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Gombrich Making Historical What he Said he Could Theoretically

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It is very difficult to appreciate the importance of E. H. Gombrich (1909-2001) to art history today. Often treated in a superficial way as a representative of a western-centric approach to art history, Richard Woodfield has argued persuasively that his historical methodology has never been sufficiently appreciated and in fact amounts to an anti-methodology.[1] Whatever we take Gombrich to be, model or relic, there is one thing no one can deny about his vast body of work: its methodological transparency between theory and historical practice. Whether or not we believe the theory or the historical writing that resulted from it, probably no art historian working in the late twentieth century had this 'transparency' to the degree that Gombrich did. Holding up his vigilant model of *making historical only what he said he could theoretically*, this essay takes the opportunity to review some assumptions of contemporary postmodern art history. Without nominating Gombrich's individual interpretations of works of art or historical accounts of aspects of the history of art, we can recognize his challenge to methodological rigor in historical writing.

It is probable that Gombrich's theoretical commitments to libertarian thinking, as embodied in the work of his friends Karl Popper, Friedrich von Hayek and Isaiah Berlin, made his point of view easy. He was such a mechanistic and atomistic thinker, much that he avoided seemed so preposterous to him that it was fairly easy to avoid. As I shall argue, when we accept that aspects of history might be emergent properties above and beyond atomistic individuals, the task becomes trickier for the historian. But that doesn't diminish Gombrich's example as a scrupulously self-conscious writer whose model ought to be observed. After emphasizing this theory-practice transparency, I go on to compare it to a prominent postmodern art historian, Keith Moxey, and draw out the differences. I end by affirming some shortcomings of Gombrich's concrete theory but emphasize the value of his methodological rigor.

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Gombrich is best known for writing on problems of perception and representation and also his work on the Renaissance. His *Art and Illusion* is a classic, as are his numerous volumes of essays on the Renaissance.[2] A commitment to the veracity of perspective and aversion of modern art is usually taken to be a sign of conservatism and even that beliefs about perspective and Renaissance art go together, nominating it as a standard of excellence. It is clear that Gombrich was quite catholic in his tastes, and likened good visual art to classical music, a language of variation. However, Gombrich believed that each historical art ought to be studied on its own merits according to *ad hoc* principles.

In regard to the Renaissance, Gombrich explained that it was a period of strong artistic convention and it is this that explains why we may be relatively secure in applying a set group of interpretive principles. These principles, however, were never intended to find application elsewhere. In fact Gombrich's broad interests led him to question certain certainties of iconographic interpretation.[3] He even supported E. D. Hirsch's primacy of genre in interpretation, according to which one cannot identify the subject of a painting unless one knows its genre.[4] Convention was very much important to him.

As an example of historical interpretation, we may look to Gombrich (very) brief identification of the iconography of a painting by Poussin, which is especially useful because it was criticized by David

Carrier.[5] *The Landscape with the Blind Orion* (1658, Metropolitan Museum of Art) is, like many of Poussin's works, elusive.[6] Steeped in mythology, the French painter could rely on patrons with the broadest and most esoteric knowledge. In a 1944 note published in the *Burlington Magazine*, Gombrich identified the subject as deriving from Natalis Comes' *Mythologia*, an allegory about thunderstorms, in an adaptation of Lucian's story. While the subject is dramatic, the painting certainly is not. It is relatively inexpressive.

Carrier holds Gombrich, and his kind of iconologizing, to task for masking difficulties with the identification of text to work of art. Gombrich, he argues, can pick and choose elements of the story to convince us of his successful derivation from Comes, while submerging others that are less felicitous. Comes' rendition of Orion recounts the giant walking toward Diana. Here, however, he does not seem to be walking to her, and she doesn't even appear to be looking at him. Furthermore, when in the story this action is supposed to be taking place is not indicated. Carrier regards the derivation to be imperfect and adds his own ideas that the painting, in its inexpressiveness, is more than a mere allegory; it is a discourse on desire. Vision is frustrated and Poussin thematizes it.

For Carrier, it is quite clear. Gombrich needs Carrier's added interpretive element to finish off the painting. But this begs the question of Comes' text as the likeliest source for the story, even if it is not reproduced in perfect form. Furthermore, it denies that Gombrich's general historical background could serve as basis for Poussin's own brilliant development of the theme in the direction of meta-issues of sight and blindness and painting and literature. Elsewhere, it has been noted that a positional analysis of gazes has to underscore this kind of Lacanian exercise of desire and Gombrich's essay could fit within these two extremes, leading from the virtual space and exchange of views in the painting, to the basics of the subject matter, to Poussin's own development of the theme in a very individual direction.[7] Therefore, I do not take it as proven that Gombrich's brand of interpretation is exclusivistic. Rather, like Popper, it was fallibilistic and open to reinterpretation. If Gombrich reported his findings with a fair bit of conviction, it is because he felt fairly certain that he had identified the important text and most scholars have followed him in this.[8]

As is well known, Gombrich was a committed objectivist.[9] He firmly believed that it was possible to achieve objective knowledge about history. How then to describe the march toward representational naturalism that characterizes the Western tradition in the post-Medieval period? To interpret it in terms of a *telos*, as much of German art history did at the time of his training in Vienna in the 1920s, would be to interpose a historicist framework, whether it was Hegelian or psychological, between the historian and the object under investigation, ie, a form of relativism: we understand seventeenth century realism relative to a higher-order principle of unfolding. In order to overcome this difficulty, in *Art and Illusion* he famously invented the notions of making and matching.[10] At any given time during this post-medieval period, we simply compare the state of making and matching, the degree of self-correction against the standard of nature, to understand naturalism. Dürer's *Rhinoceros* and Constable's *Wivenhoe Park* are the two best-known examples.

In a sense, Gombrich was extremely cool and detached about this problem, taking it almost as I have said as a methodological challenge. But of course this is not true. Influenced strongly by his friend Karl Popper (1902-1994), Gombrich believed there was something potentially disastrous about beliefs in 'historicism.' [11] Both Popper and Gombrich had been displaced to England by the rise of Nazism. Each believed that the proclivity to historicist thinking in Plato, Hegel and Marx had prepared the way for the acceptance of Nazi doctrines.

Popper's and Gombrich's use of the term historicism is problematic and is best understood as

inveighing against the subjugation of history to large scale laws. Frank Ankersmit has tried to clarify that this is much closer to the Anglo-Saxon meaning of historicism as a shedding of rhetorical form from history, than the 'Germanic' idea of understanding in terms of historical development. But Popper and Gombrich surely mean this too, because understanding is subject to a cognitive filter of development. Things cannot be known for themselves but only in relation to others.[12]

As I have shown elsewhere, this idea of historicism is too blunt to really make fine distinctions, which can be better appreciated in Maurice Mandelbaum's philosophy. Furthermore, its stringency leaves out the possibility of discussing historical events in terms of institutional factors, which are to be distinguished from methodological individualism. As it affects Gombrich's art historiography, this limitation was long ago indicated by Carlo Ginzburg, who wrote that, "it also risks throwing the baby out with the bath, of excluding or at least loosening, in its rejection of a superficial historicism, the bonds between artistic phenomena and history. The notion of the "spirit of the times" remains an attempt – even if approximate and mythological – to respond to a concrete problem, that of the connections existing among the various faces of historical reality (through Gombrich's arguments, directed principally against Hegel and his followers, really apply to generalizations of a Diltheyan type."[13]

But whether or not this is true is not at issue, simply that for Gombrich the stakes for historical theorizing were quite high. Uncovering traces of irrational thinking in others was a civic duty and safeguard against atrocities against humanity. What is really interesting is what Gombrich does with this situation. He also understands that when he forsakes historicism he has to forsake it completely, even for its potential benefits. For example, he also has to forsake the self-congratulatory historicism of the "Whig" theory of history that might have benefited him as a new British subject. While described as a "privileged knight of English art historians" by Murray Krieger, this was not due to any statements about the superiority of England, its pragmatic mode of thinking, or penchant for common sense.[14]

Closer to art history, Gombrich did not utilize historicism to celebrate in the bashing of modern art, whose results he did not always enjoy. For example, in a review of Erich Kahler's *The Disintegration of Form in the Arts*, he granted that even the 'decline of art' is a historicist doctrine: "When Carl Justi, lifting his eyes from Velazquez, attacked the artists of his time for their 'amorphism' he could not know that his strictures were refuted by a near recluse who was quietly working in Southern France – Cézanne, who neither wanted nor needed to exhibit.[15] 'Decline' was only the opposite of 'progress,' but both were historicist doctrines. Historicism of all kinds was unacceptable.

This is remarkable consistency and rigor. It reflects a conscious attempt to avoid what the philosopher Maurice Mandelbaum called the "self-excepting fallacy," the desire to impute falsifying effects of knowledge to all others but oneself.[16] One could also call it a "theory/practice inconsistency," defined by Derek Brereton as "declaring what is possible in a world it denies. The theory-practice inconsistency lies in proclaiming all knowledge cultural, while casuistically admitting pre-cultural reality *ad hoc*.[17]

Mandelbaum was always keen to point out how doubt and skepticism is parasitic on prior belief. Gombrich and Popper did not discuss the possibilities of knowledge in the same way. But the standard of knowledge applied consistently and defensibly was always on their minds. The most conspicuous case was Gombrich's contribution to Popper's congratulatory volume of *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*. In "The Logic of Vanity Fair," Gombrich considered the stakes of upholding skepticism relative to taste in art history.[18] One of his examples was the fabricated poetry of Ossian which took

Enlightenment society by storm. Far from being duped, those that praised Ossian merely had found a "godsend, a confirmation of the theory that the anticlassicist camp was in the process of formulating." [19] Those that "fell for" Ossian had every right to be disgusted, but those that didn't fall were no better. Their rigid classicism would not allow them, for example, to have appreciated Shakespeare. Gombrich knows that it is too simplistic to invoke quality, and charge the ignorant for not recognizing it, for he admits that he too might be susceptible to these illusions.

It is this understanding of the stakes of knowledge that have eluded many art historians today. The seemingly emancipatory gains of postmodernism have brought with them an entrenchment of principles. Especially in Keith Moxey one finds post-structuralism and postmodernisms to be basically synonyms for any procedure that refuses to fix or stabilize meaning. [20] Using Moxey's work, and particularly his discussion of Erwin Panofsky, as a case-study, I want to analyze the idea of theory/practice consistency that is so enforced in Gombrich's writings and seems to be so uninforced in recent postmodern writing on art.

Although formerly a critical voice in art history, I take Moxey and his discussion of Panofsky to be fairly typical of contemporary art history influenced from a postmodern point of view. In fact, in the book in which Moxey's analysis comes, he notes that as he is writing (the book was published in 1994) he is happy to say that due to earlier successes with post-structuralism in art history, he is much less of a critical voice. As much as this was true in 1994 it is even more true today, for Moxey and his generation of writers are at the top of their profession having spawned a flow of now canonical works on visual culture in the field. [21]

Panofsky is of course a canonical figure in art history and analyzing him brings with it the expectation of a revision of basic categories of understanding and explanation in art history. For us, Panofsky has the advantage that he was Gombrich's fellow associate of the Warburg Library (although not at the same time). [22] Each contributed fundamentally to the creation of an iconological approach to art history, formed of the survival of the classical tradition as envisioned by Aby Warburg.

According to Moxey, Panofsky's project on Dürer was deeply informed of personal issues relating to him in his life at the time and helped him resolve feelings about his emigration from Nazi Germany. Panofsky's off-hand comment about how the German artist's printmaking made Germany a Renaissance force to reckon with is made to prop ironic patriotic feelings about Germany. The way in which Dürer balanced a native irrationalism with a Latin harmony stands in for Panofsky's own path, for "Panofsky may have identified with Dürer because he saw in the artist's struggle an allegory of the battle between reason and unreason which characterized the political events of his own time." [23] The book, then, had a "complex agenda;" it "allowed the twentieth-century art historian to attribute to the sixteenth-century artist the very conflict between reason and unreason on which his interpretation depended." [24]

Of course, these words can be taken in a number of ways. Moxey first presented his ideas at a conference honoring Julius Held and one could imagine the elderly Held, Panofsky's former colleague, speaking them in a metaphoric sense: the book on Dürer serves as an emblem of Panofsky's émigré experience. Metaphorically, this is not unlike the way that Panofsky enjoyed telling people that he was farsighted in one eye but myopic in the other; it allowed him ability to view problems from extremely close up and far away. But Moxey is saying something different. This is not just an interesting emblem but a causal argument. It is as if someone said that Panofsky's point of view derived literally from the fact that he had one eye farsighted and the other myopic.

Ironically, Panofsky is one of the least displaced of émigré scholars. He left Hamburg early and found an exciting and comfortable home in Princeton, where he was held in high esteem. This is a far cry from poor and brilliant Erich Auerbach, just getting by in Istanbul as the 'thirties wear on, or Panofsky's Hamburg colleague, the poor psychologist Heinz Werner, a great researcher forced to work for several years at the Wayne County Training School, a home for the mentally retarded children outside of Detroit, Michigan.[25] Many of these recipients of German *Bildung* show a biographical confirmation of a special vigilance maintained during biographical upheavals. Historical discipline becomes a sustaining force during trying times. It is a strange sense of duty alien to the democratic impulses driving American academia but quite real in Gombrich's and Panofsky's time.[26]

No better pedigree can be given than Foucault's late work in which Power animates all human activity. What is taken for granted here is a sort of monistic universe; everything including fact, opinion, agenda collide into one another. But this commits the "epistemic fallacy," according to which items are not referentially detached and our knowledge about them is confused with their being.

Now recall Gombrich. Like Popper, he held that there are at least two universes, the transcendental world toward which science progressively through falsification (and art, insofar as it is like science, toward veridical representation) and then current opinion (e.g., the state of making and matching). Once again, it doesn't matter if we accept Popper's or Gombrich's much-criticized views, but this modicum of ontological complexity sets things on a much different course. Now at least we have a way to judge the adequacy of Panofsky's efforts.

Gombrich, like Moxey, had occasion to question certain aspects of Panofsky's thought, in particular his latent Hegelianism which took for granted the workings of the *Zeitgeist*. Reviewing both Panofsky's newly translated *Perspective as Symbolic Form* and group of essays edited by Irving Lavin, *Three Essays on Style*, Gombrich was slightly shocked by some of the sloppy recourse to period style and national character that Panofsky fell back upon. The discussion of the "Baroque," for example, mentions "the experience of so many conflicts and dualisms between emotion and reflection, lust and pain, devoutness and voluptuousness (which) had led to a kind of awakening, and thus endowed the European mind with a new consciousness." [27] Moxey did something similar in his useful attempt to discover the way in which realism had been a latent organizing principle in art history, and shaped the way that Northern European art history had been written. This essay, "Art History's Hegelian Unconscious" is telling, for it proposes the workings of Hegelian ideas below consciousness.[28] Once again, Gombrich's approach to this Hegelianism is instructive. Instead of looking for repressed content, Gombrich noted that these aspects of thought only emerged strongest in the lecture format used by Panofsky and that, indeed, far from being unaware of them, Panofsky felt stuck in his ways and was aware that such Hegelianism was being made outmoded by younger scholars like Gombrich.[29] Instead, his quest for objectivity is sacrificed in biography.

According to the self-excepting fallacy, however, Moxey is the next victim of such psychobiography as a new generation of art historians look to his upbringing and situatedness in political events to explain his historical conclusions. Outwardly, Moxey would welcome this bit of 'reflexivity.' In an allied essay called "Perspective, Panofsky, and the Philosophy of History," Moxey noted that Panofsky's reinterpretation of perspective as objective (overriding his former stance in his celebrated "Die Perspektive als 'symbolische Form'") served a new American idea of confidence and prosperity, and admitted that "It goes without saying that my own critique is susceptible to the same kind of analysis as that to which I have subjected his ideas. In other words, this is not an exercise in ideology criticism, not an attempt to show how Panofsky's work represents a particular ideology from a position that

purports to be ideology-free.”[30] Calling his own brand of analysis “discourse analysis,” Moxey clarifies that his comments are “an analysis of the unspoken values that inform his text from a perspective (not the perspective) that recognizes that all points of view are necessarily ideological.”

Moxey clearly fulfills the basic reflexive condition in introducing his background and the point of view from which he is writing in order to allow the reader to estimate his potential biases. In a brilliant extension of Bourdieu’s sociology of knowledge, however, Karl Maton has called this “authorial denial” the least productive form of reflexivity because it says nothing about organized research.[31] It foregrounds the social relation between writer and knowledge, but considers no reflexive relationship between *object under investigation* and knowledge. This is indeed found in nascent form in Bourdieu, but is typically misunderstood as typical individual reflexivity of Moxey’s variety, that says nothing of art history and is hence a form of methodological individualism with a danger of tending toward a “recursive regression and narcissism.” Without recognizing that the social element objectifies knowledge but also epistemologizes it, we will not be able to enrich the social conditions of knowledge with the intellectual conditions of knowledge.

One of the main problems is Moxey’s willingness to impute unconscious beliefs on others. This raises the question of consciousness versus unconsciousness. Freud said that melancholy is the unconscious counterpart to mourning. According to Moxey, Panofsky (incidentally living in the German culture in which Freud’s works were bought for a few pennies and discussed actively at cocktail parties) unconsciously chooses Dürer’s *Melancholy* as an emblem of his own unresolved conflicts. It can be seen that unconsciousness, one of the handmaidens of all imputed falsifying effects of knowledge of the self-excepting fallacy, makes vast claims about the way the world is. Melancholy is not just a fortuitous emblem for the essay, it is Panofsky’s emblem *although he didn’t know it*. Again, it is suggested to have been causally active in Panofsky’s formulation of his book on Dürer.

Interestingly, Otto Pächt caught Panofsky in an opposite slip when he reformulated his earlier iconological argument in *Studies in Iconology* from an unconscious cultural logic of symbols to that in *Early Netherlandish Painting* of a conscious programming of hidden symbolism.[32] How, Pächt argued in his brilliant review, are we to assume these artists incorporated these complex symbols without the help of numerous theological advisors? Furthermore, what does this say about Netherlandish naturalism? Pächt remarks that, “the superficial reader of Panofsky’s book could easily come to the conclusion that the conquest of the phenomenal world, the replacement of the conceptual by the optical world, was really only a means to an end, a by-product in the struggle for a cogent communication of metaphysical ideas.”[33]

What Panofsky and Moxey share in common is that the interpretation for a Netherlandish picture (Panofsky on Jan van Eyck) or a historian of Netherlandish art (Moxey on Panofsky) is *individual*. Culture is blocked out because for Panofsky the ‘meaning’ of the painting comes down to some arbitrary theological program devised by some learned theologian and for Moxey the ‘meaning’ of Panofsky’s interpretation of Jan van Eyck comes down to personal facts unrelated to his intellectual milieu.

Pächt also says that “the theory of disguised symbolism is a clear manifestation of the newly won autonomy of iconographic research.” In a way, the move from unconscious to conscious symbolic logic was a brilliant move for the increasingly celebrated Panofsky, as he was the master decoder of western symbols. But the use of the *individualistic* programming again sets the stage for more decoding, for every content devised by a single advisor needs someone to decode it. I hesitate to turn

this into a causal argument about Panofsky's strategies, as if his change of theory was intended to get him more work, largely because I am wary of the consequences of the self-excepting fallacy. It would flatten out Panofsky's career in a trivial way.

This is all very interesting in Gombrich's case, which of course is not amenable to such an analysis. When around 1960 students of Hans Sedlmayr – the same scholar who had become a Nazi and took over the Vienna Institute where Gombrich was trained – prepared his *Festschrift*, Gombrich did not feel ambivalent, conflicted or melancholy. In response to the proliferation of Nineteenth Century German Romantic inspired art theory he responded in the clearest terms in a book review that he admitted crossed the boundary of academic decorum.[34] What happened in fact was that Gombrich's review became a political act. Because he had been so very *conscious* of his various methodological commitments, he knew when one dear to his own had been violated *consciously* by Sedlmayr's pupils, i.e., theirs was a political act too.[35]

The unconscious is an important topic and one that should continue to be investigated alongside, and in conjunction with, its contribution to ideology. But it should not serve what is really *overinterpretation*. The main problem with speculative (or we would say with Popper, 'historicist') thinking in Gombrich's mind was its departure from the task of adequate history. Gombrich's stance on the matter emerged very clearly in his review of Leo Steinberg's *Michelangelo's Last Paintings*, a study of the elderly master's great twin frescoes in the Vatican Palace: *The Conversion of Paul* and the *Crucifixion of Peter*. [36] Steinberg evolved all sorts of insights, from the pointing line that bound the leg of St. Paul, fallen to the ground in his conversion, to Damascus in the distance, to other stories about the works meaning. Evoking E. D. Hirsch's distinction between *meaning* and *significance*, Gombrich lamented that Steinberg had confused bits of potential significance for meaning. In a larger sense, this was an example of overinterpretation, whose fault – unlike underinterpretation that "may fail to exhaust" – was that it lodges "itself in the mind and distorts our experience for ever after, even if we refuse it credence."

Steinberg strangely relied precisely on the sorts of stories that Vatican guides – were they allowed into the Pauline Chapel adjacent to the Sistine Chapel – would use to great effect. Sustained by Steinberg's great erudition and gift for writing, the analyses claim in a precocious postmodern spirit – Steinberg has been widely hailed by postmodern writers – to not really offer arguments or explanations at all. What he has written is "beyond proof or disproof." But what Gombrich noted lacking was not proof of the argument, something which is often elusive in such earlier periods lacking explicit documentation. Rather, he expected at the least "documented analogies," to convince us that the scenario sketched was possible within the structure of sixteenth century Italian life.

It is tempting to link this imperative to some of Gombrich's other observations on interpretation in general, in his brilliant essay "Icones Symbolicae," expanded substantially in his volume of collected essays, *Symbolic Images*. [37] This is so especially where he compares Aristotelian and (neo-)Platonic interpretation, the former based on resemblance and the latter on allegory. The Platonic interpretation is at root mystical, and has an accidental quality, hence, its allegorical nature. Gombrich doesn't fail to link these interpretations to those of Freud as well. For example, Steinberg's type of interpretation is largely Freudian in structure in that surface manifestations (dreams, repressed content, etc.) conceal a deeper meaning that has to be discovered yet has no tangible relationship to it.

Gombrich does not nominate either of these approaches, except to note both of their shortcomings. Yet one can easily feel that he agrees more with the Aristotelian approach, even if one must respect from

which source a historical approach to symbolism – Aristotelian or Platonic – derives. In this, Gombrich's approach could be related to that of Barbara Maria Stafford in *Visual Analogy*. There, she nominates analogy as a model of contemporary cultural orientation instead of allegory, the mainstay of Romantic and ultimately postmodern theory of signification.[38]

Certainly Gombrich would object to what Stafford calls "the annihilation of resemblance." But here Popper, as the logical place to turn for a Gombrichian refoundation of symbolism, doesn't offer much hope. Once again, analogy presumes realism while Popper and Gombrich work with weak forms of realism. Gombrich's suspicion of images – witness his opinions on physiognomy – is well known. This disjoins, in the manner of allegory, form from content. Without falling into a simplistic immanence theory, one can still see how Gombrich's ideas suggest and serve postmodern ends. Liberal atomism is none too far from radical difference.

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Ironically, Gombrich is labeled a positivist and this is one of the few things nearly true about him, even though ultimately inaccurate. Popper famously broke with his Viennese colleagues in affirming an indirect realist principle to counteract their true positivism. Like Popper, Gombrich seems to hold to some kind of mechanistic realism, hence his atomism.[39] Through falsification, we do not confirm aspects of reality but discount non-realist correspondences. This is nevertheless an edge-wise form of realism.

It is true, as the New Art History contends, that art historians do not tend to look outside their fields for insight into historical problems. This is not only true for French post-structuralism which inspires Moxey, but also for Anglo-American philosophy, that has been treating historical problems non stop. Of course, as I have been arguing, philosophy is everywhere present in Gombrich's thinking and he is certainly not guilty of closed-mindedness. The danger is not so much ignoring other disciplines but adapting an oracular voice. Panofsky did it sometimes in the ineffable trail of his erudition. Commentators like Moxey risk it too when the coded language of their discourse also mitigates consideration, reflection and repetition of its proposals. In this sense, what art history needs is theory it can live with. It needs what Althusser said of Marxism: "a philosophy that is capable of accounting for the nature of theoretical formations and their history, and therefore capable of accounting for itself, by taking itself as its own object." [40]

This means naturalistic models of knowledge and society. Gombrich was interested in these naturalistic models. It was not just because he glorified science or was a technocrat. Science teaches a quick lesson. Once we adopt its models, we have to be ready to turn their principles immediately on ourselves. This then creates a large-scale reconsideration of the possibilities of knowledge.

[1] Richard Woodfield, "Gombrich's 1955 Lecture to the British Psychological Society: 'Art History and the Psychology of Perception,'" in *E.H. Gombrich: In memoriam*, ed. Paula Lizarraga (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, S.A.), 167-184.

- [2] See Gombrich, E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (London: Phaidon, 1960), and *Symbolic Images Norm and Form; The Heritage of Apelles; Ideals and Idols*; etc., all from Phaidon.
- [3] E. H. Gombrich, "Introduction: The Aims and Limits of Iconography," *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 1972).
- [4] E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); E. H. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*.
- [5] E. H. Gombrich, "The Subject of Poussin's *Orion*," *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, (London: Phaidon, 1972), pp. 119-122; David Carrier, "Blindness and the Representation of Desire," *Poussin's Paintings: A Study in Art-Historical Methodology*, (University Park: Penn State University, 1993), pp. 105-144.
- [6] The painting was made for the Parisian financier Michel Passart. For basic bibliography, see Anthony Blunt, *Nicholas Poussin*.
- [7] Ian Verstegen, "A Plea for a Cognitive Iconology within Visual Studies," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 4 (2006).
- [8] See for example H.-W. van Helsdingen, "Notes on Poussin's Late Mythological Landscapes," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 29 (2002): 152-183.
- [9] This emerges clearly in many writings, but see E. H. Gombrich, "Relativism in the Humanities: The Debate about Human Nature," in *Topics of our Time: Twentieth Century Issues in Learning and Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); "In Search of Cultural History," in *In Ideals and Idols: Essays on Values in History and in Art* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1979), 24-59.
- [10] Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*.
- [11] On the Gombrich–Popper connection, see Sheldon Richmond, *Gombrich and the Philosophies of Science of Popper and Polanyi* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994); Ian Verstegen, "Arnheim and Gombrich in Social Scientific Perspective," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 34 (2004): 91-102.
- [12] John Passmore, "The Poverty of Historicism Revisited," *History and Theory* 14 (1975): 30-47.
- [13] Carl Ginzburg, "From Any Warburg to E. H. Gombrich," in *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, 45.
- [14] Murray Krieger, "The Ambiguities of Representation and Illusion: An E. H. Gombrich Retrospective," *Critical Inquiry* 11 (1984): 181-94.
- [15] E. H. Gombrich, "Dilemmas of Modern Art Criticism," in Richard Woodfield, ed., *Reflections on the History of Art: Views and Reviews* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 205-210.
- [16] Maurice Mandelbaum, "Some Instances of the Self-Excepting Fallacy," *Philosophy, History and the Sciences: Selected Critical Essays* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); c.f. A. Spitzer, "Introduction: Historical Argument when the Chips are Down," in *Historical Truth and Lies about the Past: Reflections on Dewey, Dreyfus, de Man, and Reagan* (Chapel Hill and London, 1996).
- [17] Derek Brereton, "Critical Realism in Ethnology," *Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, H. James Birx, ed. (Sage Publications, 2006), vol. 2, pp. 600-612.
- [18] E. H. Gombrich, "The Logic of Vanity Fair," in *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*, ed. Paul Schlipp (Illinois: Open Court, 1974).
- [19] *Ibid.*, 950.

- [20] For an incisive review, see Amy Schmitter, "The Verificationist in Spite of Himself," [Review Essay of K. Moxey, *The Practice of Persuasion: Paradox and Power in Art History*], *History and Theory* 42 (2003): 412-23.
- [21] Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey, eds., *Art History, Aesthetics, Visual Studies* (Williamstown, Mass.: Clark Studies in the Visual Arts, 2002); Mark Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey, eds., *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Norman Bryson and Keith Moxey, eds. *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1994); Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey, eds. *Visual Theory: Painting and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).
- [22] Keith Moxey, "Panofsky's Melancholia," *The Practice of Theory: Poststructuralism, Cultural Politics, and Art History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 65-78.
- [23] Ibid, 75.
- [24] Ibid, 77, 78.
- [25] Interesting here is Edward Said's discussion of Auerbach, which notes a special vigilance that the author attained through his exile; *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 8: "In other words, the book owed its existence to the very fact of Oriental, non-Occidental exile and homelessness. And if this is so, then Mimesis itself is not, as it has so frequently been taken to be, only a massive reaffirmation of the Western cultural tradition, but also a work built upon a critically important alienation from it, a work whose conditions and circumstances of existence are not immediately derived from the culture it describes with such extraordinary insight and brilliance but built rather on an agonizing distance from it." On Werner, see Seymour Wapner and Bernard Kaplan, "Heinz Werner: 1890-1964," *The American Journal of Psychology* (1964).
- [26] I have commented on Jewish art historians surprising respect shown for the work of Nazi art historians like Wilhelm Pinder, and ability to separate the man from the scholarship, in "Gestalt, Art History, and Nazism," *Gestalt Theory* 24:2 (2004): 134-150.
- [27] Erwin Panofsky, *Three Essays on Style*.
- [28] Keith Moxey, "Art History's Hegelian Unconscious," in *The Practice of Persuasion: Paradox and Power in Art History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).
- [29] E. H. Gombrich, "Icon [review of Erwin Panofsky, *Three Essays on Style and Perspective as a Symbolic Form*]," *The New York Review of Books* (15 February 1996).
- [30] Keith Moxey, "Perspective, Panofsky, and the Philosophy of History," *New Literary History* 26 (1995): 783.
- [31] Karl Maton, "Pierre Bourdieu and the Epistemic Conditions of Social Scientific Knowledge," *Space & Culture* 6 (2003): 52-65.
- [32] Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origin and Character* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953); Otto Pächt, "Panofsky's 'Early Netherlandish Painting' - II," *Burlington Magazine* 98 (1956): xxx-277.
- [33] Pächt, "Panofsky's 'Early Netherlandish Painting' - II," 275.
- [34] E. H. Gombrich. Review of *Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttheorie im 19. Jahrhundert (Probleme der Kunstwissenschaft)* (Berlin, 1963); *Art Bulletin*, 46 (1964): 418-20.
- [35] In his notebooks *Parables of Sunlight* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), p. 56, Rudolf Arnheim writes, "For the benefit of the Freudians one ought to collect instances where sex is not the final target of the symbol but is itself used as a symbol for an ulterior meaning. Hegel quotes from Herodotus to the effect that Sesostris used to erect a phallic column in every country he had conquered. If the people had put up little resistance, he also had a vagina engraved on the monument."
- [36] Leo Steinberg, *Michelangelo's Last Paintings: The Conversion of St. Paul and the Crucifixion of St. Peter in the Cappella Paolina* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); E. H.

Gombrich, *Reflections on the History of Art: Views and Reviews*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987, p. 86.

[37] E. H. Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae: The Visual Image in Neo-Platonic Thought," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948), 163-92; expanded in *Symbolic Images* (London: Phaidon, 1972).

[38] Barbara Maria Stafford, *Visual Analogy: Consciousness and the Art of Connecting* (MIT, 1999).

[39] See further Verstegen, "Arnheim and Gombrich." Another way of saying this is that Popper (and Gombrich) don't believe that matter has emergent properties. Further, because he regards the problem of induction as fatal, Popper believes that laws are provisional and built on regularity (rather than emergent powers).

[40] Louis Althusser, *For Marx* (New York: Pantheon, 1969), p. 39.

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