AFTERLIVES OF ROMANTIC INTERMEDIALITY

THE INTERSECTION OF VISUAL, AURAL, AND VERBAL FRONTIERS

EDITED BY
LEENA EILITTÄ AND CATHERINE RICCIO-BERRY

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Leena H. Eilittä

Introduction

Intermedial connections between different art forms became particularly wide-spread during the Romantic era, which marks a turning-point in the level of interest shown toward intermediality in both aesthetic theory and artistic practices. However, such connections had already been at the heart of artistic practices and critical reflections throughout Western cultural history. Ever since Homer's description of the shield of Achilles in *Iliad*, which marks the beginning of an ekphrastic tradition, works of visual art and literature have been depicted either as close allies or, less often, as fierce rivals. Their affinities were introduced with Simonides's references to painting as a mute poetry and Horace's founding of the *ut pictura poesis* tradition. The fact that poetry had gained more weight in this alliance became apparent with da Vinci's insight into their relationship as *paragoni,* a term suggesting implicit rivalry, which subordinated works of visual art to the service of verbal art. Although the connections between works of literature, visual art, and music found manifold artistic manifestations throughout the centuries, it was not until the eighteenth century that European philosophers began to undertake more frequent comparisons between them and to elaborate a more far-reaching aesthetics concerning their differing qualities.

G.E. Lessing's *Laocoon* (1766) made a breakthrough in this discussion with his argument that the works of visual art and poetry should not be compared with each other in the manner of *ut pictura poesis.* Lessing's major idea was that works of visual art depict the static realm of the spatial area, whereas works of verbal art depict the linear and temporal developments. From a contemporary point of view, Lessing's treatise was important because it succeeded in making a preliminary distinction between the verbal and visual works of art from a medial point of view. In his treatise, Lessing assumes that the difference between works of verbal and visual art is based upon the

different media realms from which these forms of art are, so to speak, being derived. Subsequent theoretical discussions about artistic interdisciplinarity have benefitted from Lessing's pre-Romantic discovery.

The theory of "universal" aesthetics, which was launched by Friedrich Schlegel in his *Athenaeum Fragment 116*, contributed to a new understanding of artistic interdisciplinary relations in Romanticism. Here, Schlegel introduced Romantic poetry in terms of infinite becoming, which allows poetry to be related to other arts and to the transcendence beyond the limited scope of human language and mind. In contrast to earlier poetry, which found itself in the completed state and thus accessible to human inquiry, Schlegel maintained that the infinite nature of Romantic poetry was beyond human comprehension and critical faculties:

> Romantic poetry is progressive, universal poetry. Its aim isn't merely to reunite all the separate species of poetry and put poetry in touch with philosophy and rhetoric. It tries to and should mix and fuse poetry and prose, inspiration and criticism, the poetry of art and the poetry of nature . . . Other kinds of poetry are finished and are now capable of being fully analyzed. *The romantic kind of poetry is still in the state of becoming, that, in fact, is its real essence: that it should forever be becoming and never be perfected*. It can be exhausted by no theory and only a divinatory criticism would dare try to characterize its ideal. It alone is infinite, just as it alone is free.[1]

Schlegel's enthusiastic remarks should be understood in the context of early Romantic *Zeitgeist*, in which there was a reaction in Germany against the aesthetic values of Enlightenment and Classicism. The era before Romanticism was interested in elaborating Classical notions of form directly to modern subject-matters and to an understanding of subjectivity. Romantic thought, in contrast, went for a more dialectical exchange between the subject and the object. Although Romanticism should be understood by no means primarily as an anti-rational counter-Enlightenment movement, the aesthetic ideas of the Romantics did contribute to the break from earlier aesthetic programs, not least with the definition of "Universalpoesie" that was extended to all arts and knowledge. According to Schlegel, the open, infinite state of Romantic poetry is by no means restricted to literature, but this quality of Romantic aesthetics applies equally well to painting, music, and sculpture—and even to sciences. Schlegel's radical formulation of Romantic aesthetics, which brought different forms of art essentially closer to each other, was accompanied with a growing interest in the connections between verbal, plastic, and acoustic forms of art to an extent probably never previously experienced. In his remarks from the Louvre in 1802, Schlegel introduced the idea that different forms of art possess an original unity and an inner resemblance, which should be discovered: "How natural is it that the spirit of the different

arts because of their close relation and original unity may tend to mutually confuse and mistake itself."[2] In his remarks from the Louvre, Schlegel also brings up the possibility that different forms of art have various degrees of artistic interrelatedness. Whereas such a painter as Antonio da Correggio was a musical artist, some others tended toward plastic arts or architecture: "If there are musical painters, there are others who painted more in the spirit of sculpture or even of architecture."[3] The original unity of arts also comes up in the Romantic views about music, a form of art which, ever since Plato, has been considered in different terms from the rest of the arts. In the eighteenth century, the composer Robert Schumann, for example, noted a common principle across the arts, commenting that: "The aesthetic principle is the same in every art; only the material differs."[4] Indeed, it was not only in theoretical terms that the Romantics accomplished a change in the artistic interdisciplinary relations but, much more importantly, in the elaboration of interdisciplinary perspective to Romantic works of literature, music, plastic arts, and even dance. In the Romantic works of art, such elaborations of other perspectives produce an awareness of other media which makes the work of art artistically complex, enriching and often puzzling for their later audiences which sometimes were exhausted with the rich load of artistic and philosophic ideas introduced by the Romantics. Although Romanticism was an extremely intensive era in the development of aesthetic theory and intermedial activities, the time-span of Romanticism remained short. By the 1850s, Romanticism had ceased to be the major impetus behind literature and visual art, although its influence continued in music until the turn of the century. In many countries, the end of the Romantic era was fairly abrupt when we only take into consideration the quick turn that literary developments first made toward Realism and, subsequently, toward Naturalism during the nineteenth century. By focusing on a non-idealistic worldview, as well as realistic narrative descriptions, the artists went the opposite direction from that which the Romantics had chosen only some decades before. Sometimes their lack of interest in Romanticism recalls the opinions of elderly Goethe, who had considered German Romanticism to be a sort of "sickness." However, the ideas about intermediality that the Romantics introduced during their prime years found spaces and cultural contexts that subsequently embraced it. Romanticism did not come "out of blue" but rather involved enriching connections to the enlightened past (and to earlier periods such as the Middle Ages and the Antique); equally so, Romanticism did not disappear into nothingness. During the turn of the century, New Romanticism explicitly cultivated Romantic sources, making the Romantics' ideas about arts, intuition, feeling, and nature, for example, available to the growing numbers of urban public. Also, other schools of Modernity and later Modernist and Post-Modernist activities benefitted from the Romantics' conceptions of arts and life, although the

world surrounding the arts had profoundly changed since the Romantic era. Ever since its birth, Romanticism has continued to inspire and provide direct influence for arts, aesthetics, and also for ideologies—sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse.

The Romantic elaborations of other media and their "afterlives" in Modern and Post-Modern arts are interesting from the point of view of intermediality, which in recent decades has been a focus of theoretical concerns, particularly in the literary studies, art history, musicology, and media studies. The works of such contemporary theoreticians as J.E. Muller, Irina Rajewsky, and Werner Wolf, to name just a few, have introduced a new understanding of interartistic relations and media. The point of departure is a definition of medium as that which, as Muller argues, mediates on the basis of meaningful signs or sign configurations, with the help of suitable transmitters for and between humans over spatial and historical distances. A change from media product to intermedia product takes place if a multi-media coexistence of different media quotations and elements is transformed into a conceptual coexistence of intermedia. Different media combinations, transformations, and references to other media, which Irina Rajewsky has mapped out in her book *Intermediality* (2002), have an effect on our reception of a work of art. Muller suggests that intermedial coexistence foregrounds the aesthetic refractions and faults that open new dimensions of experience to the recipient. Such intermedial coexistence introduces an awareness of aesthetics of another medium obviously in such cases where there are two media present, but also in such references to and transformations of other media in which these media are no longer materially present.

Although today's philosophers and artists have elaborated contemporary forms of intermediality, the articles of this volume want to draw attention to the historical sources of this phenomena. By recalling the Romantic past, this volume wants to show that even present intermedial developments are indebted to the insights about the medial nature of arts that, strictly speaking, started with Lessing's theory. The authors of this volume address in their articles the manifold developments that were launched by the Romantics with a focus on artistic intermediality. In the first part of this volume, the authors reflect upon the role of intermediality in Romantic arts and philosophy. They show the arising perspective of intermediality in terms of adaptation of intermedial dimension to different forms of Romantic art: to poetry, to music, and to dance. Also, the authors discuss in philosophical and even ideological terms the Romantics' preoccupations with intermediality that indeed provided various points of departures for later developments. In the second part of the volume, the authors go into the manifold, enriching elaborations of modern writers, artists, and composers with Romantic arts. They show that, in these works, intermedial connections—or sometimes the conscious lack of

such connections—depict illuminating developments about the modern arts. The authors of these articles focus upon modern and postmodern intermedial developments in literature, painting, music, film, and video art with topics that range from European arts to Latin American literature.

PART I

The first two articles of this volume focus upon intermediality in the works of Romantic poetry both in Germany and in Britain. Norman Kasper discusses the historical dimension of linguistic iconicity in the poems of Ludwig Tieck and Joseph von Eichendorff. His hermeneutical argumentation points out that in their poetry iconicity is depicted neither in terms of mental images, nor as the pictorial representation derived from them, nor as an ornamented, figurative use of language, but in their poems iconicity refers to the visibility and effects of presence. By referring to their own medial options, Tieck's and Eichendorff's poems reflect an "aesthetic" that is, a sensual perception. In this process, these Romantic poems construct innovative forms of a prospective (abstract) pictorial imagery and shape the discursive conditions for the possibilities of modern art. Kasper undertakes a comparison between the question of color in the pre-Romantic era and in Romanticism. He argues that in contrast to the debate of the Early Modern Age and the Enlightenment, which was characterized by the body-mind problem, the specific romantic spirituality of color comes up as an ambiguous contribution to an aesthetic of modernity. Klara Franz discusses the topic of Romantic intermediality by examining how two opposing Romantic poetological models—which are Keats's "negative capability" and Wordsworth's "egoistical sublime"—are linked to specific ways of dealing with the image. Whereas Wordsworth's poetry attests to his entanglement with the eighteenth-century concept of the picturesque and thus tends to reproduce strategies of framing and imaginatively altering nature, Keats's ekphrasis externalizes the frame that structures the picturesque mode of viewing. Klara Franz argues that in doing so, the ekphrastic mode helps Keats to develop "a poetics of sympathy" that is based on the processes of identity loss and identification with the poetic object and thus rejects any preconceptions of the poet that might affect the process of artistic creativity.

The subsequent article discusses intermedial developments in Romantic forms of art other than literature. Arne Stollberg takes as his topic the changing perception of the concept of "tone painting" in nineteenth-century music. Stollberg recalls how at the end of the eighteenth century, the "painterly" potential of music was under the influence of the postulate of imitation and had still been exclusively applied to moving objects. With the idea of

"absolute music," a much broader scope was opened for music. Since it was no longer understood as a mimetic art, it could be connected with optical images without having to reproduce them in the strict sense. Accordingly, it became possible for such Romantic writers as Wackenroder, Tieck, and Hoffmann to affirm music's complete autonomy from the visible world and simultaneously to express musical impressions in the form of fantasy images and visual metaphors. The newly aligned relationship between the two art forms was elaborated in the artistic experiments involving several medias and in the compositions based on paintings. While discussing the latter development, Stollberg uses the example of *The Battle of the Huns* by Franz Liszt (after the eponymous fresco by Wilhelm von Kaulbach). He shows that Liszt's prerequisite was to use the narrative possibilities created in the image and to make them fruitful for the development of temporal, musical sequences.

The final articles of this section reflect upon the question of Romantic intermediality in terms of philosophy and ideology. Asko Nivala argues that discussion of Schlegel's aesthetic ideas in connection with the themes of mediality and intermediality may disclose an interesting new perspective on his philosophical thought, which also explains the difference between his thought and subjectivism. As Nivala recalls, Schlegel emphasized intersubjective communication in his philosophy instead of withdrawal into the personal sphere of mystical enthusiasm (so called "Schwärmerei"). In contrast to mysticism, Schlegel claimed that ironical distance and linguistic mediation are epistemologically indispensable. Schlegel's concept of irony as a dialectical movement mediating between fixed positions proves the relativity of every viewpoint. According to Schlegel, reaching the level of absolute knowledge was not possible as a result of conceptual labor or as an immediate feeling, but as a result of artistic work and, in that way, as a reward for artistic toil. Mattias Pirholt compares in his article two apparently very different texts written by Clemens Brentano. *Der Philister vor, in und nach der Geschichte* (1811) is a political pamphlet directed at contemporary bourgeois society, which includes disturbingly anti-Semitic items. "Erklärung der Sinnbilder auf dem Umschlage dieser Zeitschrift" (1812), in contrast, is an aesthetic text, which deals with such topics as symbolism, allegory, and mimesis. Pirholt, however, argues that the *Philister* essay is as much a work on art as it is an ideological text, and "Erklärung der Sinnbilder" addresses both political and aesthetic issues. He maintains that both texts aim at unity: the unity of art and the unity of society and, accordingly, the idea of aesthetic unity is thus a political project as well, aiming at forming a unified society. Pirholt argues that the political and aesthetic unity is formed by means of imitation, which enables Brentano to construct an ideal of sameness, that is, a paradoxical unity of similarity, identity, and difference. As Pirholt recalls, political and aesthetic sameness forms relations of identity between objects

that are similar, thus excluding the dissimilar, the alien, which in this case is the Jewish in particular.

PART II

The first article in the second part of this volume draws a link between Romantic poetry and contemporary video art. Antonio J. Jimenez-Munoz outlines the points of contact between canonical English Romantic poems and some contemporary video installations signaling continuity in the modes of artistic thought and expression. Analyzing the key works of established artists like Bill Viola, Tony Oursler, and Gary Hill, as well as those of younger artists like Sam Taylor-Wood, Matt Pyke, and Ervin Çavuşoğlu, he argues that their core tradition is not visual but textual, denoting a formal influence of key Romantic texts in their creations. Jimenez-Munoz's interpretation of video artists as "poets" helps to see their creations and their artistic statements in a new light and inserts them into a longer tradition of creators.

The following two articles of this section discuss the connections between German film and Romantic literature or visual arts. Sabine Müller elaborates in her article the link between narrativity and Hoffmann's intermedial writing style and, subsequently, the repercussion of this style at the different stages of German film between 1915 and 1933. By drawing on recent cognitive developments in narrative theory, Müller argues that the influence of intermedial stimulation is depicted as a device which enhances the narrativity of the text. While different intermedial techniques can undermine the narrator's authority and inspire self-reflexivity, the rich visuality resulting from those techniques creates suspense and enables the reader to immerse herself into the story world. The spatial formulation of the psyche thus not only results in horror effects and sensationalism but also allows for the emergence of realistic or fantastic story worlds onscreen. Martina Moeller critically addresses in her article the traditional view of German post-war rubble films which have often been addressed as simplistic films of low artistic quality that reaffirm the spectator's expectations. In contrast, Moeller argues that the rubble films such as Wolfgang Staudte's *The Murderers Are Among Us* (1946) provokes an interesting discussion on German national identity and its reconstruction after the National Socialist regime which is related to its intermedial devices. Moeller shows that Staudte's film is informed by narrative and visual elements from Romantic works of E.T.A. Hoffmann and Caspar David Friedrich, which reformulate the question of Germans' identity after the Third Reich.

The subsequent two articles explore the elaboration of Romantic notions of synesthesia and music in the works of modern art. Karl Schawelka

focuses in his article upon the role of synesthesia in the works of such Bauhaus artists as Klee and Kandinsky, who were quite familiar with the Romantic notion of synesthesia. Schawelka argues that during the Bauhaus period when they continued to explore the possibility of synesthesia for their arts, they became more aware of its metaphoric nature than the Romantics had been. Klee, for example, who used the parameters gained from music as some kind of grammar of the visual arts, was fully aware that there were not any real correspondences. Schawelka's article, which includes reflections upon the recent theoretical discussions on synesthesia, also shows that Klee, along with other Bauhaus artists, strained the possibilities of mapping a structure onto another by using material that did not promise cross-modal comparisons and whose goal was merely to express a dissonant world. Tobias Hermans examines how the typically Romantic confluence of literature and music, present in Wilhelm Müller's Romantic cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*, is elaborated in Mahler's modern *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, for which he himself wrote the lyrics. Hermans shows how Mahler employed Romantic literary motives and imagery, and he also discusses how correspondences and differences between the poets can be interpreted in the context of a post-Romantic aesthetic. Hermans does not focus on Mahler's musical dialogue with Schubert as such, but rather argues that the relationship between text and music can only be adequately described when the literary aspects of the text are regarded in intermedial terms as an integral part of the musical work.

Whereas the articles hitherto have depicted the intermedial developments in the works of European arts, the final articles of the volume expand the scope to South America and to a colonial perspective. In his article, Jacinto Fombona discusses Spanish-American Modernism, which has received Romantic sensibilities through a reading of French symbolism and Parnassians. Modernist development was led by Nicaraguan Rubén Dario, who revolutionized Spanish language poetry and prose to the extent that it is possible to date whether poems were written before or after him. Fombona argues that within Spanish-American Modernism, the travel chronicle in particular became a genre of literature benefitting from intermedial connections to other arts. Also, this genre of literature allowed its authors to construct public personas that were able to be like "a bridge" between their countries and European spaces. Fombona interprets the travel chronicles written by Venezuelan novelist Manuel Diaz Rodriguez as instances of intermediality. He argues more generally that by elaborating the European traditions, the Spanish-American writers of the Modernist period set up the elements that eventually made possible the emergence of the Spanish American contemporary novel. James Cisneros analyzes the plural forms of intermediality that emerged in River Plate Romanticism's readings of Lord Byron. A focus on

the fourth canto of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, in dialogue with an example taken from John Keats, shows the rhetorical figure of ekphrasis to hold a central place in a series of reflections on the subject's haunting relation to the past and to the "shrines" of Antiquity's artistic creations. While comparing the writings of the Argentine poets J.B. Alberdi and José Mármol, who cite the importance of Byron for their own lyrical experiments, Cisneros shows how they exclude any hybrid aesthetic, including the figure of ekphrasis, which is not merely absent, but even rejected with deliberate force. In their writings, Cisneros finds a distinct series of relations between the American subjects, the colonial past they are exorcising, and the national soil from which they have been exiled. Cisneros proposes reading this absence as a symptom of a "derivative aesthetics" that manifests itself negatively in the history of River Plate Romanticism.

NOTES

1. Friedrich Schlegel, *Ansichten und Ideen von der Christlichen Kunst*, vol. 4 of *Kritische Friedrich—Schlegel-Ausgabe*, ed. Hans Eichner (München: Ferdinand Schöningh and Zürich: Thomas Verlag, 1959), 182; Translation from ibid., *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. Peter Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 175.
2. Friedrich Schlegel, *Ansichten und Ideen von der Christlichen Kunst*, vol. 4 of *Kritische Friedrich—Schlegel-Ausgabe*, ed. Hans Eichner (München: Ferdinand Schöningh and Zürich: Thomas Verlag, 1959), 18.
3. Friedrich Schlegel, *Ansichten und Ideen von der Christlichen Kunst*, 18.
4. Robert Schumann, *Music and Musicians*, trans. and ed. Fanny Raymond Ritter (London: William Reeves, 1891), 76.

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Part I

INTERMEDIALITY IN THE ROMANTIC ARTS AND PHILOSOPHY

Chapter 1

Loss of Presentiveness—and Poetical Explanations

Linguistic Iconicity in Poetry by Tieck and Eichendorff

Norman Kasper

In the case of images in poems, it is obvious that they are not about something visible. Words differ from pictures, and the imagery of words has little to nothing to do with the imagery of pictures. That is why the rhetorically founded talk of linguistic iconicity or verbal imagery is criticized from a media-reflexive position. From the point of view indicated by the advocates of the iconic turn, visibility and visibility-based iconicity are opposed to the narrational as well as the coherence-based valances of (scientific) language, intellect, and knowledge.[1] As long as visibility structures the understanding of iconicity, language is at a disadvantage: it is said to be a kind of repression of *true iconicity* that refers to images in only a metaphorical and rhetorical way.[2] Linguistic iconicity seems to be a contradiction in terms. It has its meritorious rhetorical past, but it neglects the categorical differences structuring the relationship of image and text.

With a view to the history of linguistic iconicity, W.J.T. Mitchell distinguishes between two different traditions. To the extent that words are used in order to deflect attention away from the literal sense, it is common to attest that language has a specific metaphoric, figurative quality—as it characterizes, for example, baroque forms of manieristic poetry. By the start of the eighteenth century, rhetorical figures and tropes are said to be an ambiguous phenomenon that undermines the rationalistic postulates of clarity. They pass out of use, and a metaphor—once the main example of figurative speech—is now understood to be a kind of description.

As Mitchell argues, the term "figure" is subsequently substituted by the term "image." Images refer to the rationalistic philosophy of the mind. They mark a representationality that constitutes real pictures and linguistic iconicity in a combining mode of mental imagery. From the eighteenth century on,

phrases in many poems can be identified that try to imitate those paintings, that is to say, the clarity, vividness, and presentiveness of mental representations.[3] The suggestibility of a recognizable mental image is often what poems become interested in. In mixing two or more different images, a new linguistic iconicity emerges, as the metaphor shows. Although this iconicity is no longer tied to the imagery offered by the paintings (but rather follows its own rules in the way it combines and accentuates), the talk of verbal imagery is based on the representationalism of pictures. This means that the poem's phrases are not orientated on the effect aesthetics, which the pictorial image permits, but rather on the mental image. This kind of imagery structures and connects different semiotic systems, pictures, and texts. They are both treated as different modes of an equivalent imagery. This is the reason why a media-reflexive position is skeptical toward the use of the terms "picture" and "image" in order to characterize poetical language.

One conclusion of this skeptical attitude is that many concepts of mediality and intermediality regard image/picture and text/language as inconvertible. A figurative language seems to have no pictorial qualities at all. It is rather the product of a particular use of language that can be analyzed by directing attention to syntax, word usage, rhythm, and rhyme. In doing so, one will find not an image that can be converted into a painting, but instead an answer to the question of how poetical language differs from a descriptive literal language. It is obvious that the talk of linguistic iconicity seems to be unfounded if it is considered from this viewpoint, but is there any other way to think of the text as an original location of images?

In opposition to the confrontation of picture/image on the one hand and text/language on the other, the question arises as to what a specific iconic character of texts could be. This only makes sense if poetical language's iconicity can be described in terms of linguistic analysis. That does not otherwise mean that this kind of use of language should have nothing to do with the visibility and the imagery of a painting.[4] Therefore, language's interest in imagery is not realized within a describing function structured by the representationalism of the presented object or the rationalistic theory of mental representation. On the contrary, pictorial aesthetics, that is to say those which have a visual effect, take center stage, and linguistic iconicity can be understood both as commenting on and constructing pictorial imagery.[5] Beyond that, linguistic iconicity shapes interesting modes of visual experience. Therefore, this kind of iconicity has to be understood as an autonomous expression in the understanding and shaping of visibility. In a broader context, the construction of the aesthetic eye's iconicity within poetical discourse is more than a comment on an already existing mode of visibility; it can be seen in its performative dimension as "an active process of embodying certain cultural and historical possibilities."[6] In other words, the history of visibility dealing

with aesthetic modes of perception can be read as the process of its poetical evocation and embodiment.

This systematic explanation of the relation of language, visibility, and imagery has to be placed within an historical framework, that is to say, within eighteenth-century aesthetic debates. Linguistic and pictorial iconicity coincide in their interest in the nature and the effects of colors and light. Whereas eighteenth-century (landscape) paintings largely operate with colors to constitute their pictorial identity (and turn away from the "correct perspective" as indicated by the popular and/or classical veduta painting tradition), romantic poetry discovers the color sense and the sense of hearing.[7] Ludwig Tieck's and Joseph von Eichendorff's poems mark an important shift in the relationship of linguistic and pictorial iconicity. As I show, language's iconicity in Tieck and Eichendorff is no longer found by referring to a painting's presentiveness, as the old rationalistic adopted *ut pictura poesis* precept indicates,[8] or by a merely symbolic use of colors. As the concept of *mood* takes center stage, pictures as well as poems are led by a musicality that also structures their iconicity. Murray Krieger exemplifies the shift from the "reproductive picture to the affective sequence of words," referring to Edmund Burke (1729–1797):

> Hence, as Burke himself suggests, the model art toward which the hybrid art of literature is now to move is no longer painting or sculpture but music. The spectrum [. . .] from sculpture through painting to literature and finally to music is reversed as the realm of sound enters the debate, and the total dependence of poetry on a visual epistemology comes to an end. At an end too is the indulgence in that sort of ekphrasis which has a visually mimetic basis.[9]

As we shall see, Tieck's and Eichendorff's turning away from the mimetic is not simply induced by a break with the tradition of visual epistemology but has to be interpreted against the background of a fundamental change in understanding and shaping visibility. Historically, this musicality is part of a particular mode of seeing (later called *pure seeing* or *sheer visibility*) for which most analyses that are focused on word and image interaction have no sympathy.[10]

THE POETIC SOUND OF VISIBILITY

Firstly, a combining loss of presentiveness and representationalism must be noted in the context of a poetical language turning away from aiming at a vivid description. The loss of presentiveness in Tieck and Eichendorff is, on the one hand, a result of focusing on the sensory perception and visibility that also characterizes landscape painting—followed by a rejection of object

representation at the same time. On the other hand, the lack of presentiveness is a consequence of a language realizing its own medial—that is to say semantic, phonetic, grammatical, and rhythmical—possibilities.[11] Poetry as well as landscape painting refers to a combining iconicity—not by obliterating their medial borders, but by concentrating on their modes of expression. When discussing the accordances and differences in Tieck's and Eichendorff's linguistic iconicity, I concentrate on a form of romantic intermediality on the basis of language. That kind of romantic intermediality has to be distinguished from inquiring after the possibilities of transforming pictures into poems, as was practiced by the *monk*-figure in Tieck's and Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder's *Outpourings from the Heart of an Art-loving Monk* ("Herzensergießungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders," 1796/97) and in August Wilhelm Schlegel's *The Pictures. A Dialogue* ("Die Gemählde. Ein Gespräch," 1799).

In these writings, the inter-art relation is accentuated in the tradition of ekphrasis. Ekphrasis focuses on the verbal representation of visual objects; it is about a verbal representation of the picture that is depicted.[12] However, this kind of literary visualization strategy within the frame of the rhetorical description of a picture or a statue is already problematized in the *Outpourings*. In reflecting on the sentimental mode of an aesthetic of effect, one says a painting is ineffable, but that is not to say that there is nothing left to describe. The viewer of a painting reflects rather on his own feelings and impressions, and that emotional reflection is Tieck's and Eichendorff's favored object of interest. Nature's overwhelming effects of color, light, and sound constitute a linguistic iconicity that tries to cope with an actual viewing situation. The poetic persona, as the viewer of an impressive natural scene, is situated between, on the one hand, the poles of devotion, service, and contemplation, and on the other hand, a self-referential color treat. This is not just an artistic matter. Against the background of quasi-religious patterns, the question arises: in which way can nature's languages and signs be understood? An interpretation of a world disintegrated in a play of color and sound has probably more to do with the viewer than with the object that is seen. As nature becomes an impression to the eye and the sense of hearing, divine signs and hieroglyphic writings no longer need to be construed. They mark a series of effects, a gesture of overwhelming power. The loss of presentiveness and symbolic character indicates atmospheres of aesthetic intensity and contemplation whose drawback is a sensual pleasure losing its transcendent dignity.

Hans Blumenberg (1920–1996) has discussed the problem of the nexus of semiotic character (sign-likeness) and aesthetic perceptibility from an equal point of view. He points out the narcissistic core of a romantic nature philosophy that departs from Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814). If one accepts nature only as a product of the absolute ego (that is to say, the subjective dialectic between the ego and the non-ego), it is identified with the human mode

of encrypting its language. Nature, therefore, is not the cryptic other that can be read, but bears the traces of human perceptive structures. In Novalis's (1772–1801) *magical idealism*, as Blumenberg argues, the hieroglyphs of nature are structured by the hieroglyphistic ego.[13] In as much as the conditions of the possibility of ciphering and deciphering are bound to that ego, the landscape may lose its transcendent dignity and become a projection of human magical efforts. From the perspective indicated by *magical idealism,* the loss of presentiveness in a play of colors is nothing more than a special way of identifying sensory perception with the seen, or, to put it more in Blumenbergian fashion, the self with the totally different other.

Eichendorff's nature lyric is strongly influenced by Tieck. Concerning the loss of presentiveness, it is noticeable that Eichendorff follows Tieck in separating the appearance of colors from a structuring representationalism. Colors are, therefore, not mainly a secondary quality of objects that have to be added to the primary qualities, but the object of interest itself. In his poems, Tieck often creates sceneries in which the action and interaction of colors take center stage, supplemented or guided by sound.[14] It is the effect of the aesthetics of pure light color that Tieck is interested in: "Alle Farben müssen fließen, / Wenn ein Licht sich soll ergießen / Aus dem goldnen Brand der Kerzen" (All colors have to flow, / if a light shall pour out / from the candle's golden fire).[15] Tieck follows his program in many poems. The following verse will now be inspected in greater detail. It is taken from the *Song of Moonlight* ("Mondscheinlied"), which he wrote in 1798:

> Hinter'm Wasser wie flimmende Flammen,
> Berggipfel oben mit Gold beschienen,
> Neigen rauschend und ernst die grünen
> Gebüsche die blinkenden Häupter zusammen.
>
> (Behind the water like glimmering flames, / Mountaintops, lit by gold above, / Incline—soughing and solemn—the green / shrubberies its twinkling heads. //)[16]

The lines are characterized by four stressed syllables, which are followed irregularly by one or two unstressed syllables. The endings are always feminine, rhyming a-b-b-a, whereas the second and the third lines are half rhymes (beschienen—grünen). However, there is more to tell about the phonetic structure. The last two words of the first line ("flimmende Flammen") constitute a word-play called *annominatio*, or *paronomasia*. The initial sound (fl) of both words alliterates in a way that onomatopoetically evokes the sound of a burning flame.[17] Moreover, the verse is crossed by a chain of assonances. "H*i*nter'm" and "fl*i*mmende," as well as "W*a*sser" and "Fl*a*mmen," reveal in the first line a chiastic structured resemblance of sound. Within the third

and the fourth lines, the vowel sounds in "grünen" and "Gebüsche" harmonize (although there is a difference with regard to the vowels' lengths). The verse's sound dimension represses questions concerning the semantic level. Objects of nature ("Wasser," "Gebüsche") dissolve in the mode of their linguistic realization. The phenomenality of the seen is transposed into a structure of what can just be heard.

The listener may ask himself after hearing—when he tries to recapitulate—what is the main topic of the verse?[18] It is about nature's colors—an answer he can surely give—but it is not just about a flame or gold and green: the poem itself tries to copy the color's aesthetic effects. Taking a look at the phrases constituting the lines, one can see that they are not organized within a full sentence but as an ellipse. The first two lines are combined by a comparison. The syntagma "Hinter'm Wasser wie flimmende Flammen" is followed by the syntagma "Berggipfel oben mit Gold beschienen." From the third to the fourth line, an enjambment splits the syntagma: "Neigen rauschend und ernst die grünen / Gebüsche die blinkenden Häupter zusammen." An understanding of the semantic level is made difficult by concentrating on the formal and phonetic dimension: it seems to be no coincidence that the last stressed syllable on line three is an adjective of color, from which the reader and the listener jump into the break of the syntagma.

While reading the poem, the phonetic structure becomes more and more important. I have already mentioned that this has to be interpreted from a media-reflexive point of view. The verse's sound dimension tries to cope with an actual viewing situation. Such a combining point of reference provides a mood-based musicality. Musicality marks the *tertium comparationis*, which allows us to interpret the different sorts of signs—represented by text and image—unified in their aesthetic of impact. It is necessary to realize that this has nothing to do with converting texts into images or images into texts. It is about reading or hearing a poem not as if it is a kind of picture, but as if it takes effect in a similar way. Late eighteenth-century landscape painting, as well as nature poetry, is not interested in presenting certain objects as they would be indicated by an increased presentiveness or the rhetorical effect of hypotyposis, that is to say, the presentive description of an object. The main focus is set on the mode of sensual sensation. This loss of presentiveness is first of all a loss of meaning. Tieck reflects on this problem in a small cycle of poems entitled *Wood, Garden and Mountain* ("Wald, Garten und Berg"). The reader learns about the meaninglessness of colors from the tulips:

> Wir prangen in der kühnsten Pracht,
> Kein andrer wag's mit uns zu streiten,
> Wir glänzen daher in vollster Macht,
> Brauchen nichts anders zu bedeuten
> Als daß in uns der Schein von tausend brennenden Farben lacht.

(We are flaunting in the boldest splendor, / No one should dare to battle with us, / That is why we are glistening in utmost power, / Do not have to mean anything else, / But to show the shine of a thousand burning colors laughing. //)[19]

On the one hand, the fact that the tulips do not need to mean anything in the context of the cycle of poems is an argument against a metaphysical and religious foundation of nature, as it is developed within the same cycle of poems in the concept of *Flower Prayer* ("Blumenandacht"). On the other hand, the meaninglessness is, more generally, the outcome of a crisis of legitimacy of interpretation. The tulips' talk makes clear that nothing is here that could be read as a sign.[20] From this point of view, the "burning colors laughing" is a poetical comment on the self-reflexive structure that characterizes sensual color appearance. As Tieck's poem *The Stripling and the Life* ("Der Jüngling und das Leben") shows, there remains an open question, however: "What is it that you want—sweet playing colors [. . .]?" ("Was wollt ihr gaukelnde Farben süß [. . .]?")[21] The talk of the sweetness reflects on the sensual foundation of colors within the eye of the viewer. However, in Tieck this pleasant experience is not just about a mode of one's own feeling; it is about the feeling of the Absolute and its limits and possibilities. The main problem Tieck is reflecting on can be seen in the linking of physical and spiritual valences within an aesthetic experience of seeing. As he argues in the poem *The Sounds* ("Die Töne"), it is the sensualistic dimension that removes man from the presence of the eternal. He is, by his nature, invisible:

Er ist so nah und wieder weit zurück,
Du siehst und fühlst, dann flieht er deinem Blick,
Dem körperschweren Blick kann's nicht gelingen
Sich an den Unsichtbaren hinzudringen.

(He is so close but yet far away, / You see and feel, then he flees your eyes, / The physical eye cannot succeed / in getting in touch with the invisible. //)[22]

The corporeality of seeing, especially of seeing colors, is already an argument with a long tradition by the end of the eighteenth century: whereas colors affect only the body, form is identified with the soul and the mind. Therefore, from the sixteenth-century Italian *colore-disegno* debate to seventeenth-century French classicism and eighteenth-century German classicism, the advice or, more often, the instruction is given that colors should be subordinated to contour.[23] The freedom of colors' play in Tieck is nothing less than revolutionary. It is interesting to see the amount of vehemence with which the German romantic speaks up for a colorful setting. Phrases such as "Spätroth sieht scheidend nach der Au" ("Late red looks parting at the meadow")[24] are ahead of their time. The anthropomorphizing tries to illustrate color's activity and

intensity in its temporal dimension (eventide) as a mode of human behavior. As can be seen later within expressionist lyrics, the subjectivization of adjectives leads to the world's disintegration in the interplay of sensory information and ad-hoc significance. Admittedly, Tieck does not go so far as to do this, but he does reflect on language's possibilities to intensify the spirituality of colors.

As we have seen, the figurative use of language is not orientated toward the representationality of a mental image or its pictorial derivates, and, furthermore, it also has more than a merely ornamental function. It rather implies an epistemological dimension: the poem's figurative valances are an essential part of an argument that follows its own poetology of knowledge, avoiding the narratively structured objectivity criteria implied by the coherence standards of the scientific discourse and its types of text (treaties, essay, disquisition, etc.). In this way, lyric poetry is not only constituting its specific identity as a literary form but also commenting and, to be more precise, constructing modes of visual experience that lead to a modern, genuine pictorial imagery.[25] Especially with visibility-based imagery in mind, the poetical text has a reality-constituting function: the potentialities of visual perception and of seeing the visibility of colors and light are promoted by the evidence of the poetic form. Or, to put this performative dimension in other words, Tieck's poetry makes its own contribution to visual epistemology and, therefore, to the modernization of perception theory.[26] It might be considered as an irony of aesthetic history that a particular use of language works on a visibility trying to emancipate itself from all that has nothing to do with sensory perception. However, the combining musicality refers to an idea of aesthetic reception that is not rooted in the perspective of a semiotic-based media theory or a Hegelian works aesthetics.

POETS' KNOWLEDGE

Although this poetology of color has to be seen against the background of a neo-Platonic concept of light whose outflow can be interpreted as a divine sign,[27] the corporeality of seeing, however, remains a problem for aesthetic theory. In late-eighteenth-century idealistic as well as anthropological aesthetics, the emergence of light phenomenon is increasingly explained in terms of physiological analysis.[28] As a result, the problem of the spirituality of light and colors becomes more critical. Thus far, the development of light is located within the organ of sight, and hence it tends to lose its divine dignity. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), Johannes Müller (1801–1858), and Johann Evangelista Purkinje (1787–1869), for instance, explore the eye's nature in its energy to produce light. As early physiological optics show, certain internal or external stimuli lead to a response, and this response is

nothing other than light and color. Seeing light and color is, therefore, based on, as Johannes Müller expresses it, a "specific nerve energy."[29] The eye itself tends to assume the role of the sun or, at least, to play an equal role. From the perspective of a poetological concept of knowledge, this shifting (as indicated by the interplay of metaphysical aesthetics and physiological optics) constitutes a new metaphor. In one of his poems, Tieck praises the *Carbuncle* ("Karfunkelstein"):

> Deß Strahlen auch entfernt vom Sonnenscheine,
> Magisch mit eignem innern Feuer brennen,
> Wo sonst kein Licht wohnt, in der Erden Tiefen.
>
> (Whose rays even away from sunshine, / burn with its own fire magically, / Where there is no light, in the earth's depth. //)[30]

Tieck's interpretation of the carbuncle's method of functioning can be read as an explanation of the eye's development of light. The eye has, to quote Tieck, a magical fire too; it does not have to rely on the light of the sun to produce colors.

It is obvious that the foundation of the color's nature in the eye is a step toward a dangerous subjectivization. The reason is that the example of color shows the degree to which seeing is neither a reproduction of a "given order of visual perception in the tradition from Kepler to Kant"[31] nor, as Crary's analysis of the *Camera Obscura*'s technical and discursive functionalization shows, merely a mode of representing the seen,[32] but it has its own productive (and self-referential) core. In addition, thus far the eye as a part of the body replaces or supplements neo-Platonic light theory, the spirituality of color is at risk of being enlightened by empirical physiological optics and emotion and perception theory. The problem becomes worse when we take into account that color's free play leaves behind all standards which are formulated by a *disegno*-based representationalism. There is no artistic or inner shape—as can be found in Wackenroder's *Raphael's Vision* ("Raphaels Erscheinung")—which could vouch for a divine origin.[33] Oscillating between subjective emphases and recognition of the divine principle, the interpretation cannot be stabilized. Just one person can arbitrate between nature's colorful signs and the viewer's sensations and emotions: the poet himself. Tieck writes about an impressive evening sky that is accompanied by a vivid imagination:

> Was dieser fliehnde Schauer will bedeuten,
> Die Bildniß, die sich durch einander jagen,
> Die Glanzgestalten, die so furchtbar schreiten,
> Kann nur der Dichter offenbarend sagen.

(What this fleeing shiver wants to mean, / images hunting each other, / shapes of sparkle, moving dreadfully, / Only the poet can proclaim as a revelation. //)[34]

The poet plays the role of a seer who operates beyond the epistemologically sanctioned borders of knowledge advocated by scientific discourses and their standards of rationality and objectivity. "[R]othe Flammen" ("red flames"), "[d]er Sonnenkranz im Schimmer [. . .] [r]oth brennend" ("the glimmering solar corona [. . .] burning red"), and "Glühwolken" ("clouds of glow") are phenomena of a *pure visibility* that are transformed into signs. These hieroglyphs, addressed as "geheimnisvolle Hieroglyphen" ("mysterious hieroglyphs"),[35] can be understood as a hermeneutical control of color's free play. The wealth of the phenomenon becomes reformulated semiotically. Therefore, sign and aesthetic affect coincide. Nevertheless, since this epiphany is not self-evident, it needs a poetical transmission, as Tieck shows.

EICHENDORFF'S ADVICE TO TIECK'S FICTIONAL HEROES

A closer look at Eichendorff's work shows that he is, on the one hand, influenced by Tieck's poetical treatment of color's visibility, and, on the other hand, he seems to be skeptical about the possibility of transforming nature's wealth of phenomena into readable signs. Eichendorff's rhetorical question ("Sind die Farben denn nicht Töne, / Und die Töne bunte Schwingen?" ["Are not colors sounds, / and sounds colorful wings?"]) could in its synaesthetic character, motivated from the perspective of the aesthetics of reception, be a direct quote from Tieck nevertheless. A closer look at the first verse of *Die Zeit geht schnell* confirms this impression:

Lieb Vöglein, vor Blüten
Sieht man dich kaum!
Vom dämmernd beglühten
Flüsternden Baum,
Wann von blitzenden Funken
Sprühn Täler und Quell,
Singst du frühlingstrunken—
Aber die Zeit geht schnell.

(Dear birdy, because of flowers / you can hardly be seen! / From the dawned glowing / whispering tree, / When twinkling sparks / let valleys and sources shine, / You sing drunk with spring— / But time goes by quickly. //)[36]

Looking beyond the melancholic undertone which is so characteristic of Eichendorff, we find a language indicating an atmosphere of aesthetic