Gothonic branch (G.*zu*, Dutch *te*), while Gothic has *du*, and Scandinavian *at* (Jespersen 1927: 10–11).

It seems to me that the expectations raised by the fact that this seems to be a frequent grammaticalisation pattern, has led us too much to see the English case as following the well-trodden path. I think it pays to look more closely at the linguistic details. I have compared the development of the infinitive marker in Dutch and English[15] and come to the conclusion that *to* and cognate Dutch *te* have not grammaticalised in the same way. On the contrary, it looks as if *to* was stopped early in its development and has even regressed in some respect. I think this could be characterised as a process of iconisation, a moving away from the symbolic pole back to the iconic one.

I believe indeed that the forces behind this process have been to a large extent iconic, although there were some syntactic factors too, which I will come back to later. The main factor is isomorphism. One can see that through the grammaticalisation of *to*, the original isomorphic relation between the signans and the signatum (as given in (13a) below) is disturbed (as shown in (13b)). The sign *to* acquires two signata: the first is the prepositonal purposive, allative 'to' and the second the semantically empty, infinitive marking element 'to'. The asymmetric situation of (13b) can be amended in two ways. The usual way according to the grammaticalisation hypothesis is for the new signatum to acquire its own distinctive linguistic form. This may be obtained through the phonetic reduction of *to*, which would then coexist with the full form *to*. This development is most clear in Dutch, which has infinitival *te*, next to the earlier particle *toe*. But in Middle English, too, we find occasional *te* spellings (this would be stage (13c)).[16] In fact with stage (13c) we have a new stable isomorphic relation. The other solution for the asymmetry of (13b) is to go back to the earlier symmetry (i.e. 13a). This also makes the relation isomorphic again, and it is more strongly iconic than (12c) because here the sign *to* is linked back up with its original meaning (cf. the general point I made about iconicity and persistence in (7iv)).

(13) *stages of grammaticalisation of* to

a. $\frac{\alpha}{x}$ b. $\frac{\alpha}{xy}$ c. $\frac{\alpha}{x}\ \frac{\beta}{y}$

(a = the signans *to*; b = the reduced signans of *to*; x = signatum 'goal'; y = signatum 'infinitival marker')

So my suggestion is that diacronically English *to* moved back to stage (13a), while Dutch *te* moved on to stage (13c). In what follows, I will have a look at the (comparative) facts and also offer some suggestions why English *to* re-iconicised.

It seems that at first, in the late Old English, early Middle English period, *to* developed very much like Dutch *te*. Evidence for this can be found in the following facts:

(14) *the grammaticalisation of* to *in its early stages*

i. strengthening of *to* by *for*
ii. phonetic reduction of *to*
iii. loss of semantic integrity
iv. occurrence of *to*-infinitive after prepositions other than *for*

ad (i): The need for an additional preposition (*for*) to emphasise the goal function of the *to*-infinitive. This use of *for* is attested from 1066 onwards (see Mustanoja 1960: 514) and steadily increases in the Middle English period until 1500 (see

Table 1). A similar development can be seen in Middle Dutch, where *om(me) te* begins to occur quite frequently (see Stoett 1909: §283) and becomes more and more regular for the expression of purpose (see Gerritsen 1987: 143–47), becoming obligatory in many positions in Modern Dutch and remaining there whenever purpose or direction is intended.

Table 1. *The frequency of* for to *in the Middle English and early Modern English periods, based on the Helsinki corpus (taken from Fischer 1997a)*

	1150–1250	–1350	–1420	–1500	–1570	–1640	–1710
forto	1	29	46	46	1	0	0
forte	87	15	1	0	0	0	0
for to	14	91	323	251	41	7	5
for te	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
(*te, t', to-*	36	3	1	2	1	0	0)

ad (ii): The phonetic reduction of *to* to *te* can be found in Middle English, see Table 1 above. In Middle Dutch we already find the reduced form only, but this can be reduced even further to a single phoneme *t* attached to the infinitive (Stoett §283 gives the form *tsine* for *te sine* 'to be'). I have found a few bound forms in the Helsinki corpus too, all from the late Middle English period, as the last horizontal line in Table 1 shows.

ad (iii): We see the occasional use of the *to*-infinitive in Middle English in structures where it cannot possibly be goal-oriented, i.e. in positions where the plain infinitive and the present participle (which express simultaneity rather than purpose) have been the rule in Old English (cf. Fischer 1996: 119–121). The following is an example from a fourteenth century text.

(15) *And in my barm ther lith to wepe/ Thi child and myn ...*
'And in my bosom there lies weeping thy child and mine'
(Macauley 1900–1901, Gower, *ConfAm*. III 302)

In Middle Dutch, too, the usual forms in these constructions are the plain infinitive and the present participle (but a coordinated construction is also quite often found, cf. Stoett 1909: §§10, 281). But here, too, the *te* infinitive, which becomes the rule in later Dutch (cf. the examples in (16)), begins to make headway,

(16) *Hij lag te slapen*
he lay to sleep
'He lay sleeping'
Zij stond te wachten
she stood to wait
'She stood waiting'

ad (iv): We see the occasional occurrence in Middle English of a *to*-infinitive preceded by another preposition which also governs the infinitive, making clear that *to* can no longer be prepositional. According to Visser (1969: §976), this structure does not occur in Old English, and is very rare again in later English. Most of his examples are from the period 1200 to 1500. Some illustrations are given in (17).

(17) a. *bliss of herte that comþ* ***of God to lovie***
the bliss of heart that comes from God to love
'the happiness of heart that results from loving God'
(Morris [Gradon] 1965, *Ayenbite* 93)

b. *7 himm birþþ ȝeornenn aȝȝ þatt an,/ Hiss Drihhtinn wel to cwemenn/ ... Wiþþ messess 7 wiþþ beness/ 7* ***wiþþ to letenn*** *swingenn himm*
and him behoves yearn ay that one, his lord well to please, ... with masses and with prayers and with to let scourge him
'and it behoves him to always desire that one thing, i.e. to please his Lord well ... with masses and prayers and and by letting himself be scourged' (Holt 1878, *Orm*. 6358–62)

In Middle Dutch, and more frequently in early Modern Dutch, the *te*-infinitive begins to occur too after other prepositions, such as *van* 'of', *met* 'with', *na* 'after', and especially *sonder* 'without', and these constructions can still be found in Present-day Dutch, especially in colloquial speech (see Stoett 1909: §§282–83; Overdiep 1935: §§354–358).

(18) a. *Hy starf, niet* ***sonder*** *seer* ***beclaeght te wesen***, *den 8sten April*
he died, not without very lamented to be, the 8th April
'He died, not without being deeply lamented, the 8th of April'
(van Mander, Overdiep 1935: 420)

b. ... *sal ick eindigen* ***naer*** *mijn groetenisse aen alle*
... shall I end after my greetings to all
de vrinden ***ghedaen te hebben***
the friends done to have
'I will end after having given my greetings to all my friends'
(Reig.77/16, Overdiep 1935: 421)

Thus, the initial stages involving *to* in Middle English look like a regular grammaticalisation process. However, towards the end of the Middle English period the trend seems to reverse. All the structures discussed in (14i-iv) above seem to disappear. Table 1 makes quite clear that the strengthening of the *to*-infinitive with *for* disappears quite suddenly — at least from the Standard language — in the early Modern period. I believe that the reason for this is that *to* went back to its original meaning, again strongly expressing goal or direction (there is some difference with Old English usage, I will come back to that below). But apart from the disappearance of the grammaticalisation characteristics enumerated in (14), there are also new developments that indicate the renewed, semantic independence of *to* before the infinitive:

(19) *new developments involving* to
i. appearance of split infinitives
ii. absence of 'reduction of scope'
iii. no loss of semantic integrity

ad (i): The first split infinitives are attested in the fourteenth century (see Mustanoja 1960: 515; Visser §977; Fischer 1992a: 329–30).[17]

(20) *Blessid be þou lord off hevyn ../That suche grace hath sent to his /Synfull men for to þus lede /In paradice* (*Cursor Mundi*, Laud Ms 18440–44, Morris 1876)
'Blessed are you, Lord of heaven, who has sent his sinful people such grace as to lead (them) thus into paradise'

This shows that the grammaticalisation of *to* is disturbed in that the usual process would have been for grammaticalised *to* to become more and more 'bonded' to the infinitive, in accordance with one of the grammaticalisation parameters distinguished by Lehmann's (1985).

ad (ii): Another phenomenon showing ongoing grammaticalisation, also mentioned by Lehmann, is the reduction of scope. When two infinitives are coordinated in

Modern Dutch, it is the rule for both infinitives to be marked by *te*, if the first one is so marked (for some idiomatic exceptions see Fischer 1996: 112–13). In other words, the scope of *te* has been reduced to its immediate constituent. This is not the case in English where the first *to* can have both infinitives as its scope, as the literal English translation of the non-acceptable Dutch example in (21) shows,

(21) a. **Je kunt deze shampoo gebruiken om je haar mee* ***te wassen en*** *je kleren* ***schoonmaken***

b. You can use this shampoo **to wash** your hair **and clean** your clothes

ad (iii): Lehmann's fifth parameter, 'the loss of integrity', is also relevant here. It is clear that in Dutch, *te* has gradually lost its semantic integrity, i.e. it has become de-iconised, and no longer expresses 'goal' or 'direction'; this is now expressed obligatorily by *om te*. One result of this semantic loss in Dutch was already mentioned under (14iii) above. Another one is the appearance of the *te*-infinitive with a future auxiliary in Dutch. Overdiep (1935: §336) shows that they are quite regular already in early Modern Dutch. This again is a clear contrast with English where such a future infinitive simply never develops, neither in Middle English when *shall* and *will* could still be used in infinitival form, no later with the new future auxiliary *to be going to*. Overdiep also mentions that *zullen* is especially common when the matrix verb itself is not inherently future directed, so after a verb like *say*. The reason for this difference may be clear by now. *To* itself refers to the future and therefore had no need for a future auxiliary, whereas Dutch *te* no longer carried future meaning; it had become empty of referential meaning, and therefore the Dutch infinitive may need reinforcement.

The loss of the purposive meaning of *te* has also widened the possibility of using non-agentive subjects with a *te*-infinitive in Dutch (showing grammaticalisation along the 'animacy' hierarchy). With a verb like *dreigen* 'threaten', the use of a non-agentive or an expletive *it* subject (i.e. with the verb being used epistemically) is quite common in Dutch, while it is more awkward in English, because of the stronger purpose meaning of *to*,

(22) a. *Het dreigde te gaan regenen, toen ik het huis verliet*
?It threatened to rain, when I left the house[18]

b. *Hij dreigde van zijn fiets te vallen*
*He threatened to fall of his bike[19]

The same is true when *dreigen* is followed by a passive infinitive, making an agentive function of the matrix subject, which is also the subject of the infinitive, impossible (cf. Traugott 1995: 34: "the passive demotes the inference that the subject ... is volitional or responsible with respect to the purposive clause"). (23) is a perfectly possible sentence in Dutch, but unacceptable in English,

(23) *Hij dreigde ontslagen te worden*
*He threatened to be fired

And a construction like (24) is ambiguous in Dutch, but not in English,

(24) *Hij dreigde haar te doden*
There was a danger that he would kill her
He threatened to kill her

English has only the second interpretation. The reason for these differences is the fact, as I mentioned above, that *to* in English is still more strongly purposeful and therefore by default as it were one expects a controlling agent.[20]

It should be mentioned here that *threaten/dreigen* is not the only verb that shows this difference in usage between Dutch and English. Traugott (1993) also discusses the behaviour of the verb *to promise*, which in Dutch can be used non-agentively more easily than in English. In Fischer (1997a: 271–73) I also point out that in English *to*-infinitives regularly occur with the categories of verbs that Haspelmath (1989) has described as 'irrealis directive' and 'irrealis potential', but not with the categories 'realis non-factive' and 'realis-factive'. The latter two categories contain clearly non-directional verbs, and it is interesting that in Dutch and German these last two categories do take *te/zu* infinitives much more easily than in English. Thus a verb like *affirm* does not take a *to*-infinitive in English, but its Dutch semantic equivalent *verzekeren* does (for more details see Fischer 1997a).

A final difference between Dutch and English is the formation of new modal auxiliaries in English consisting of a matrix verb that has semantically inherent future reference and the *to* element that belongs to the infinitive following the verb, as in *to be going to/gonna, to want to/wanna, to have (got) to/gotta* etc. Plank (1984: 338–39) notes that these verbs are unlike auxiliaries in that they occur with *to*, but notes at the same time that these same auxiliaries "allow the conjunction [i.e. *to*] to be reduced and contracted in informal speech" even when this is not fast speech, and before pauses, indicating that this *to* has grammaticalised and become, as it were, affixed to the matrix verb. This amalgamation is possible because both *to* and the matrix verb express future modality (so it seems that *to* could be further grammaticalised in English only when it coincided with another future-meaning bearing element).[21] In Dutch, however, this development has not taken place, because there was no meaningful 'future' or purposeful *te* for the matrix verb to attach to. In fact, whenever we do get a (semi-)auxiliary followed by a *te*-infinitive, it is clear that *te* goes with the infinitive. This is shown in the position of the adverb in examples such as the following,

(25) a. *Ik zit nu te denken / *Ik zit te nu denken*
I sit now to think / I sit to now think
'I am thinking now'

b. *Het dreigt thans te mislukken / *Het dreigt te thans mislukken*
It threatens now to fail / It threatens to now fail
'there is a possibility that it will fail'

In linguistically similar cases in English, the adverb can occur between *to* and the infinitive, showing that *to* and the infinitive do not form a cluster. That *to* in fact forms a cluster with the matrix verb is shown by cases in which matrix verb and *to* can be contracted as in the second example of (26).

(26) I want to immediately go there
I wanna go there immediately

Now the question must be asked, what has caused the reversal in the grammaticalisation of *to*? I believe this is due to the grammatical circumstances under which *to* developed. In one respect English came to differ radically from Dutch, and this influenced the use and interpretation of *to*. In early Middle English the infinitive became much more strongly verbal than in Dutch (for instance, Dutch infinitives can be preceded by a possessive pronoun or an article, which is impossible in English (for more details see Fischer and van der Leek 1981: 319). This verbal nature of the infinitive was strengthened by the fact that *to*-infinitives started to replace *that*-clauses on a grand scale in the Middle English period (cf. Manabe 1989); that is, they replaced clauses which have a tense-domain separate from the tense expressed in the matrix clause. This caused the element *to*, which originally expressed 'goal' or direction, to function as a kind of shift-of-tense element. What I mean is, *to* came to express a 'break' in time, a movement away ('direction') from the time of the main clause, i.e. it again expressed 'direction'. It is indeed only in English that we later (the first examples date from the late Middle

English period) see the development of two different kinds of infinitival complements after perception verbs, where *to* becomes crucial in expressing a shift in tense:

(27) a. *it thoghte hem gret pite/ To se so worthi on as sche/ With such a child as ther was bore/ So sodeinly to be forlore*
'it seemed to them a great pity to see so worthy a woman as she was to be destroyed together with the child that was born to her' (Macauley 1900–1901, Gower, *ConfAm*. II, 1239–42)

b. *"for certeynly, this wot I wel," he seyde/ "That forsight of divine purveyaunce/ Hath seyn alwey me to forgon Criseyde."*
'for certainly, this I know well, he said, that the foresight of divine providence has always seen that I would lose Criseyde'[22]
(Benson 1988, Chaucer *T&C* IV, 960–62)

In both cases the *to*-infinitive refers to something happening in the future. The construction contrasts with the usual complement structure of physical perception verbs, which until then had only allowed a bare infinitive, expressing the simultaneous occurrence of what had been seen, heard or felt, as in *I saw her cross(ing) the street*. In Present-day English, this *to*-infinitive after perception verbs no longer expresses future time, but in examples like (28) (for those who accept this type of construction) it can still express a shift in tense, making the experience indirect.

(28) Alex saw Julia to have been in a hurry when she dressed (because she was wearing her T-shirt inside out) (the example is from van der Leek 1992: 13)

The type of construction shown under (27) was further strengthened by the influx of Latin type accusative and infinitive constructions (as in (29)) appearing again in the late Middle English period, showing similar 'breaks' in tense between matrix verb and infinitive.

(29) I expect him to be home on time

These accusative and infinitive constructions always have a *to*-infinitive. (For more details on this development, see Fischer 1992b, 1994a.). It seems that we can conclude that special syntactic circumstances as it were forced infinitival *to* to become more isomorphic again with the preposition *to*.

4. A brief conclusion

I have tried to show that iconicity plays an important role in so-called grammaticalisation processes, both in a general sense, where it supports the hypothesised process of grammaticalisation, but also in specific cases, where it often runs counter to the expected development. The histories of *have to* and the *to*-infinitive show that the grammaticalisation path need not be one way, and need not be steered by the principles of semantic change alone. Iconicity plays an independent role, is in fact a more independent factor in syntactic change than grammaticalisation. It may be doubted even whether grammaticalisation should be looked upon as an independent causatory factor in the theory of linguistic change at all.

Notes

* I would like to thank my colleague at Amsterdam, Frederike van der Leek, for discussing this paper with me, for her valuable and inspirational comments, and for turning my attention to Holyoak and Thagard's book, *Mental Leaps. Analogy in Creative Thought*. I also would like to express my gratitude to audiences at Zurich and Vienna for their questions and queries which have made me rethink and alter parts of this paper. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank Max Nänny, for stimulating me to make the 'mental leap' from linguistics to literature, a most fruitful analogy.

1. See also Song (1996: 5), who writes that typologically too there is an iconic relationship between the type of causative used and the (in)directness of the causation: "In order to express direct causation, languages tend to use the causative which exhibits a higher degree of fusion of the expression of cause and that of effect, whereas in order to express indirect causation, languages tend to use the causative in which there is a lower degree of fusion".
2. Frederike van der Leek pointed out to me that what may be involved is not so much linear distance (because distance may change according to the construction used, cf. *Which door did he spray with green paint?*), but the fact that e.g. prepositions like *on, with, to* activate concepts of their own. Still, it could be said that these prepositions *with* their additional concepts create distance too between the verb and its argument.
3. For this mechanistic view of grammaticalisation see especially Bybee et al. (1994: 298), who write, "Thus our view of grammaticization is much more mechanistic than functional: the relation between grammar and function is indirect and mediated by diachronic process. The processes that lead to grammaticization occur in language use for their own sakes; it just happens that their cumulative effect is the development of grammar". Although I would agree with the downtoning of the functional aspect, I do not believe that the process once set in motion is as automatic as they presume.

4. There is some difference of opinion as to the stage of grammaticalisation in which bleaching is most prominent. According to many investigators of the phenomenon, the bleaching of source concepts sets off the process (cf. Givón 1975, Lehmann 1982, Heine and Reh 1984, Bybee and Pagliuca 1985: 59–63, Heine et al. 1991a), but according to others (notably Traugott, see Traugott 1982, and Hopper and Traugott 1993: 87–93), bleaching is a process that occurs in the later stages of grammaticalisation, the semantic shift occurring at the beginning being one of pragmatic enrichment rather than loss.
5. Bybee at al. (1994: 289ff.) recognise three other mechanisms of semantic change that play a role in grammaticalisation (it is quite clear that for them the mechanisms of semantic change are more or less equivalent to the mechanisms found in grammaticalisation, see p. 282), i.e. (3) generalisation, (4) harmony and (5) absorption of contextual meaning. It is clear from their description that all three mechanisms are essentially metonymic in nature, with metaphor playing a subsidiary role. Indeed they conclude (p. 297): "The most important point that can be made from the discussion of mechanisms of change is that context is all-important".
6. Heine et al. (1991b: 50, 60) indeed distinguish two types of metaphor. The type that occurs in grammaticalisation they call 'experiental' or 'emerging' metaphors, because these metaphors that arise in context (i.e. they are metonymic in nature), and they contrast them with 'conceptual' or 'creative' metaphors, which are much more likely to contain conceptual 'jumps' and cannot be predicted in any sense.
7. It is not at all clear from the literature I have studied what the status of grammaticalisation is in the theory of change. Vincent (1995: 434) talks about "the power of grammaticalisation as an agent of change", which seems to suggest to me that he thinks it has explanatory value, that it has independent force. Most students of grammaticalisation describe it vaguely as a 'phenomenon', a 'process', an 'evolution'. However, the fact that for most linguists one of its intrinsic properties is that it is unidirectional suggests to me that in their view the process must have some independence. Heine et al (1991b: 9) write that "Meillet followed Bopp rather than Humboldt in using grammaticalization as *an explanatory parameter* in historical linguistics" (italics added), and the authors themselves seem to follow this line too (see also p. 11 of their book).
8. Heine et al (1991a) indeed refer to the process as a 'chain'.
9. It is interesting to note that Bruyn (1995), who was looking at the developments taking place in a pidgin becoming a creole (where it is believed that grammaticalisation plays an important role), so as it where looking for grammaticalisation evidence from another perspective, found very few cases where grammaticalisation ran its full course. She found that language contact (especially substratum influence) often caused divergence (p. 241ff.), or early abortion (p. 53ff.), or that sometimes a development was much more abrupt than is usual in grammaticalisation cases (pp. 237–39). Her investigation shows that it is important at each stage to take into account the synchronic circumstances, which will ultimately (and freshly) decide what will happen. So far, evidence for cases of 'regrammaticalisation' or iconisation is not very abundant but examples are given in Plank (1979) and Ramat (1992).
10. I am here using 'isomorphism' in a somewhat narrower sense than is perhaps usual, following the definition given by Haiman (1980: 515–16) and other linguists quoted by Haiman (see also

Haiman, Kortmann and Ungerer, this volume). Isomorphism is usually seen as a mapping that satisfies "two fundamental structural properties", i.e. the property of "being one-to-one" and the property of being "structurally consistent" (Holyoak and Thagard 1995: 29). Since here there are only two *single* elements involved, only the 'one-to-one' relationship applies. But as Haiman writes (1980, note 2), it is only "by virtue of this correspondence between individual signans and signatum [that it is] possible for the relationship of SETS of signantia to mirror the relationship of sets of signata".

11. See also Rubba (1994: 99), who notes that morphological boundness is related to semantic dependence, and the important work done by Bybee (e.g. 1985) on semantic 'relevance' as a factor in fusion and morpheme order in verbal forms.
12. For more information on this corpus, see Kytö 1991.
13. Concerning both (i) and (ii), it is quite generally accepted as part of the grammaticalisation hypothesis that the semantic and syntactic factors are seen as intertwined and the result of the same 'motivation'. Heine et al (1991a: 168) write that "both grammaticalization and re-analysis are the result of one and the same strategy, namely the one which aims at expressing more 'abstract' concepts in terms of less 'abstract' ones". We have seen that in the *have to* case the rebracketing or re-analysis is not linked to a semantic development.
14. Another example of the force of proximity can be found in Bolinger (1996: 16), his "oddment 14: proximity agreement", where he discusses that the mere iuxtaposition of a noun and a verb may lead to ungrammatical agreement, as in *One of their sons were killed in Vietnam* or *The size of the fish are immaterial*.
15. For more details, also on the comparative development of *zu* in German, see Fischer (1997a). This article takes a different approach in that it considers the degrees of grammaticalisation of *to, zu* and *te* from the point of view of the parameters of grammaticalisation distinguished by Lehmann (1985).
16. See e.g. *King Horn* (Hall 1901: 25), *te lyue*. In addition, there is also evidence of reduced *to* in forms where *to* is combined into one form with the infinitive, e.g. *tobinde* (*Havelok*, Smithers 1987: 56), *tobe* (Rolle, *Psalter*, Bramley 1884: 380) and *tavenge* (Caxton, *Reynard*, Blake 1970: 54). All these instances are from late Middle English, none have been found in earlier or later periods in the Helsinki corpus.
17. There are also cases of split infinitives found in early Middle English but these are of a different type, they involve infinitives preceded by the negative particle or by a personal pronoun. Presumably (cf. van Kemenade 1987) these particles/pronouns are still clitics, which explains their position next to the infinitive which was becoming more verbal around this time.
18. Traugott (1993) notes that occurrences with expletive *it* are very rare in her corpora but that they do occur. It is interesting that all my ten informants, except one, do not like this sentence. They would much prefer, *It threatened rain* or *Rain threatened* or *It looked like rain*, and they find it also more acceptable with a progressive verbal form. Obviously it is not a construction they would comfortably use themselves. Traugott also notes (1993: 187) that, although inanimate subjects with *threaten* occur, there is usually "something about the subject that leads to an expectation of the proposition coming into being"; in other words, there is a strong tendency still present to ascribe some agentive function to the subject.

19. All informants except one agree that this is only possible in English if the subject wanted to injure himself and thus inflict pain on someone who cared for him. The epistemic meaning is the usual interpretation of this sentence in Dutch. When the subject has to be interpreted as agentive, the normal construction would be with a finite clause: *Hij dreigde dat hij* ….

20. There may be some problems here, which would need further investigation, since not every *to* before the infinitive may signal 'purpose'. John Haiman, for instance, suggested that purpose is absent in *To be or not to be* …. However, I am of the opinion that *to* expresses some kind of shift here which is absent in the plain infinitive (or the *ing*-form for that matter). It is similar to what Duffley (1992: 106) writes on the difference between e.g. *need* followed by a bare or a *to*-infinitive, "if the means of realizing the infinitive's event are not felt to exist, then there is felt to be nothing real occupying the before-position [so a bare infinitive or *ing*-form would be appropriate]… If, on the other hand, the means are conceived as really or probably existing, then the speaker feels that there is something real occupying a before-position with respect to the infinitive's event, and so uses *to*". It is obvious that Hamlet is here considering possibilities (*that is the question*): should he *be* or *not be*? In other words, there is a 'before' and 'after'.

21. The importance of *to* for the development of these new modals is also emphasised by Hopper and Traugott (1993: 81), where they write: "The contiguity with *to* in the purposive sense must have been a major factor in the development of the future meaning in *be going to* as an auxiliary". A full discussion follows on pp. 81–83.

22. For more details on how this rather difficult example (of which there are three in Chaucer) should be interpreted, see Fischer 1995: 10–11.

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Iconicity, Typology and Cognition

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1. Introduction

The basic question that will be addressed in this study is this: If we adopt iconicity as a working hypothesis, i.e. if we assume that the structure of language reflects in some way the structure of experience, what can typology and the cross-linguistic study of the structure of human language in general contribute to a better understanding of the structure of human cognition? This is a daring question to ask: It makes linguistic structure the basis for making claims concerning cognitive structure and thus goes a crucial step beyond other studies on the iconicity of language.

Before turning to the central claims that will be made, it is necessary to specify what exactly is meant by *cognition*, *typology* and *iconicity* here. With regard to cognition there is one central domain that will be of interest to us, namely the semantic space of adverbial (or: circumstantial) relations. It is this semantic space which we draw upon whenever we provide discourse coherence by establishing semantic links between propositions, such as temporal, causal, or conditional links. The central role of this semantic space for human cognition was already acknowledged by Georg von der Gabelentz over a hundred years ago (1891):

> Those categories of thought connection which we express by means of *if*, *because*, *although* ... etc. do of course belong to the most indispensible tools of any reasoning mind; no people can do without them, each linguistic community operates in its thinking with conditions, causes, restrictions, alternatives (translated by the author from Georg von der Gabelenz 1901^2: 464).

For reasons that have been given elsewhere (cf. Kortmann 1996: 79–89), a set of some thirty adverbial relations — the exact number is irrelevant — can be said to constitute this semantic space. These relations are distributed across three major networks: temporal relations (1), modal relations (2), and causal, conditional and concessive relations as well as relations closely related to these three (3). Those adverbial relations, notably locative relations, which cannot be subsumed under any of these three networks have been grouped separately (4):

(1) TIME
- Simultaneity Overlap 'when'
- Simultaneity Duration 'while'
- Simultaneity Co-Extensiveness 'as long as'
- Anteriority 'after'
- Immediate Anteriority 'as soon as'
- Terminus a quo 'since'
- Posteriority 'before'
- Terminus ad quem 'until'
- Contingency 'whenever'

(2) MODAL
- Manner 'as, how'
- Similarity 'as, like'
- Comment/Accord 'as'
- Comparison 'as if'
- Instrument/Means 'by'
- Proportion 'the ... the'

(3) CCC
- Cause/Reason 'because'
- Condition 'if'
- Negative Condition 'unless'
- Concessive Condition 'even if'
- Concession 'although'
- Contrast 'whereas'
- Result 'so that'
- Purpose 'in order that'
- Negative Purpose 'lest'
- Degree/Extent 'insofar as'
- Exception/Restriction 'except/only that'

(4) OTHER
- Place 'where'
- Substitution 'instead of'
- Preference 'rather than'
- Concomitance 'German wobei'
- Negative Concomitance 'without'
- Addition 'in addition to'

Typology is understood here as functional (or: Greenbergian) typology. It explores the patterns and limits of variation of language by investigating large samples of (ideally) genetically and areally unrelated languages. Another hallmark of this approach is that it attributes a central role to functional or external explanations for language structure, including a semiotic principle like iconicity. The results that will be reported on in this investigation are taken from an areal study of roughly 50 languages (including 18 non-Indo-European languages) which was conducted as part of the EUROTYP project ('Typology of European languages') from 1990 until 1994.[1] The objects of study were adverbial subordinators (such as *while, after, if, because, although*), i.e. the largest and most strongly grammaticalized class of lexical markers of adverbial relations. The collection and classification of more than 2,000 adverbial subordinators (cf. Kortmann 1997 for a complete dictionary) was designed in such a way that it allows for the systematic study of form — meaning and form — function relations, more exactly for the testing of semiotic principles, including the different varieties of iconicity and motivation.

What will stand at the centre of this study is diagrammatic iconicity, more exactly iconic motivation, i.e. the assumption that the relations between parts in linguistic and cognitive structure correspond to each other. In passing it should be noted, however, that the analysis of the form and meaning of adverbial subordinators also allows us to make important claims concerning other kinds of iconicity and motivation, for example concerning isomorphism and (syntagmatic) economic motivation (cf. Figure 1):

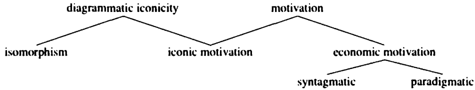

Figure 1. *Types of motivation and diagrammatic iconicty*

First, concerning isomorphism, it is to be noted that the majority of adverbial subordinators is monosemous (63.5%), with 86% of the more than 2,000 subordinators investigated having no more than two readings (Kortmann 1996: 102–106). This tendency towards isomorphism, i.e. towards a one-to-one relationship between form and meaning, can also be shown to be the result of a very clear historical development (cf. also Kortmann forthcoming), which in turn is often accompanied by what Bréal called the Law of Distribution: "... words which should be synonymous, and which were so in the past, have acquired different meanings and are no longer interchangeable" (1921: 26). Second, as far as economic motivation is concerned, Kortmann (1996: 123–136) furnishes solid evidence in support of Zipf's economy principles. Zipf suggests, for example, that there exists an inverse relation between the morphological complexity of a form and its semantic versatility. Indeed, an analysis of the form and meaning of adverbial subordinators in the European languages clearly confirms that "there is a tendency for old age, small size, versatility of meaning, and a multiplicity of permutational associations — all to be directly correlated with high frequency of usage". (Zipf 1949: 121).

This leads us straight back to the topic of this study because it is a reasonable assumption that a high frequency of use of individual forms reflects the cognitive centrality of the concepts they denote. This assumption was spelt out, for example, by Helen Eaton (1940: ix) when she wrote "that the words and locutions which appear most often are those which are most necessary for the concerns of life..." Eaton provided what she called a "semantic frequency list" for four major European languages (English, German, French, Spanish). For each of these languages she drew up a frequency list which allows us to check on the frequency of use of a particular lexical item with a particular meaning. With regard to adverbial subordinators, for example, we can now ask (a) which of them are among the most frequently used lexical items in these four languages and (b) which adverbial relations they mark, and may thus arrive at a first hypothesis as to which adverbial relations are candidates for a high degree of cognitive centrality. If we concentrate on those adverbial subordinators among the 1,000 most frequently used items in Eaton's lists, we arrive at the following set consisting of 16 adverbial relations: [2]

(5)	TIME:	Simultaneity: Overlap 'when', Duration 'while', Co-Extensiveness 'as long as'
		Anteriority 'after', Immediate Anteriority 'as soon as', Terminus a quo 'since'
		Posteriority 'before', Terminus ad quem 'until'
	MODAL:	Similarity '(just) as, like', Proportion 'the... the'
	CCC:	Cause/Reason 'because', Condition 'if', Concession 'although', Result 'so that', Purpose 'in order to'
	OTHER:	Place 'where'

These 16 relations may thus be viewed as candidates for membership in the core of the semantic space of adverbial relations. This core is to be distinguished from a set of increasingly peripheral relations that are considerably less necessary for the concerns of establishing discourse coherence. The assumption behind all this is that the semantic space of adverbial relations has a layered structure, and that it is via the most highly grammaticalized markers of these relations, i.e. adverbial subordinators, that we may be able to find empirical, even statistical evidence for placing a given adverbial relation either in the core or in the periphery.

As a matter of fact, these are already the first two major claims that will be made in this study. The complete set of central claims to be defended in the following two sections is spelt out below:

> The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the morphology and semantics of adverbial subordinators in a wide variety of languages allows us to formulate hypotheses and to provide independent evidence for intuitions and claims concerning the internal structure of the semantic space of adverbial relations, such that
>
> (A) there is a core–periphery structure in terms of cognitive centrality or basicness, i.e. there is a core set of adverbial relations which plays a central role in our thinking (Section 2);
>
> (B) there is a structure in terms of cognitive complexity (or: informativeness), i.e. for some adverbial relations more world-knowledge, more co(n)text-substantiated evidence is necessary than for others (Section 3);
>
> (C) these two structures overlap, but are in principle independent of each other (Section 3).

The major pieces of evidence drawn from the morphology of adverbial subordinators are these: for claim (A), the number of languages having at least one maximally lexicalized (i.e. maximally formally reduced) marker available for the individual adverbial relations; for claim (B), the proportion of monomorphemic and polymorphemic subordinators for every single adverbial relation, the underlying assumption being that simple (i.e. monomorphemic) forms tend to denote cognitively simple concepts and complex (i.e. polymorphemic, including phrasal) forms tend to denote cognitively complex forms. Additional evidence from the domains of adverbial subordinators and adverbial participles includes observations made in psycholinguistics (first language acquisition), pragmatics (interpretative enrichment), and in historical linguistics (semantic change, age of adverbial subordinators).

2. Cognitive centrality

In this section it will be demonstrated that a typological study of adverbial subordinators allows us to identify a (layered) core set of adverbial relations which can rightly be assumed to play a central role in human (or at least

European) reasoning. Interestingly, this core set is a subset of the one that emerged from Eaton's semantic frequency lists and looks like this:

(6)	TIME:	Simultaneity Overlap, Simultaneity Duration, Anteriority, Immediate Anteriority, Terminus ad quem
	MODAL:	Similarity
	CCC:	Condition, Cause, Concession, Result, Purpose
	OTHER:	Place

Especially the top six relations constituting the very core (in this order: Condition, Cause, Similarity, Concession, Simultaneity Overlap, and Place) do not come unexpected. All of them are typically regarded as prototypical instances of adverbial relations, constituting the semantic foci of the major networks of relations (e.g. Similarity as the semantic focus of the network of modal relations).

But what is the basis on which this set is arrived at here? Essentially, there are three types of typological evidence for the set in (6). The most important of these is the availability of maximally lexicalized adverbial subordinators in those languages which predominantly or exclusively make use of free lexical subordinators. 'Maximally lexicalized' is taken to mean a maximum of formal reduction, i.e. a monomorphemic subordinator (e.g. *if*) is regarded as more lexicalized than a polymorphemic one-word subordinator (e.g. *provided*), which in turn is more lexicalized than a phrasal subordinator (e.g. *as long as*). The guiding assumption behind this is that the degree of coding of a concept reflects its degree of cognitive centrality, or as Haiman (1985: 259) puts it:

> Given that 'grammars code best what speakers do most' we should expect to find maximal coding (that is, economy and opacity) in well-trodden areas of semantic space, and minimal coding (that is, iconicity and transparency) at the peripheries.

With regard to adverbial subordinators *economy* is taken to translate into a high degree of formal reduction, i.e. maximal lexicalization, and *opacity* into a low degree of etymological transparency and reconstructability. From this perspective then, economy in adverbial subordinators is also iconic, namely iconic of cognitively central adverbial relations. Table 1 shows what leads us to the identification of the twelve core relations in (6) above. All of them have in common that the number of languages which have (i) no monomorphemic adverbial subordinator and/or (ii) no one-word adverbial subordinator and/or (iii) not a single adverbial subordinator (i.e. not even a lexicalized phrasal subordinator) for these twelve core relations is lower than the average of the relevant lexical gaps for any of the other twenty adverbial relations investigated. For example, of all languages investigated,[3] an average of twenty languages has no monomorphemic subordinator for expressing as their only or primary meaning any given adverbial relation (see the right column in Table 1). This average goes down to roughly nine languages if we ask for any kind of adverbial subordinator that a language possesses for the marking of any one adverbial relation (see the left column). As can easily be read off the table, the figures for the twelve relations are all lower than the relevant averages.

Table 1. *The twelve interclausal relations with the highest proportions of strongly lexicalized adverbial subordinators (i.e. with the lowest number of lexical gaps across languages)*

		number of languages with no adverbial subordinator (average: 9.4)	number of languages with no one-word adverbial subordinator (average: 15.9)	number of languages with no monomorphemic adverbial subordinator (average: 20.1)
I.	Condition	0	0	0
	Cause/Reason	0	0	4
	Similarity	0	7	12
	Concession	0	7	18
II	Place	1	7	9
.	Simultaneity Overlap	3	3	5
	Result	2	9	11
	Immediate Anteriority	2	9	14
	Purpose	3	5	11
	Simultaneity Duration	5	9	14
II	Anteriority	7	14	18
I.	Terminus ad quem	9	13	17

In addition, we can identify roughly three layers of core relations. In the first layer we find relations without a single gap in the leftmost column, with Cause and especially Condition constituting the very core since for these two adverbial relations all languages analyzed possess a one-word subordinator and in the case of Condition even a monomorphemic subordinator. Among the adverbial relations in the second layer, Place ('where') and Simultaneity Overlap ('when') are listed first because they have the lowest number of gaps for monomorphemic adverbial subordinators and thus come closest to markers of Cause and Condition. In the third layer we find relations with the greatest number of gaps for all three degrees of lexicalization. This layering can also be represented as in Figure 2:

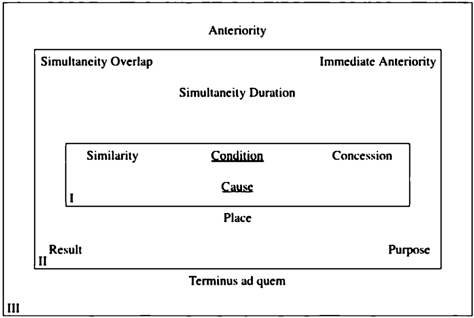

Figure 2. *The layered structure of the set of cognitively central adverbial relations*

Besides the availability of maximally lexicalized adverbial subordinators, there are two other types of typological evidence taken from the domain of adverbial subordinators which support the core set of relations in (6). Both represent additional ways of determining the degree of coding of adverbial relations, which, as was spelt out above, is taken here to be the prime indicator of their relative degree of cognitive centrality. The first way is simply to determine those adverbial relations which are most extensively coded in the sample, i.e. for which we find the highest number of adverbial subordinators marking them as their only or (one of their) primary meaning(s). The second way is to do this only for the most highly grammaticalized subset of adverbial subordinators (sometimes called '*primary*' *subordinators*), namely one-word adverbial subordinators that exclusively function as clause connectives and may not additionally function as, for example, prepositions or adverbs. The relevant tables and layers for these two counts will not be given here (cf. Kortmann 1996: 147–151). Suffice it to say that the adverbial relations with the highest proportions in these counts are largely identical with the core set of cognitively central relations in (6), Table 1 and Figure 2; as a matter of fact, they exhibit even almost the same ranking order.

Taken together, we can say that different types of evidence drawn from a cross-linguistic study of adverbial subordinators all point to a relatively clearly definable set of adverbial relations which seems to play a privileged role in human (or at least European) reasoning. One type of evidence is constituted by different ways of determining the degree of coding of adverbial relations, the other type is the frequency of use of adverbial subordinators (recall Eaton's list in (5)). In closing, a third type of evidence may be mentioned which so far has only been found for a single language, viz. English. This piece of evidence requires detailed historical information on a language and is closely related to Zipf's semiotic principles mentioned in the introduction. Among other things, Zipf claimed that the frequency of use of a lexical item correlates with its age. The analysis of adverbial subordinators does in fact yield the result that almost all of those that are most frequently used in Present-Day English date back to Old English, i.e. almost all of those adverbial subordinators marking, as argued above, cognitively central adverbial relations (e.g. *after, as, while, since, so, if, though*).[4] The prediction would be that similar observations can be made in many other languages as well.

3. Cognitive complexity

However controversial the area of cognitive centrality may be, the notion of cognitive complexity is certainly far more controversial. Therefore those of the following claims which are based on the morphosemantics of adverbial subordinators are much more tentative than those in the previous section and require further (especially psycholinguistic) research. As such, however, the idea of different degrees of cognitive complexity (or: informativeness, specificness) inherent in different adverbial relations is not new in the domain of adverbial subordination. It has been argued in various studies that adverbial relations differ according to the degree of world knowledge or co(n)text-substantiated evidence that is necessary before a given relation can plausibly be said to hold between two propositions. Establishing a causal link between two propositions requires more such knowledge or evidence than establishing a temporal, more exactly an anterior ('after', 'since') link. A similar situation we find for contrastive or even concessive links compared with temporal links of simultaneity ('when', 'while', 'at the same time'). Adverbial relations with a relatively high degree of cognitive complexity will therefore typically be the output of processes of pragmatic enrichment and, consequently, over time endpoints of semantic change, whereas adverbial relations with a relatively low degree of cognitive complexity will recurrently be found to be the input or starting-point of such processes. Figure 3 may serve as a first approach to an attempt at specifying the different degrees of cognitive complexity inherent in adverbial relations. In the figure *informativeness* relates to the amount of contextual and world knowledge which is necessary for identifying a given adverbial relation.

most informative	Concession	
(strongest)	Contrast	
	Condition	
	Instrument	Purpose
	Cause	Result
	Anteriority	Posteriority
	Manner	
	Exemplification	
	Specification	
	Simultaneity	
least informative	Accompanying Circumstance	
(weakest)	Addition	

Figure 3. *A gradient of informativeness for adverbial relations*

The gradient in Figure 3 was suggested in Kortmann (1991: 118–132). It was shown to be relevant when trying to illuminate factors entering into the interpretation of (present-participial) adverbial participles in English and to account for interpretative differences between different types of such constructions, as in (7a–c):

(7) a. *Catching sight of her*, he slowly raised his right hand. (free adjunct)

b. The Dean turned and went out, *his gown billowing darkly behind him*. (absolute)

c. *With John driving*, we won't have a lot of fun. (augmented absolute)

For the most part, the adverbial relations above the dividing line of the gradient in Figure 3 involve a relationship of temporal succession between the two propositions and/or require some additional lexical marking (for instance, an adverbial subordinator or adverb). Underlying those relations below the dividing line, on the other hand, is a temporal relation of simultaneity ('when', 'while') between the two propositions, i.e. the default situation for a present-participial construction. Not surprisingly, in the vast majority of cases the relevant adverbial participles were not additionally marked for a certain relation with the help of a connective. This gradient proves useful for illuminating (a) the internal structure of recurrent search domains for the interpretation of individual adverbial participles and (b) the lines along which the language user will eventually arrive at a decision and settle on a given member of this search domain.[5] In addition, the distinction between 'less informative' and 'more informative' adverbial relations makes it possible to identify a general principle behind the interpretative differences that were found to hold between free adjuncts, absolutes and augmented absolutes as in (7a-c) respectively. This is a principle of iconicity, more exactly of iconic motivation. The analysis of almost 1,700 of these constructions yielded the result that a much higher proportion of free adjuncts (55%) receives a 'more informative' interpretation compared with augmented absolutes (40%) and especially with (unaugmented) absolutes (25%). In other words, the tightest semantic linkage, i.e. the semantic linkage requiring a great amount of contextual and world knowledge, exists for that construction with the highest degree of syntactic linkage (free adjuncts: shared subject, syndetic link possible) and the loosest link for that construction with the lowest degree of syntactic linkage ((unaugmented) absolutes: independent subject, no syndetic link). This confirms an iconicity principle as it has independently been formulated for the domain of adverbial relations and adverbial clauses, namely that "... the strongest semantic relations will be expressed in the most tightly linked syntactic configurations found in the language, the weaker relations in the less tightly linked constructions" (Foley and van Valin 1984: 271), or that "the more two *events/states* are integrated semantically or pragmatically, the more will the *clauses* that code them be integrated grammatically" (Givón 1990: 826). This variety of the proximity principle (cf. Givón 1990: 970f.) is held to be confirmed in all languages which have same-subject and different-subject adverbial participles (cf. Kortmann 1995: 225f.).

What has been argued in this section so far is that it makes sense to distinguish between adverbial relations according to their degree of informativeness or cognitive complexity, and that cognitive complexity is a concept which allows us to identify an important iconic principle in the domain of adverbial subordination which is held to be universal. But what evidence is there to be drawn from an analysis of adverbial subordinators in support of different degrees of informativeness or cognitive complexity in adverbial relations? Of the various types of evidence that have been given in the literature, it may suffice to mention only the following two (cf. also Kortmann 1996: 154–157). The first of these is drawn from pragmatics and historical semantics, namely the potential for and direction of interpretative enrichment and semantic change of connectives. Across languages we can identify recurrent paths of change for adverbial subordinators, with certain adverbial relations again and again serving as source domains and other adverbial relations as typical target domains. The former tend to be adverbial relations with a low degree of cognitive complexity (e.g. Manner, Similarity, temporal relations) and the latter relations with a relatively high degree of cognitive complexity (e.g. Cause, Purpose, Condition, Contrast, Concession). The relevant pragmatic enrichments and semantic changes thus tend to be unidirectional, i.e. from cognitively less to cognitively more complex relations.[6] The overall picture which emerges with regard to the major networks of adverbial relations introduced in (1) is the one in Figure 4. Locative and modal relations serve exclusively as source domains, CCC relations as a target domain, and temporal relations serve both as a source domain (notably for CCC senses) and as a target domain (for connectives originally marking locative or modal relations).

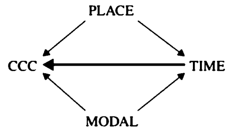

Figure 4. *The major networks of adverbial relations: directions of interpretative enrichment and semantic change*

The second piece of evidence consists in recurrently reported facts from first-language acquisition.[7] Adverbial subordinators tend to be acquired in a certain order: temporal subordinators first, next subordinators expressing Cause and Result followed by Purpose, later conditional subordinators (first for the marking of open conditions, much later for the marking of hypothetical and counterfactual conditions), and last contrastive and, in particular, concessive subordinators. In other words, recalling for example the gradient in Figure 3, we can say that the more cognitively complex a given adverbial relation is the later the relevant adverbial subordinators tend to be acquired by the child.

To these pieces of evidence we want to add only two observations drawn from the morphosemantic analysis of adverbial subordinators in our sample of European languages. The first of these relates to the form of adverbial subordinators, more exactly to their degree of morphological complexity. Operating on the assumption that "concepts which are always, or frequently, expressed by simple grammatical structures are cognitively primitive and those expressed by complex structures are cognitively complex" (Croft 1990: 173), we determined the proportions of monomorphemic subordinators for every single adverbial relation. Indeed, it turns out (cf. Table 2) that the candidates for a low degree of cognitive complexity (e.g. Simultaneity Overlap, Simultaneity Duration, Manner, Place) have the highest proportions of such morphologically simple subordinators or at least much higher proportions than the candidates for adverbial relations with a high degree of cognitive complexity (e.g. Concession, Exception, Negative Condition, Negative Purpose). Note also that of all cognitively central relations identified in (6), marked with an asterisk in Table 2, Concession is the relation with by far the lowest proportion of monomorphemic adverbial subordinators (24.4%).

Table 2. *Proportions of monomorphemic adverbial subordinators*

> 60%	Simultaneity Overlap* (63.9%), Manner (63.2%)
51%–60%	Purpose* (51.0%)
41%–50%	Condition* (48.1%), Simultaneity Duration* (46.2%), Comment/Accord (45.1%), Anteriority* (44.8%), Terminus ad quem* (44.8%), Result* (42.5%), Place* (42.2%), Contingency (41.9%), Similarity* (41.5%)
31%–40%	Cause* (38.8%), Immediate Anteriority* (36.8%), Posteriority (33.3%), Comparison (31.9%), Terminus a quo (31.4%)
21%–30%	Negative Concomitance (30.4%), Contrast (28.6%), Simultaneity Co-Extensiveness (27.9%), Instrument/Means (25.0%), Concession* (24.4%), Negative Condition (23.9%), Substitution (23.8%), Negative Purpose (22.2%), Exception/Restriction (22.1%)
0%–20%	Concessive Condition (20.5%), Preference (20.0%), Addition (17.7%), Degree/Extent (7.9%), Proportion (7.3%), Concomitance (0.0%).

But different degrees of cognitive complexity do not only seem to correlate with different degrees of morphological complexity of the relevant adverbial subordinators. They also correlate with the extent to which the relevant adverbial relation is expressed by monosemous or polysemous adverbial subordinators. In view of what has been pointed out above concerning the directedness of pragmatic enrichment and semantic change, cognitively complex adverbial relations can be expected to be marked by a greater number of monosemous adverbial subordinators than adverbial relations with a low(er) degree of cognitive complexity. This tendency is to a large extent confirmed (cf. Kortmann 1996: 165–175). Among the adverbial relations with the highest proportions of monosemous adverbial subordinators are Negative Purpose (75%), Comparison (65.4%) and Concession (56.6%), whereas Manner, Simultaneity Overlap and Simultaneity Duration are among those adverbial relations with the lowest proportions of monosemous subordinators (ranging between zero and 9.1%).

In finally relating our findings on cognitive complexity to what we said about cognitive centrality, we can state the following. It very much looks as if there is a high degree of overlap between (a) the core set of cognitively central relations and cognitively simple or primitive relations (cf. especially Simultaneity 'when'/'while', Anteriority 'after', Place 'where', and Similarity 'as, how') and (b) between the set of peripheral adverbial relations and cognitively complex relations (e.g. Negative Condition 'unless', Negative Purpose 'lest', Substitution 'instead of', Preference 'rather than', Comparison 'as if'). There is no total overlap, however; just consider relations like Cause and above all Concession which go against the correlation in (a). Concession is the clearest instance of an adverbial relation which requires us to keep the two parameters distinct after all. It clearly qualifies both as a cognitively complex and a cognitively central relation.

4. Concluding remarks

Grammar is less arbitrary than has traditionally been assumed. The iconicity hypothesis provides us with a powerful external motivation for language structure and is thus opposed both to traditional structuralism and linguistic determinism. Typology is ideally suited for testing the iconicity hypothesis and thus for formulating hypotheses concerning our cognitive structure. Let me therefore close with the following three statements concerning iconicity, typology and the study of human cognition:

First, typology and cross-linguistic research, in general, offer a great advantage over single-language studies in drawing on the iconicity hypothesis (and other semiotic principles) as external motivation(s) for language structure. Searching for and exploring large patterns across languages is necessary if we want to make reliable statements concerning iconic motivations of language structure. That way we are much less at the mercy of the idiosyncrasies of individual languages where virtually everything can be motivated functionally. Second, typology is not only suited for the testing of the iconicity hypothesis. The study of patterns and limits of language variation also allows us to develop (tentative) hypotheses concerning cognitive structure to be tested in cognitive psychology. But even if, third, one rejects such hypotheses, maybe for the principal reason that the iconicity hypothesis must be rejected in the first place, adopting iconicity as a working hypothesis is useful in typology anyway:

> .... because the effect of doing so is to study some aspect of language that would not otherwise be studied. If the study yields interesting cross-linguistic generalizations, then the working hypothesis will have been useful — at least to typology — even if it turns out to be ultimately an unsatisfactory explanation. (Croft 1990: 172)

In other words, as the contributions to this volume convincingly show, the iconicity hypothesis has given and continues to give us interesting ideas that otherwise would not be followed up by anyone interested in language, be they linguists or literary scholars.

Notes

1. The following languages were analyzed: five Celtic languages (Irish, Manx, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, Breton), seven Romance languages (French, Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese, Latin, Italian, Rumanian), seven Germanic languages (Danish, Icelandic, Dutch, English, German, Yiddish, Gothic), five Slavic languages (Polish, Russian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Serbian/Croatian), two Baltic languages (Latvian, Lithuanian), two Hellenic languages (Classical Greek, Modern Greek), Albanian, Armenian and two Indo-Iranian languages (Romani, Talysh). Besides these Indoeuropean languages, the following non-Indoeuropean languages were included in the sample: three Uralic languages (Finnish, Udmurt, Hungarian), six Altaic languages (Azerbaijani, Turkish, Karachay-Balkar, Tatar, Chuvash, Kalmyk), four Caucasian languages (Georgian, Abkhaz, Tsez, Lezgian), two Semitic languages (Maltese, Assyrian) and one isolate (Basque).

2. Note that for English this set receives confirmation if one considers the most frequently used adverbial subordinators in the LOB and the Brown corpus. Compare Johansson and Hofland (1989) for the LOB corpus, Francis and Kučera (1982) for the Brown corpus, and Kortmann (1996: 130–132).
3. For this count only 39 European languages were taken into consideration. Extinct languages (e.g. Latin and Classical Greek) as well as the so-called 'converb languages' (e.g. Turkic and North-Caucasian languages), which for the most part have adverbial subordinators bound to the verb stem, were excluded. Nevertheless it should be noted that for eight adverbial relations the majority of the eleven converb languages in the sample do after all possess a free adverbial subordinator, and that seven of these adverbial relations belong to the core identified in (6) and Table 1 (Condition, Cause, Concession, Purpose, Simultaneity Overlap, Anteriority, and Place).
4. To causal subordinators this observation applies only with a grain of salt. The major causals in Present-Day English (*because, since, as*) do not go back to Old English, at least not in their use as causal markers (*since, as*). Present-Day English *now (that)*, as in *Now (that) Mary has arrived, we can begin*, does go back to the Old English causal *nu þæt*, but does not belong to the group of high-frequency subordinators. *For*, on the other hand, is clearly used very frequently, but does not qualify as a subordinator in Present-Day English; however, *for þæm (þe, þæt)* may have had subordinator status in Old English (for opposing view on this point compare van Dam 1957 and Traugott 1992: 253f.). So under the rubric 'high-frequency connective dating back to Old English' one may include *for* here after all: it proves our point with regard to the correlation of high frequency, age and the cognitive centrality of Cause/Reason. For the details of the historical development of adverbial subordinators in English compare Kortmann (1996: 291–335).
5. The assumption underlying the notion of (limited) search domains is that the hearer/reader will choose only from a subset of adverbial relations when searching for the appropriate kind(s) of semantic linkage between a given adverbial participle and a matrix clause. Some of these subsets recur regularly (for example, search domains like Anteriority — Cause, Simultaneity — Contrast — Concession, or Accompanying Circumstance — Simultaneity — Manner). Their composition can be motivated, the most important factor being the basic temporal relation between two propositions (anteriority, posteriority, or simultaneity).
6. For strong cross-linguistic evidence compare Kortmann (1996: 175–211).
7. Compare, for example, the discussion in Bloom et al. 1980 and Reilly 1986.

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The Iconic Use of Syntax in British and American Fiction

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1. Introduction

Recent work on iconicity in language and literature has asserted its theoretical profile in a controversial debate with those philosophers and linguists who deny that there is a resemblance between language and reality and who postulate the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign. In the conflict between the arbitrarist model and the non-arbitrarist or 'iconicist' model (see, for instance, Haiman 1985: 1–3, Simone 1995a: vi–xi) the literary critic will rather find himself on the side of those who accept the concept of iconicity, because iconic forms of expression are so frequent, almost omnipresent, in aesthetic or poetic language that their denial would be tantamount to a denial of the nature of the verbal artifact. E.L. Epstein even goes so far as to regard "formal mimesis as part of a criterion of value for literature" (Epstein 1975: 41). And Max Nänny rightly stresses the fact that "it is in the nature of literature to exploit all linguistic and, hence, also all iconic possibilities for aesthetic purposes", although he also warns us with equal justification that "iconic functions of textual elements [...] are no more than latent possibilities" and "will only appear if the meaning of the textual passage is compatible with them" (Nänny 1986: 199). It is certainly true that the analysis of iconic elements in literature must proceed with the utmost care and discrimination, but there is no doubt that iconicity belongs to the aesthetic potential of the verbal artifact, since the interdependence of form and meaning is an essential characteristic of the aesthetic use of language.

Now if iconicity is always a latent possibility of aesthetic or poetic language and, further, if we take it for granted that aesthetic or poetic language exploits, develops and heightens possibilities already inherent in ordinary, non-poetic discourse, the massive presence of iconic forms of expression in literature can be regarded as lending support to the theory of the iconic potential of language in general. Of course, it is linguistics that has increasingly drawn attention to the phenomenon of iconicity in the last two decades, and the recent increase of work on iconicity in literature is strongly indebted to new trends in linguistics. One could even say that studies on iconicity in literature would not have been possible without the new interest this topic has received from linguists. But linguists should, in turn, take notice of what literary critics find out about iconicity in poetic or fictional texts, because these texts frequently reveal iconic forms of expression in a more conspicuous or more spectacular way than natural language does. The study of iconicity provides an ideal field of research for linguists and literary critics alike and may thus help to bridge the gulf between the two disciplines which has steadily widened in the course of the twentieth century.

The iconic use of syntax in fiction is still a rather unexplored subject and a highly problematic one. The following pages will be an attempt to open up a new field of research. The syntactic forms and structures to be examined will always be considered within their respective aesthetic and semantic contexts. A systematic and comprehensive treatment of the subject cannot be achieved within the confines of a short paper. I will start with small-scale instances of syntactic iconicity in the specific use of ellipsis and parataxis and then pass on to larger structures such as syntactic periods.

2. The iconic function of ellipsis: some examples

My first example is taken from Raymond Chandler's *The Little Sister*. The novel's protagonist has been beaten up and is now being locked in:

> I collapsed on the floor. The door opened. A key rattled. The door closed. The key turned. *Silence*. (Chandler 1949: 49. Italics mine in this and the following quotations.)

This sequence of objectless clauses registers the protagonist's sense impressions. With its reduction to a one-word noun phrase the last clause syntactically reinforces the meaning of the utterance. The syntactic reductiveness of the clause corresponds to its meaning. The form of the clause — its predicatelessness —

and the idea expressed — sudden silence — accord one with the other. The fact itself cannot be immediately presented, since language is the medium of literature. But in the radical shortening of the utterance the illusion is created that the 'fact' — silence or the perception of silence — is present. This "isomorphic" — or, rather, iconic — relation between syntax and its "mental designatum" (Givón 1995: 47)[1] is still more obvious in similar sequences of clauses whose last elements are constituted by a negative noun phrase:

> The steps moved off. The faint distant creak of the stairs. *Then nothing*. [...] I looked down to see Hicks going into the manager's apartment. The door closed behind him. I waited for the sound of voices. *No voices* (Chandler 1949: 32).

The truncation of the syntactic clause is in each of these cases homologous with the idea of the disappearance or non-existence of sound that is expressed. Iconicity is here to be found in the attempt to present the perception of "nothing" or 'absence of action' with a great amount of immediacy, the impression of which is effected by extreme syntactic shortening. Raymond Chandler, who is a very syntax-conscious writer, usually makes iconic ellipsis part of longer mimetic structures. Here is an example from *The Big Sleep*, a part of a description of the protagonist's observation from his car of a woman's arrival at a house which he is watching:

> She went in through the box maze. *A bell rang faintly, light through the rain, a closing door, silence* (Chandler 1939: 37).

The clause and the following noun phrases, which are, in this instance, not separated by full stops, become, step by step, syntactically more truncated, with the maximum reduction reached in the final word "silence". The rhetorical law of the growing length of the members of a climactic sequence is here inverted. The syntax provides an analogue to a process in which sensory impressions are reduced. This is a good example of syntactic mimesis of action or, rather, of the perception of an action from the perspective of a fictional character.

A different iconic function is accorded to ellipsis at the beginning of Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*. In the first sentences of this novel ellipsis emerges in the form of noun phrases in what has been called a telegram style which reduces the text's message to essential information (Plett 1975: 230):

> London. Michaelmas term lately over, and the Lord Chancellor sitting in Lincoln's Inn Hall. Implacable November weather (Dickens 1971: 49).

Whether brevity is really the ruling principle of this passage is, however, doubtful, if we consider that Dickens is a writer who is never afraid of redundancy and long-windedness. The special effect of the sentences under discussion may, rather, be derived from the desire to represent the city as a world of stasis, devoid of real action. This interpretation is supported by the syntactic features of a passage which follows a little later in the text and which is to be the object of our analysis:

> Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping, and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city. Fog on the Essex Marshes, fog on the Kentish heights. Fog creeping into the cabooses of collier-brigs; fog lying out on the yards, and hovering in the rigging of great ships; fog drooping on the gunwales of barges and small boats. Fog in the eyes and throats of ancient Greenwich pensioners, wheezing by the firesides of their wards; fog in the stem and bowl of the afternoon pipe of the wrathful skipper, down in his close cabin; fog cruelly pinching the toes and fingers of his shivering little 'prentice boy on deck (Dickens 1971: 49).

The iconic force of this passage results from the combination of the syntactic device of ellipsis with the rhetorical figure of repetition. The elliptic style of the novel's beginning is here continued in the description of the fog of London and the surrounding areas in ten extended noun phrases, whose subject is in all instances the word "fog". To this word are linked adverbs and adverbial phrases ("everywhere", "up the river", "down the river" etc.), to which, in turn, adverbial clauses are subordinated ("where it flows ...", "where it rolls ..."). In the course of the description, participle clauses are joined to the noun "fog" instead of adverbial phrases and clauses ("creeping into the cabooses ...", "lying out on the yards ...", "drooping on the gunwales ..."). The pervasive occurrence of the word "fog" as the subject of elliptic (predicate-less) clauses and the extension of the noun phrases by adverbial clauses and participle clauses which predominantly refer to the slow motion and spreading of the fog, serve to iconically represent the fog which has the whole city and its vicinity in its grip. It is important to note that the overall character of the description is static, which is a consequence of the deletion of the predicate in the main clause. The kinetic component — the slow, but irresistible motion of the fog — is shifted to clauses in a subordinate position. The repetitive and sprawling and spreading syntactic structure of the passage mirrors the powerful and all-encompassing and all-penetrating presence of the fog. The iconic force of the language and particularly the syntax of the passage is remarkable indeed. Later in the chapter a semantic dimension is revealed which transcends simple mimesis, for the fog is not only a real presence in Dickens' fictional city, it has a symbolic meaning too.

The examples adduced show different iconic functions of elliptic syntax: In the extracts from Chandler the reduction of clauses to noun phrases indicates the disappearance of the perceived object or the idea of negation, and in the passage from the beginning of *Bleak House* the elliptic clauses centred round the noun "fog" are in their elaborate repetitive and expansive structure a syntactic analogue to the lack of dynamic motion and the omnipresence of the fog. In the examples from Chandler, syntactic iconicity results from the emphasis of the narrative representation on an isolated elliptic main clause, while the iconic force of the Dickens passage is due to the repetition and extension of an elliptic main clause within a large-scale pattern.

3. The iconicity of paratactic syntax I: the expression of emotion

Linguists (e.g. Haiman 1985: 4) have frequently referred to Julius Caesar's famous pronouncement "veni, vidi, vici" as exemplifying the fact that in a narrative the order of clauses usually reflects the order of the events described. This may seem self-evident because an inversion of the order of Caesar's clauses — for instance a sequencing like "vici, vidi, veni" — would be too obviously absurd, yet the natural principle of narrative sequence, "whereby events are described in the order of their occurrence" (Haiman 1980: 533), remains an important aspect of the iconicity of syntax. This is why Raffaele Simone suggests that coordination is "the most natural syntactic resource for expressing diagrammatic structures" (Simone 1995b: 166).

A paratactic sequence of syntactic clauses may, in narrative, correspond to the sequence of events described, as is the case in the last sentence of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms:*

> After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain (Hemingway 1960: 256).

This applies equally to syndetic parataxis, as in the last-quoted sentence, and to asyndetic parataxis, i.e. coordination of clauses without the use of the connective "and". However it is also possible for coordination, particularly the coordination of unconnected clauses, to express not the linearity of time and sequence, but the idea of simultaneity,[2] for instance in the following quotation from Schiller's "Glocke":

> Alles rennet, rettet, flüchtet [...] ('All run, escape, flee')
> (Friedrich Schiller, "Das Lied von der Glocke")

or in Sir Walter Scott's description of a crowd in commotion:

> Women shrieked, cattle bellowed, dogs howled, men ran to and fro ...
> (Scott 1893: 185).

Here, asyndetic coordination serves to mimetically present a tumult. The kinetic force of the examples from Schiller and Scott derives from the fact that the focus of the clauses is on the predicates which contain verbs of action. The same holds true for the objectless clauses in the description of King Herod's rage in one of the medieval mystery plays:

> Hath those fawls traytours done me this deed?
> *I stampe! I stare! I loke all abowtt!*
> Myght I them take, I schuld them bren at a glede!
> *I rent! I rawe! and now I run wode.*
> (Happé, ed. 1979: 373–374, ll. 778–781)

The asyndeton, the sequence of unconnected clauses with mostly dynamic predicates is here used for the mimetic representation of Herod's wrath. An extreme emotional state is represented in a description of vehement, jerky movements of the body, which, in turn, are mirrored in an abrupt sequence of unconnected clauses. The asyndeton is excellently suited for the representation of emotions and emotional processes. Thus in James Macpherson's *Ossian* a woman's fear for the life of her lover is presented entirely in terms of her physical reactions:

> Again the shield resounds! She rushed. She stopped. Her voice half rose. It failed. ... (Macpherson 1971, II: 205).

In its jerkiness the asyndetic syntax corresponds to the inner agitation of the woman. Elsewhere I have used the term "the emotional asyndeton" for such syntactic patterns (Müller 1992). The emotional asyndeton tends to emerge in the literature of feeling, as we have seen in the passage from Macpherson's *Ossian*. It is also to be found conspicuously in Richardson's novels. In the interesting scene in which Pamela, the titular heroine of Richardson's first novel (1740–1741), suddenly finds her master's hand in her bosom, her reaction is rendered in a triad of coordinated clauses which mirror her being overwhelmed by the shock she has received:

> I sighed, screamed and fainted away (Richardson 1969: I, 50).

There is an iconic relation here between the protagonist's physical reaction to her shock and the syntactic structure — the triad of coordinated predicates.

The emotional asyndeton tends to occur in Richardson in the representation of extreme emotional states. The syntax regularly falls apart as Pamela, locked in her room, is watching from her window how Mr B. arrives, fearing that he will make yet another attempt to rape her:

> And no young ladies! — So that I fancy — But hold! I hear their coach, I believe. I'll step to the window. I won't go down to them, I am resolved.
>
> Good Sirs! Good Sirs! What will become of me? Here is my master come in his fine chariot? Indeed he is! — What shall I do? Where shall I hide myself? — O! what shall I do? Pray for me! But O! you will not see this! — Now, good God of Heaven, preserve me! if it is thy blessed will! (Richardson 1969: I, 158–159).

This is an instance of Richardson's characteristic "writing to the moment", in which the gap between a character's experience and his or her letter-writing is reduced to the point of non-existence. Pamela's utterances are reduced to questions, exclamations, interjections, and unconnected sentences and fragments of sentences. The vehemence and disconnectedness of her clauses is indicated by punctuation, the high frequency of exclamation marks and dashes. In the last sentence of the quoted passage an exclamation mark is placed even at the end of a main clause and before an if-clause, where we would in normal syntax expect a comma. The dissociative syntax is here, together with the text's massive equipment with punctuation marks, an iconic analogue of the tumult and disruption in the protagonist's internal life.

Richardson's second novel, *Clarissa* (1747–1749), is richer and subtler in its use of asyndetic syntax as a mirror of emotional states. There are, for instance, short, isolated one-clause sentences, forming one paragraph, in which an emotional reaction is defined, an extreme form of disconnectedness. And there are dyadic and triadic groups of such sentences which name symptoms or separate stages in an emotional crisis. Here are examples of the respective types:

> I wept. (Richardson 1978: I, 78)
> I trembled: I was ready to sink. (I, 390)
> I sighed. I wept. I was silent. (I, 82)

There is no time for a more detailed analysis of Clarissa's emotional syntax. But I will at least have a look at a longer passage from one of Lovelace's letters in which he addresses Clarissa "in broken sentences, and confusion". This is not really an example of asyndetic parataxis, but rather a mixture of (apparent) ellipsis and repetition with asyndetic coordination:

> What — what-a — what has been done — I, I, I — cannot but say — must own — must confess — hem — hem — is not right — is not what should have been — but-a — but — but — I am truly — truly — sorry for it — upon my soul I am — and — and — will do all — do everything — do what — whatever is encumbent upon me — all that you — that you — that you shall require, to make you amends! (III, 221).

At first sight this looks like a syntactic chaos, a totally disorganized, incoherent, almost inarticulate utterance, but on closer inspection this wildly emotional passage turns out to be a complete syntactic period whose basic structure is quite evident:

> What has been done I cannot but say is not right, but I am truly sorry for it and will do all that you shall require to make you amends.

Now the sentence which Lovelace actually articulates derives its exclamatory and broken character — which is signalled by the abundance of dashes — from the repetition of individual words, which gives it a stammering asyndetic character ("What — what-a — what"/"I, I, I" etc.) and from the use of parentheses consisting of asyndetic word groups ("cannot but say — must own — must confess" etc.). The emotional asyndeton is thus interpolated in a perfectly structured complex sentence. However emotional and fragmented the sentence may look, the speaker keeps firm rational control over it. Lovelace, the artful manipulator of language is not, as it may seem, entirely carried away by his feelings at this moment, but carefully expressing them in order to achieve a desired effect. The contrast between the regular structure of a syntactic period and the strongly emotional speech forms mirrors, in a breathtaking mastery of iconic syntax, the mind of Lovelace, a character whose expression of feelings is never entirely devoid of an element of pretence.

4. The iconicity of paratactic syntax II: processes of perception, stimulus and response

The previous section defined it as one of the functions of asyndetic parataxis to present a syntactic analogue to inner states and processes. The focus may in such cases be more strongly on immediate emotional reactions, as in Clarissa's triad "I sighed. I wept. I was silent", or on presentation of physical reactions as in the following quotation from Chandler's *Farewell, My Lovely*: "He stopped. His eyes rolled. His head jerked" (Chandler 1940: 16). The arrangement of the clauses corresponds in such examples to the succession of the emotional or physical reactions, the disconnectedness of the syntax mirroring the abruptness and intensity of the processes described. But there are other and more complex instances of iconicity to be noticed in parataxis to which I will now turn.

An example of paratactic syntax miming, in its sequentiality, not a succession of events but a process of perception and growing awareness is one of the climactic passages in Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, which refers to Mrs Verloc, who has murdered her husband and now realizes the consequences of her action:

> She saw there an object. The object was the gallows. Mrs Verloc was afraid of the gallows (Conrad 1971: 216).

It is, as Leech and Short (1981: 219–220) have shown, of central importance to the stylistic effect of this passage that it consists of separate, disconnected sentences, which mirror a thought process going on in Mrs Verloc. In clearly marked steps she passes from the perception of an object to the identification of the object and, then, to the realization of the emotional impact of the object (fear of the gallows). It is the syntax which contributes essentially to the linguistic representation of a specific thought process of a specific literary character. That this kind of step-by-step perception and cognition is characteristic of Mrs Verloc's mind, that it is, in fact, an aspect of her "mind style", can be illustrated by another example: "Mrs Verloc gazed at the whitewashed wall. A blank wall — perfectly blank. A blankness to run at and dash your head against" (Conrad 1971: 198).

I will now come to a special semantic relation between coordinated clauses which is of greater iconic force. Chandler's novel *The High Window* (1949: 155) has a scene charged with aggressive feelings in which occurs the following pair of sentences: "I stood up. Tony stood up". One could define the relation between these two laconic sentences as one of cause and effect. But it would be more precise to speak of stimulus and response. One reaction provokes another reaction without any thought process being involved, and it is the very disconnectedness of the clauses, the lack of a logical connection, which characterizes the automatic sequence of reaction and counter reaction. Elsewhere I have called that kind of narration which concentrates exclusively or at least predominantly on the physical aspect of human reactions as behaviouristic and labelled Hammett's, Chandler's, and, to some extent, Hemingway's prose narratives as behaviouristic fiction (Müller 1981). In the following example of a homology of syntax and narrative progress from Hammett's story "Fly Paper", the unconnectedness of the paratactic-asyndetic syntax is reinforced by another iconic aspect, the reduction of the paragraphs to one sentence. The typography indicates that the syntactic unit is a unit of action:

> 'Hell with that,' he said and charged.
> I shot his right knee.
> He lurched toward me.
> I shot his left knee.
> He tumbled down.
> 'You would have it,' I complained (Hammett 1979: 80).

The law ruling the sequence of actions described in this passage is the behaviouristic pattern of stimulus and response. The lack of logical relations between the clauses syntactically corresponds to the mechanism of action and reaction or stimulus and response, which is not attended by thought-processes. To say it once more, the unconnectedness of the clauses expresses the automatism in the chain of reactions presented. The omission of connecting syntactic devices corresponds to the missing of an explicit causal connection between the units of action.

5. The homology of syntax and narration

A completely different kind of syntactic iconicity will now be considered. The following sequence of asyndetic main clauses foregrounds subject-object relations which, in turn, reflect semantic relations:

> Babe liked Sue. Vassos liked Sue. Sue liked Babe. Vassos didn't like that (Hammett 1979: 56).

A neater example of syntactic iconicity seems hardly imaginable. The relations between three people are here expressed in unconnected one-clause sentences which are built alike. They have the same predicate, but the constellation of subjects and objects changes significantly. In the first two sentences there are two different subjects (agents) related to the same object (patient). In the third sentence this object takes the role of the subject, and one of the subjects of the first sentences appears in the role of the object. In the fourth sentence the tension between the characters, which manifests itself linguistically in terms of syntactic relations, rises so as to lead to a point of violent action, which is described in the subsequent sentences which are not quoted here. A fatal triangular relationship is here expressed in unsurpassable condensation, in a syntax reduced to its very essence. The grammatical relations are so presented as to form a veritable mirror-image of the semantic relations, i.e. the attitudes towards one another of the people referred to. The connection between syntax and narration is so close here that it is not an exaggeration to say that narration *is* syntax and vice versa.

Our analysis has so far confirmed, from a literary point-of-view, Raffaele Simone's opinion that coordination is the most natural syntactic resource for creating iconicity. But as far as literary discourse is concerned, the iconic potential of syntactic subordination is at least as great as that of coordination. Let us have a look at a fighting scene from *Tom Jones* which Henry Fielding describes in one long sentence:

> My landlord, whose hands were empty, fell to with his fist, and the good wife, uplifting her broom and aiming at the head of Jones, had probably put an immediate end to the fray, and to Jones likewise, had not the descent of this broom been prevented — not by the miraculous intervention of any heathen deity, but by a very natural though fortunate accident, viz., by the arrival of Partridge; who entered the house at that instant (for fear had caused him to run every step from the hill), and who, seeing the danger which threatened his master or companion (which you chuse to call him), prevented so sad a catastrophe, by catching hold of the landlady's arm, as it was brandished aloft in the air (Fielding 1893: IV.263–264).

The iconicity to be found here is more difficult to recognize and describe than in the previous examples. It can be characterized as an analogical relation between the structure of the syntax and the whole work's form and meaning. There is, of course, no room for a complete syntactic analysis of this passage. We will concentrate on those of its features which are of iconic significance. The narrative unit here is not, as in the above-quoted examples, the separate main clause but a complex and widely ramified syntactic period. The constellation of main clauses and subclauses of various kinds and degrees corresponds to the narrator's distinction between matters of primary and matters of secondary or tertiary importance. Iconicity is here to be found in a basic form in the correspondence of the syntactic and semantic levels. The narrator's presence manifests itself in an extremely orderly organisation of the sentence, a carefully thought-out syntactic structure which corresponds to a complex of thoughts and ideas in which nothing is left unconnected and unexplained. The narratorial element is particularly evident in the clauses included in brackets which look like parentheses but are syntactically entirely integrated into the period. It is their function to express authorial comment and to engage the reader's participation.

The expansion of the sentence occasioned by the insertion of a conditional structure deserves special attention. In this part of the sentence, the narrator envisages the possibility that the fight and the hero would have been put an end to ("the good wife [...] had probably put an immediate end to the fray, and to Jones likewise"), if his friend Partridge had not appeared on the scene. The end of the conditional structure is emphasized by the rhetorical figure of *correctio* (non x, sed y): "not by the miraculous intervention of any heathen deity, but by a very natural though fortunate accident, viz., by the arrival of Partridge". The *correctio* has an argumentative function, for, with it, Fielding rejects the miraculous as a cause of the events, a topic with which he deals elsewhere in the novel at greater length. Within a sentence which has, all in all, the character of narrative report, he includes statements reinforcing his empiricist position that in the world of experience there may be fortunate events, but that these are not the result of supernatural agency. The expansion of the conditional structure thus has a meta-narrative function. It can be regarded as a minimal digression dealing with the problem of the miraculous, which played a great role in the conflict between the irrational concept of reality held by the romances and the rational concept of reality which was propagated in the novel as a realistic literary genre.

Fielding's presentation of a fight differs fundamentally from a mere report of physical action. It is enriched by authorial comments and appeals to the audience's imagination, and it is in the introduction of subclauses and expanded parts of the sentence that these aesthetic intentions are realized linguistically. Thus at the level of the syntactic period the same structural principle can be identified which determines the structure of the whole novel, which is made up of esssayistic and reportorial components. Hence, a homology between syntax and narration is to be found here in a way completely different from the paratactic-asyndetic passages analyzed above. Such a periodic sentence can be regarded as a miniature mirror image of the structure of the whole work. Without being concerned in any way with iconicity Dorothy van Ghent intuitively grasped the iconic character of Fielding's syntax, when she said that "many of Fielding's sentences are little complex 'plots' in themselves" (1953: 80).

In order to confirm my postulate that iconicity may in fiction connect syntax and the whole form of the narrative text, let me adduce one last example, a passage from Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White*. It illustrates that the novel of suspense may be written in a syntax of suspense. The passage chosen describes one of the most prominent events of the novel, Walter Hartright's midnight encounter with the mysterious 'woman in white':

> I had now arrived at that particular point of my walk where four roads met — the road to Hampstead, along which I had returned, the road to Finchley, the road to West End, and the road back to London. I had mechanically turned in this latter direction, and was strolling along the lonely high-road — idly wondering, I remember, what the Cumberland young ladies would look like — when, in one moment, every drop of blood in my body was brought to a stop by the touch of a hand laid lightly and suddenly on my shoulder from behind me.
>
> I turned on the instant, with my fingers tightening round the handle of my stick.
>
> There, in the middle of the broad, bright high-road — there, as if it had that moment sprung out of the earth or dropped from the heaven — stood the figure of a solitary Woman, dressed from head to foot in white garments, her face bent in grave inquiry on mine, her hand pointing to the dark cloud over London, as I faced her (Collins 1974: 47).

The passage is too long for a detailed analysis (cf. Müller 1993: 90–92). So just the most important iconic aspects will be examined. First of all, it is to be noticed that there is a significant interplay of syntax and tense. The first sentence of the passage — "I had now arrived" — is written in the pluperfect tense which, together with the use of the adverb "now", already creates a certain amount of suspense. The past perfect in a context written in the past tense makes the reader wait for a temporal clause in which he gets the most important information of the sentence. This kind of sentence structure is similar to the Latin *cum inversivum*-construction which inverts the relation between the main clause and a temporal subclause. Now Collins uses a whole artillery of suspense-creating syntactic devices in connection with this construction. He joins two relative clauses to the pluperfect main clause which contain a lot of circumstantial matter, and he does, strikingly, not end the first sentence with the temporal clause the reader is waiting for. The next sentence begins with another pluperfect clause — "I had mechanically turned" — followed by a further suspense-heightening clause written in the past continuous tense — "and was strolling" — which is, in turn, succeeded by an extended parenthesis ("idly wondering, I remember ..."). It is only then that the grammatically required temporal clause is reached which resolves the syntactic and semantic suspense of the construction. But even then Collins uses protracting syntactic devices, an adverbial phrase and a passive construction which shifts the agent of the action to a prepositional phrase: "when, in one moment, every drop of blood in my body was brought to a stop by the touch of a hand ...". But, owing to Collins' point-of-view technique, even now the entire event is not yet brought into focus. The following one-sentence paragraph describes the protagonist's physical reaction to the event, before the whole situation is depicted in the last of the quoted sentences, yet again not without the use of suspense-increasing syntactic devices (inversion of the word order, the use of adverbial elements, parenthesis): "There [...] stood the figure of a solitary Woman ...".

This is indeed a supreme example of the art of creating suspense. The syntax with its many retarding, i.e. suspense-heightening devices, makes the passage examined a suspense plot in miniature, an analogue to the novel's overall structure with its step-by-step revelation of the central mystery. This text shows once again that narrative texts have a tendency to exploit the iconic potential of syntax to a great extent.

Notes

1. Givón uses the term "isomorphic" in a rather general way, so that it is actually synonymous with 'iconic', i.e. it refers to a general similarity between form and meaning. 'Isomorphism' is, however, to be used in a narrower sense, i.e. when there is a strict "one form-one meaning relation", with each morpheme in a sequence corresponding to one and only one meaning (Ramat 1995: 122).

2. The asyndetic sequence "veni, vidi, vici" quoted above also seems to convey the idea of simultaneity; the structure suggests that Caesar managed to do all this almost unnaturally fast.

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Linguistic Expression of Perceptual Relationships

Iconicity as a Principle of Text Organization (A Case Study)

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1. Introduction: defining iconicity

Traditionally, the term 'iconicity' has been used in linguistics in opposition to 'arbitrariness', as it was postulated by de Saussure: signs that were in some 'geometrical' sense similar to the entities they represented or referred to, were called 'iconic' (cf. Hockett 1958). The term itself, taken from the writings of Peirce, was first applied to what has since been termed 'primary iconicity', i.e. direct isomorphism of form and content, dependent on linguistic substance and most typically manifested as onomatopoeia. Structural linguists have repeatedly pointed to yet another type of isomorphism where similarity as the constitutive principle of iconic structures was defined as parallellism between syntax and semantics: it was observed that the order of elements within syntactic structures reflects the order of perception (physical experience) or conceptualization (knowledge) (cf e.g. Jakobson 1968). In more recent work on iconicity in language, notably that by John Haiman (1980, 1985), iconicity in language is seen as resulting from the interplay of two factors: isomorphism and motivation.

Motivation, understood as a non-arbitrary relation between form and content, underlies the type of iconicity that has been discussed under the heading of Action Sequence, or — after Enkvist (1989, 1990) — as Experiential Iconicity. Making explicit reference to the classical notion of *ordo naturalis*, Enkvist claims that experiential iconicity underlies text strategy in producing texts in which the sequence of elements corresponds to one of the three guiding principles of sequencing. Thus, iconic texts can be 'action oriented' (prototype: a cookery book), 'location oriented' (prototype: a guidebook) or 'time oriented' (prototype: a chronicle) (Enkvist 1989). Although the three prototypical strategies necessarily involve the temporal aspect (i.e. temporal sequencing of elements), they are defined relative to the predominant type of sequencing. In works written by linguists, experiential iconicity has been most frequently associated with the level of syntax, and especially with the phenomenon of time and/or place adverbial fronting. In literary studies, it has surfaced as the principle of chronological sequencing, which "is iconic in the sense that it imitates the purported sequence of events in the fictional world" (Leech and Short 1981: 236).

As defined by Enkvist and others, experiential iconicity involves a more or less direct relation between linguistic expression and perceptual relationships. But the relation between form and meaning can also be motivated by the order of gaining (or conveying) knowledge of things. In this connection, both linguists and students of literature talk about juxtaposition, or the proximity principle, which states that the distance of words in a text reflects conceptual closeness of constitutive elements of the world of fiction (cf. e.g. Leech and Short 1981, Section 7.7.2.), or "the distance between concepts" (cf. e.g. Haiman 1983).

The motivated interrelation between form and content has become one of the central issues in modern semantics, notably within the framework of the cognitive theory of language. The basic cognitive assumption that linguistic structures are the reflection of the world not as it is, but as it is perceived by a cognizant human being, underlies a definition of iconicity as the **conceived** similarity between conceptual structure and linguistic form. The relation between reality, cognition and language conditions the process of concept formation, where the consecutive stages of **perception** (reality), **conceptualization** (cognition) and **symbolization** (language) represent consecutive phases of abstraction (Nowakowska-Kempna 1995: 109). Forms are paired with concepts, and the motivation for this process might be some kind of similarity. Thus, iconic construals do not relate to perceptual processes per se, but directly reflect conceptual structures.

Such a view, basically anthropocentric, means bringing back into the picture Peirce's 'interpretant', or, to use a more popular term, the context, which accounts for its understandability (cf. Givón 1988). In this view, Peirce's 'icon' becomes a 'symbol'. The distinction between the two has never seemed lucid to Peirce's interpreters (cf. e.g. Lyons 1977, Section 4.2); however, the assumption that the underlying principle of the meaning-form similarity is invariably of a 'natural' kind seems untenable to most. The actual recognition of the similarity between linguistic structure and the underlying concept often requires from a language user an appeal to some interpretational convention. As such conventions are clearly culture- and language-specific, iconicity can no longer be considered 'natural' or 'universal', and 'icon' and 'symbol' become two opposite poles of a single continuum (Givón 1988: 99).

Traditionally, it has been generally assumed that iconic relations are one-way processes: from expression to concept. However, if we agree that the ability to recognize a given similarity results fom the language user's knowledge of a given culture and language, then we can also reasonably assume that the process may be reversed: via the (linguistic) convention, the user of language might associate (by recognizing relevant similarities) certain expressions with certain concepts, and in consequence arrive at a certain view, or interpretation, of reality. In other words, we might wish, after all, to consider discussing iconicity in relation to the much-feared "tangle of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis" (Droste and Fought 1989: 5). It is one of the purposes of this paper to argue that, if considered within the changed context of contemporary literary and linguistic studies, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis need no longer play the bogey.

It will also be argued that a gap that has for long been separating linguistics from literary studies may be bridged through the application to texts — also those that are *par excellence* literary — of the instruments that have been developed by linguists (notably of the cognitivist persuasion) with reference to linguistic or textual units.

2. The text: structure and function

The type of analysis presented in this paper as a case study of iconicity is in fact a fairly common exercise in applied linguistics known as *explication du texte*. It involves a dilemma only too well-known to text linguists: discussing a text in its entirety (which is the only methodologically sound procedure) carries the risk of making the discussion so long as to reduce the audience to tears of boredom. On the other hand, cutting the illustrative material to reasonable proportions necessarily involves tampering with the text, which in turn must mean distortion. The present analysis avoids this particular difficulty: the text under discussion is short enough to be dealt with on a couple of pages.

However, the choice was also motivated by some more significant factors.

Entitled "Pfalz", the text is one of the 300 'capsules' that provide 'verbal illustrations' to a massive history of Europe, published recently by a prominent Oxford historian (Davies 1996). Dispersed throughout the 1200 pages of the body of the main text, the capsules deal with selected details taken from European history, each of the apparent minutiae leading to a more general reflection, and thus contributing to the main flow of the narration. It might seem that when writing a history book, a historian would adhere to the principle succinctly formulated by one of the characters from *Alice in Wonderland*: "Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves". In other words, he would produce a sample of what is known as expository prose. Yet Davies's ostensibly non-literary passage is clearly an instance of that "more conscious use of language" which theorists of literature take to be the defining feature of "literary texts" (cf Fischer and Nänny, this volume).

It will be claimed that the author of "Pfalz" exploits the convention of experiential iconicity as a text strategy in order to impose upon the reader a particular interpretation of a particular historical process. I do not feel competent to discuss either the extent or the nature of the author's 'consciousness' of the entire process, but it seems quite obvious that the text is an instance of a 'world creation'. As a (cognitive) linguist, I consider it more appropriate to look at the actual linguistic devices — which might just as well be called 'grammar' — that account for the final effect.

It can be easily seen that the text (given in the Appendix) is a sequential combination of two iconic text-type prototypes as defined by Enkvist: a guidebook (lines 1–41) and a chronicle (lines 42–64). A potentially significant difference lies in the fact that while the former of these two genres usually **accompanies** actual visual perception, the first three paragraphs of Davies's text are meant to **replace** it. However, in view of the fact that "Pfalz" creates its own world rather than merely depicting the one already in existence, the presence of a typical guidebook context is immaterial.

Structurally, the texts consists of three parts. The introductory paragraphs (lines 1–10) constitute a 'zoom', characteristic of tourist guidebooks: from a long-distance shot of the ancient town of Aquisgranium, through *Kaiserpfalz* and Charlemagne's chapel, to a close-up of its famous octagon. In cognitive linguistics this particular type of structuring, although naturally limited to the syntax of an individual complex sentence, is known as a "nested locative" (cf. e.g. Langacker 1988: 71–3) and often quoted as an example of an iconic ordering of information. Cognitively, consecutive narrowing of a 'search domain' corresponds to the way in which we locate things in physical or mental space. Guiding the reader through search domains is, naturally, the main function of a guidebook.

The guidebook text strategy is maintained until line 41: the text offers a sequence of descriptions of details located within the octagon. Having begun with the dedication which runs round the octagon (notice the 'prototypical' (place) adverbial fronting in lines 10 and 11: *Round the interior of the octagon, above the first tier of Roman arches*...), we pass on to the description of the mosaic within the dome. But within the general 'guidebook' framework, information given in this paragraph (lines 29–41) is selected so as to illustrate the point made in the introductory sentence: the juxtaposition of "the imperial symbolism" and "a new and naive Christian setting". We begin 'the tour' with the contrast between the technique (a mosaic: developed in ancient Rome and adapted by early Christian art) and the theme (the Christian motif of the Adoration of the Lamb). The description of the next detail , the *ambo* (lines 32–33) has an internal sequencing of its own: from function (Christian) to ornamentation (Roman), and then from *pottery* and *glass* (Roman) to an *eagle cameo*, with the eagle being an important symbol of both the ancient Rome (Roman) and Charlemagne's own empire (Christian). In lines 33–34 we move from the *Egyptian columns* (ancient) to the *second tier of arches*, which evokes Ravenna, mentioned earlier in the second paragraph (Christian). The next element of the decoration to be mentioned (in lines 34–35) is the *pala d'oro*: the altar. Unlike in the case of the dome mosaic, the order now is from the theme (the Passion, Christian) to the technique (*classic Roman relief*). From the description of the altar the text moves to that of the *Lotharkreuz:* the Cross of Lothar (lines 35–37). On the syntactic level, the presentation of the cross differs from the preceding ones: it takes two sentences, separated by a full stop. We are told that it is made of *beaten gold encrusted with antique gems* (ancient), but it is only in the next sentence that the usual contrast is actually provided: the cross is shown to be *surmounted by a central portrait cameo of the Emperor Augustus*. Thus the *leitmotif* of the entire paragraph appears once again, but the particular syntactic structuring brings in yet another iconic element: in the case of a cross, the ultimate symbol of Christianity, the mixture of the 'Holy' and the 'Roman' comes as a surprise; in this sense, the 'literal' full stop that separates these two sentences reflects a 'metaphorical' one: we are not prepared to combine (the concept of) the cross with (the concept of) the imperial centre-piece.

Finally, there comes the description of the imperial throne (line 38), its elevated position in the first-floor gallery being selected as a symbol of its status. At this point, the 'guidebook' begins to merge with the 'chronicle', and the change is marked — iconically again — by the description 'moving' from the central octagon to Charlemagne's shrine. On the level of grammar, the passage is marked by the change from the guidebook simple present to the chronicle simple past (note the first occurrence: *as it **did** ...*, in line 39).

As before (lines 10–11), line 42 brings the prototypical (time) adverbial fronting: *In the twelfth century,...* The *collection of suitable relics* (lines 45–6) is presented in a meaningful sequence: although making a 'trinity', the constitutive elements are ordered from the 'highest' to the 'lowest', i.e. from Christ to Holy Virgin to Charlemagne himself, and the description ends with the inscription on the iron chandelier, donated by Barbarossa. Structurally parallel to Charlemagne's inscription on the circumference of the octagon in the 'guidebook' part of the text, it is a tribute to *Stella Maris*. The shape of a chandelier — a truly Christian symbol of *the walls of the New Jerusalem* (line 49) — brings no associations, and no contrasts, with the Roman Empire.

The description brings us back to the dome of the Cathedral: the tour has been completed. Having seen and admired one of *the foremost wonders of romanesque art*, the tourist finds himself back at the entrance to the Cathedral: at the famous Wolf's Door. And it is only now that he is told that, in fact, he had been offered not only a tour but also (or first of all?) a history lesson.

On closer scrutiny, "Pfalz" proves to be neither a guide nor a chronicle. As seen in the Appendix, where relevant fragments of the text are diagrammatically related to actual locations within (and, significantly, outside) the octagon and the chapel, the 'spatial chronology' of the tour is violated, and the 'tourist' is led along a bizarre zigzag route; to have a glimpse of the *Lotharkreuz*, he even has to make a brief trip to the nearby *Domschatz*, or the Castle Treasury, before he comes back to see the imperial throne. The chronicle part violates temporal chronology: it moves from year 1165 to year 1215 (when Charlemagne's shrine was finally completed), and then back to 1165: the year in which Barbarossa made his donation.

In fact, the entire text, iconic as it is, is in itself an iconic representation of Davies's own 'history lesson.' What we are offered are **conceptual** relationships, although they are given in a 'perceptual disguise'. The real guided tour is from the classical to the barbarian, and from the pagan to the Christian. The illusion itself could well be classified as an artistic device, and relegated to the field of literary study. It is, however, a task for a linguist to see how it comes about.

3. Cognitive linguistics: grammar and imagery

In cognitive linguistics, the notion of 'imagery', which a student of literature would tend to associate with the figurative or 'poetic' language of metaphor, takes a prominent position. As in literary studies, it is defined, roughly, as a way in which speakers represent things, relations, feelings, emotions and thoughts; unlike in literary studies, it becomes the property of every instance of language use. Since the way in which speakers talk about things is determined by choices made on the level of particular linguistic expressions, ultimately 'imagery' becomes tantamount to 'grammar'.

In Langacker's (1988) model of grammar, imagery is the speaker's ability to construe a given situation in various ways by means of the resources that a given linguistic system puts at his disposal. Having the linguistic competence means being able to make motivated choices out of an array of possibilities, which are sanctioned by linguistic convention. Thus the speaker is free and restricted at the same time. The particular fragment, or section, of conceived reality that he selects as the 'theme' of an image is called a scene, with its own setting and its own participants. In order to produce a coherent linguistic image of a scene, the speaker must select the relevant linguistic devices in a consistent way, so that all his choices contribute to the overall effect. Within the framework of cognitive linguistics, the differing aspects of scene construal are discussed as a set of parameters, which are called 'dimensions of imagery'. I would like to claim that the principle of experiential iconicity of the kind described in Section 2 above (and also, in all probability, other kinds of iconicity), when used as a text strategy, requires making consistent and appropriate grammatical choices along precisely these parameters. As particularly relevant to the present analysis, I will discuss the use in "Pfalz" of particular grammatical devices that pertain to dimensions of imagery defined as selection, epistemic grounding, directionality and abstract motion, and figure/ground alignment.

3.1 *Selection and scope*

The particular selection of elements that finally constitute an image is conditioned by the obvious fact that not all elements of perception find their way to conceptualization. The choice of the constituent elements of the scene is just a 'more conscious' application of a general principle of iconicity: perceptual saliency is isomorphic to "the degree of communicative saliency of the message" (Givón 1988: 117). In the text under discussion, only those objects along the 'tourist's' route are picked up to be brought to his attention that show *the powerful fusion of the barbarian and the classical, of the Christian and the pagan*. Moreover, the description of these objects highlights those attributes of each object that express the fusion without necessarily being its defining features. For instance, the fact that the technique of mosaic was first developed in ancient Rome, or that an eagle was a symbol much used both in ancient Rome and at Charlemagne's court, are elements of encyclopaedic rather than dictionary meanings of the English words *mosaic* and *eagle*. Drawing attention to these particular details, within the context that repeatedly brings in the contrast between the ancient and the barbarian, evokes in the mind of a (knowledgeable) reader the connotative features of meaning crucial for the understanding of the overall message.

However, in order to activate the encyclopaedic elements of meaning, the text must employ proper linguistic devices. For instance, in agreement with the conventions of the use of the indefinite article in English, the phrases ***a** mosaic* and ***an** eagle cameo* **define** their referents as, respectively, 'a mosaic' and 'an eagle cameo' rather than **identify** them (cf. ***the** mosaic*, ***the** eagle cameo)*. To express their function without appealing to linguistic jargon, one might say that they function as 'triggers': the meaning of *a* in the sentence which describes the mosaic in the dome may be paraphrased as: 'This is a mosaic: try to remember what you know about mosaics, to help you understand why it is mentioned at this particular point'.

3.2 *Epistemic grounding*

An entity is said to be epistemically grounded when its location is specified relative to the speaker and hearer and their spheres of knowledge. (Cf. Langacker 1991: 318ff.). In English, one of the main linguistic exponents of epistemic grounding is the definite article. In a typical guidebook, consistent use of the definite article is functionally justified by its identifying function; the thing referred to must be properly located in physical space; for instance, ***the** ambo* is 'this particular ambo that I (the writer) and you (the reader) are able to identify; I can do it because I am familiar with it, and you can do it because you are just standing in front of it'. The whole series of things mentioned in the text, i.e. ***the** ambo*, ***the** pala d'oro*, ***the** Lotharkreuz*, and ***the** imperial throne*, constitutes an iconic imitation of the 'guidebook' grounding, where the text is intended to accompany the actual physical objects.

But, as we said, in "Pfalz" the perspective is not that of a tourist, who is actually visiting the Cathedral, but of a narrator who had already reshuffled the objects and ordered them according to his own conceptualization of the entire scene.

As with any other type of iconicity, the ordering is of primary importance. In terms of cognitive linguistics, it reflects the conceptual process defined as abstract motion.

3.3 *Directionality and motion*

The further types of 'guidebook iconicity' are the directions 'upwards' and 'from the general to the particular', which reflect the nature of direct sensuous experience of a perceiver. In the text under discussion, the former is exemplified by the sequence of the description in lines 10–31 (*round the interior — above the first tier of Roman columns — inside the dome*), which iconically mirrors the direction of the viewer's 'eye movement', while the latter can be seen in the descriptions of the ambo, the altar, the cross and the throne. A combination of both 'directions' is seen in the description of Egyptian columns in lines 33–34: the viewer would first notice the overall style of the columns, then *the green and rose porphyry*, and only then raise his eyes to notice that the columns support *the second tier of arches*.

As has been said, the crucial general feature of texts structured according to the principle of experiential iconicity is that they reflect the actual ordering of things in space or time. It has also been claimed that in "Pfalz" this basic principle is carried over from the perceptual to the conceptual level. While experiential iconicity typical of the guidebook style requires that elements of the description are ordered in agreement with the direction and order of the tour, in "Pfalz" the icon turns into a symbol: conceptualization mediates between perception (reality) and symbolization (language) (cf. Section 1 above). Not only (in lines 29–31) do we 'move' in 'the direction' from the old to the new, i.e. from ***the** imperial symbolism* to ***a** new and naive Christian setting* (or, from identification to definition, cf. above), but the tour takes us from symbols peripheral to Christianity to the central symbol of the cross: we move from the dome (of a temple) via the ambo and the altar to the cross. While on the periphery of the category the fusion of the Holy and the Roman is mirrored by the syntactic fusion (cf. above), with the category-central symbol the syntactic caesura, which breaks the flow of the narration in line 37 (*...with antique gems // It is surmounted...*), marks the conceptual incongruity of the combination.

3.4 *Figure/ground alignment*

Choosing a particular scene construal the speaker must decide to which of the constitutive elements he might wish to allot a more prominent role of scene participants, and which should be demoted to constitute the setting. Having adopted the terminology introduced by gestalt psychologists, cognitive linguistics discusses this differentiation under the heading of figure/ground alignment. It has long been noticed that objects that speakers select as figures tend to be grammatical sentence subjects, while the setting takes the syntactic shape of adverbial phrases. It is also a well known fact that passive constructions in languages like English are chosen to depict scenes in which the agents are backgrounded, i.e. 'figures' are demoted to the status of 'ground'. "Pfalz" employs all these linguistic strategies, both on the level of the whole text and on the level of the individual constitutive sentences.

After establishing *Charlemagne's chapel* as the figure on the highest level, i.e. that of the entire text, the introductory 'guidebook' part has *Charlemagne* as its main figure, i.e. as the grammatical subject of finite verbs: *...added* (line 5) ... *had seen and admired* (line 8). In the 'chronicle' part the figure is Frederic Barbarossa — the grammatical subject of the verb *donated* (line 47). Interestingly, although the latter is also the giver of the orders (line 42), the figure in the first part of this paragraph is still *Charlemagne('s body):* the passive construction demotes the actual executors of Barbarossa's orders, iconically marking the 'motion' of Charlemagne from his role as the initiator of the construction of his Cathedral to sainthood. However, in the sentence that introduces the topical 'history lesson' by summarizing the direction of 'the conceptual tour', we have a double figure: the grammatical subject expressed by a coordinate nominal phrase *Charlemagne and his successors* (line 30).

On the level of sentences, each of the objects described as elements of the decoration of the chapel is a figure in its own right (they are all grammatical subjects; and the cross, significantly, performs the function twice), thus marking the consecutive stages of the 'tour'.

4. Conclusions

As I hope to have demonstrated, the apparatus offered by cognitive linguistics makes it possible to correlate the principles of iconicity with particular grammatical devices: the choice of individual lexical items; word order (with adverbial fronting being the most typical case); the use of articles (the definite — indefinite opposition); sentence structure (the active — passive opposition, subordination vs. coordination; simple vs. complex sentences, etc.). In itself, this correlation might seem to be of interest to linguists rather than to literary scholars. Therefore, in the remainder of this paper I would like to claim that a linguistic approach to a literary text might offer some attractions to a literary scholar as well.

First, it seems that using linguistic tools (the cognitive linguist's kit being probably the most promising) one can make a description of a text that is more precise and more well-grounded than one relying entirely on the intuition of even a most sensitive analyst. Second, the investigation of what might seem to be insignificant minutiae ultimately reveals a complex and coherent network of interrelations, where different grammatical devices cooperate, each contributing to the overall meaning of the message. Third, a linguistic approach brings to the fore a fact which literary scholars still find more difficult to accept than linguists: that the difference between a 'literary' and a 'non-literary' text is, in the long run, a difference in quantity, which ultimately consists in the level of conventionalization. Experiential iconicity as a principle that underlies particular text strategies — notably in cookery books, guidebooks and chronicles — is the property of those non-literary genres. It is achieved by using particular conventional linguistic devices. The same type of iconicity, used in a way which is less conventional (and therefore more conscious, as claimed by Fischer and Nänny; cf. the introduction to this volume) becomes constitutive of a 'literary' text. The literariness of "Pfalz" consists, as was said, in shifting the principle of experiential iconicity from the perceptual to the conceptual level. The conceptual guided tour through the Aachen cathedral is aimed at creating the concept of romanesque as the symbol of the 'powerful fusion' that the author of the text considers characteristic of Western Europe of the 9th–12th centuries: we know this, because he explicitly admits it.

But there is more to it than just that. The author is well aware that the readers have a (subliminal) knowledge of the convention of experiential iconicity, and he relies on that knowledge. He obviously wants them to use the guidebook and chronicle convention as a grid, or a template, that will provide the key to the understanding of the text which he gives them. In this sense, he wants them to follow a route which is a reverse of the 'natural' direction that leads from perception to conception to symbolization. The perception stage (in the visual sense) is removed; and the symbolization which is offered is meant to lead to a particular conceptualization. In other words, their knowledge of a particular genre (guidebook) makes Davies's readers accept his own conceptualization of Charlemagne's epoch as 'a journey of Western Europe from the barbarian to the Christian'. The capsule appears in the chapter on the Middle Ages, and this view is indeed repeatedly emphasised in the main body of the text. If Davies uses his knowledge of experiential iconicity (and his knowledge that his readers have that knowledge too) in order to shape thoughts — in a very Whorfian vain — he does it to no evil purpose. But, although 'manipulation' is usually understood as a pejorative term, this is precisely what it is.

Conventions concerning (various types of) iconicity can be used — and abused — in much the same way as other ways of conventional knowledge: to create worlds. The potential danger is there. Because, metaphorically speaking, what if the reader does not know that the *Lotharkreuz* is kept in the Treasury and not in Charlemagne's chapel?

Appendix

PFALZ

AACHEN takes its name from the Roman spa of Aquisgranium, "Waters of Apollo-Granus". Its warm, healing waters explain Charlemagne's choice for the site of his favourite residence, the *Kaiserpfalz*. The French name, Aix-la-Chapelle, marks the famous chapel, now part of Aachen Cathedral, which Charlemagne added to his palace.

Charlemagne's chapel was completed in 805. It is a three-tiered octagon, built in the Byzantine style of San Vitale in Ravenna, which Charlemagne had seen and admired. Its proportions are said to follow the mystical numbers of the seventh vision of St John's Revelation. In its day it was the largest stone building north of the Alps. Round the interior of the octagon, above the first tier of Roman arches, there runs a dedication reputedly composed by Alcuin:

CUM LAPIDES VIVI PACIS CONPAGE LIGANTUR
Since the living stones have been joined in peaceful harmony,
INQUE PARES NUMEROS OMNIA CONVENIUNT
And all numbers and measurements are in agreement,
CLARET OPUS DOMINI, TOTAM QUI CONSTRUIT AULAM
The work of the Lord who built this hall will shine brightly.
EFFECTUSQUE PIIS DAT STUDIIS HOMINUM
The completed edifice crowns the pious efforts of the people
QUORUM PERPETUI DECORIS STRUCTURA MANEBIT
Whose work will remain forever as a monument of beauty
SI PERFECTA AUCTOR PROTEGAT ATQUE REGAT.
If the Author of All things protects and rules over it.
SIC DEUS HOC TUTUM STABILI FUNDAMINE TEMPLUM
May God therefore watch over this temple
QUOD KAROLUS PRINCEPS CONDIDIT, ESSE VELIT.
Which Charles the Prince has founded on a solid base.

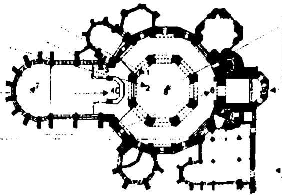
The decoration of the chapel is heavy with the imperial symbolism which Charlemagne and his successors had revived in a new and naive Christian setting. A mosaic inside the dome represents the Adoration of the Lamb. The ambo or pulpit is encrusted with fragments of Roman pottery, glass and an eagle cameo. Egyptian columns in green and rose porphyry support the second tier of arches. The *pala d'oro*, or altar-panel, portrays the Passion in classic Roman relief and in solid gold. The Lothar Cross of Lothar is a magnificent Christian ornament of beaten gold encrusted with antique gems. It is surmounted by a central portrait cameo of the Emperor Augustus. The imperial throne, cut from simple slabs of white marble, looks down from the first-floor gallery as it did during all the 32 coronations of 700 years. The message is clear: the Empire which Charlemagne launched thought of itself as Holy and as Roman.

In the twelfth century, on the orders of Frederic Barbarossa, the chapel was turned into Charlemagne's shrine. In 1165 the body of the newly

canonized saint was transferred to a casket of solid gold. It was surrounded by a collection of suitable relics – the loincloth of Christ, the Virgin's girdle, a splinter of Charlemagne's skull – all placed in precious reliquaries. Barbarossa himself donated a huge, wheel-shaped, iron chandelier, the *Barbarossaleuchter*, which is suspended in the centre of the octagon and which symbolizes the walls of the New Jerusalem. It bears another long inscription:

Jerusalem, celestial Zion; John, herald of salvation saw Thee... Frederick, Catholic Emperor of the Roman Empire pledged his crown of lights as a princely gift... Now, O Holy Virgin, he dedicates it to Thee. O *Stella Maris*, O Star of the Sea, take the humble Frederick into Thy care... and protect the Emperor's wife, Beatrix.

Today the imperial chapel at Aachen is ranked among the foremost wonders of romanesque art. But it is more than that. It provides a history lesson more vivid than any book can offer. As visitors enter, they pass through the *Wolfstür* – so called after the legend of the wolf who cheated the Devil for possession of the chapel. It is a dull mind that is not gripped by the powerful fusion of the barbarian and the classical, of the Christian and the pagan, which provided the spiritual drive of the age. Here is Western Europe's greatest memorial to a time when romanesque was a novelty, and when the centre of civilization still lay in the East.



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