



Visiting Professor Program Academic Year 2024/2025

TEACHING COMMITMENT: 18 hours

COURSE TITLE

The Meaning of Images. Iconology from Aby Warburg to Contemporary Visual Culture

TEACHING PERIOD

2nd term

SCIENTIFIC AREA

Aesthetics

LANGUAGE USED TO TEACH

Italian

COURSE SUMMARY

The course aims to acquaint students with iconology, a method for interpreting images that explores their implicit meanings by contextualizing them historically and analyzing the interplay between images, texts, and symbols. Initially, the lectures will trace the roots of the iconological method starting with the works of German art historian Aby Warburg (1866-1929). Subsequently, the course will explore the evolution of iconology through scholars associated with the Warburg school, such as Erwin Panofsky, Gertrud Bing, and Ernst Gombrich. The latter part of the course will focus on how the iconological method, from its inception, has examined images not only in the realm of figurative arts but also in popular culture and folklore. We will look into case studies that illustrate this relationship, and we will thereby touch on a specifically aesthetic question, namely, how iconological studies may have the potential to transform our very definition of figurative art.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The course aims to provide students with an ability to critically understand images as a product of a socio-cultural context. By the end of the course, students should have developed a sensitivity to the historical contextualization of images, the possibility of relating them to other cultural products (primarily written documents), and the relationship between artistic and non-artistic images. Students will also need to be able to understand, critique and analyze texts discussed in class. They will need to demonstrate the ability to present, orally or in writing, the result of their reflections and study.

The teaching approach will involve a combination of lectures, small group discussions, and close analysis of texts and images.

OTHER ACTIVITIES BESIDES THE COURSE

The Visiting Professor will be involved with the activities of the Aesthetics Research group of Turin and will take part to at least one lesson of the teaching on Landscape aesthetics in the framework of the international master Cultural Heritage (Biella).

VISITING PROFESSOR PROFILE

A lecturer in philosophical aesthetics with expertise in iconology and the history and science of images is sought. The lecturer must have experience in interdisciplinary research and teaching at an international level.

CONTACT REFERENT

Paolo Furia
paolo.furia@unito.it