ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Visualizing Recognition

1. Introduction

My point of departure will be several related articles and a review published recently in the journal *Argumentation and Advocacy* that focus renewed attention on the question of whether visual images can be understood as arguments. And if so, then how? Should logic, rhetoric, or aesthetics be taken as the foundation upon which images can be understood as depicting an argument? Indeed, is a conceptual approach alone sufficient, or satisfactory?

These recent position papers review many a traditional answer; the conflict between image and concept is as old as the rivalry between rhetoric and philosophy. Some of these articles advocate taking one side of this relentless antagonism against the other. For example, J. Anthony Blair (1996) and David Fleming (1996) doubt that images can be understood as arguments unless and until their (manifest and latent) content is reconstructed into propositional terms, thus repeating the familiar subordination of aesthetics, literature, and rhetoric to the perspective of logic as the proper and sole critical method in the field of argument studies.

Gretchen Barbatsis (1996) takes the opposite approach and imports critical methods from literature, aesthetics, and media criticism to show precisely how much the reduction of an image to a proposition is a *misreading* that fails to understand the potential for manipulation in modern mediated forms of communication. And a recent collection of articles reviewed by Lenore Langsdorf advocates 'visual literacy' and a "recognition that a visual argument is, despite appearances of spontaneity, in fact being made by an unacknowledged argument partner, for less than evident purposes, and culminating in other than obvious conclusions" (1996: 50).

In many ways, the dispute over critical methods in the analysis of images raises two additional theoretical issues. The first is whether a *descriptive* or a *normative* model is the most appropriate for understanding the image as communicative form. The second is whether 'argumentation studies' as a discursive field should welcome or resist this importation of analytical models and critical methods from

disciplines other than logic. Fleming resists just these centrifugal tendencies and wonders, rhetorically, if we now are to recognize pictures as arguments, "do we risk losing something important in our conventional understanding of argument?" (1996: 11). But whose 'conventional understanding' is at stake?: his restrictive sense of 'argument fields' limits debate by accepting only those definitions of argumentation already advanced by recognized authors in the same scholarly journals that promote a limited (and primarily deductive) definition of argument. This is a legitimate, but ultimately sterile move, although in extreme cases it raises the specter of a possible incommensurability of assumptions when these move across divergent disciplines. Yet since most argument scholars accept the norm that narrowing differences of opinion should count as the operative definition of the purpose of argumentation, this should not pose a real danger (except in cases of *unsuccessful* argument). Finally, as David Birdsell and Leo Groarke remind us: "Most scholars who study argumentation theory are... preoccupied with methods of analyzing arguments which emphasize verbal elements and show little or no recognition of other possibilities, or even the relationship between words and other symbolic forms" (1996: 1).

This paper will sketch a response to this antagonism between descriptive and normative models by attempting a reciprocity of perspectives. This reciprocity is enthymematic; no one field can supply sufficient premises alone, and so must invite participation by another in a dialogic attempt to address whether images are arguments.

Thus, I propose to use the idea of an argumentative or dialectical reciprocity of concept and image to address the issues. I then will raise the issue of *recognition* as a key to unlock this door of dialectical reciprocity. Behind that door we will come face to ace, in spirit at least, with Herr Professor G. W. F. Hegel and address selective issues in the infamous *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1977). My secondary purpose is to move the field of argument studies away from reiterating such *ad hominems* (abusive) about Hegel as we find in Charles Willard (1996), for instance, and recognize the value of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as a masterwork of argument that integrates rhetoric and philosophy, image and concept (Verene 1985). This paper will focus these concerns by raising the possibility, actuality, and limitations of using informal logic and deductive analysis in the interpretation of images.

2. Recognizing the Enthymeme

Most textbook definitions of the enthymeme, and they are profuse, compare it to the syllogism and so emphasize the enthymeme's abbreviated form. Again, most theorists approach the enthymeme as a deductive, one-premise, and thus incomplete argument that invites an average audience or learned logician to supply the missing links in the chain of reasoning. The exceptions to this procedure are few yet noteworthy: Francesca Piazza (1995) claims this traditional account is itself incomplete because it ignores (or suppresses) the larger 'rhetorical situation' of antiquity. Instead of restricting our premises a priori, Piazza proposes a more encompassing, even symbolic reading of the enthymeme that recognizes the *practical, persuasive*, and hence the *public* aspects of this popular form of argumentation. The *public* in the ancient world was not an abstract concept (as theorists today prefer to reconstruct it), but an immediate interpersonal encounter in the agora, theatre, courtroom, legislative assembly, and even the household. The public itself was constituted symbolically through the interplay of words and images presented in just such places. The 'Athenians,' for example, would associate commonly held images and entertain commonplaces of experience by using their most familiar form of reasoning: the enthymeme was a primary vehicle that allowed the ancients to recognize who they were, as sophistic rhetoric well understood.

In contrast to the restrictive deductivist account, Piazza suggests a more complete and systematic reconstruction of enthymematic argument that recognizes at least six distinctive features of the natural logic of debate. This "wider conception," she writes, "takes into account not only the formal characteristics of enthymeme but also the contents, the aims and the conditions in which it is used" (1995: 146). Her insightful historical reconstruction deserves a wider audience.

Traditional accounts start with Aristotle's theory as presented in *On Rhetoric* and elsewhere, but those usually fail to recognize that even here the "enthymeme is more complex that its interpretation as an imperfect or incomplete argument" (Piazza 1995: 146). Piazza notes two striking deficiencies. First, traditional accounts fail to recognize the earlier pre-Socratic use of the word by such orators as Isocrates and Alcidamas to indicate the general public reflection that precedes an emotional decision. In sophistic rhetoric *enthymema* aimed "at the emotional and intellectual involvement of the audience, using suitable language" (147). When Aristotle later offers the first conceptual definition of the enthymeme in *On Rhetoric*, the real novelty lies in "reconstructing the rhetorical issue from a

logical point of view, to the extent that rhetoric becomes the 'antistrophos' of dialectic" (147). As elsewhere in the text, Aristotle's famous opening definition of rhetoric (dialectically) blends image and concept, thus helping the reader visualize the placement of these two arts of language by borrowing an image from tragedy.

Antistrophos indicates the dramatic countermovement of the chorus across the stage, and by analogy, situates the analytic syntax of these emotional and intellectual counterparts before our eyes (Heeney 1997).

Regretfully, space permits only a listing of Piazza's six reconstructive characteristics of the body of the enthymeme:

1. *Nature of the contents*
2. *Nature of the premises*
3. *The relation between premises and conclusion*
4. *The role of the interlocutor*
5. *Way of expression (style)*
6. *The complexity of reasoning*

I will examine and extend her arguments only for the second aspect; this alone will offer a telling contrast with the predominantly deductive accounts of enthymeme that suppress the larger semantic field of terms Aristotle actually used, and his audience would recognize. Piazza reminds us that Aristotle says enthymemes start with premises that are either *eikota* or *semeia*, usually translated as probabilities or signs respectively. Both Greek terms operate in the larger semantic field of *visual associations:* classical philosophers used *eikasia* to denote (and often demean) the activity of perceiving mere images and reflections (Peters 1967: 51). In Plato, *eikon* names the visible image taken as a sign of the intelligible but invisible Forms – we must start with only probable and perceptible images to reach, in dialogue with the philosopher, the ultimate in abstract thought, the concept of Truth. Probabilities and signs function by creating an intermediary place between knowledge and ignorance, just as in ancient Greek itself the 'middle voice' was used primarily in their verbs that associate seeing and thinking – the visual aspect of experience semantically shaped the terms used to refer to thought and recognition (Prier 1989). And 'signs' are notoriously visual phenomena, in both ancient literature and common speech (Auerbach 1953).

So, 'probabilities' invoke semantic associations in popular language and natural logic that remind us of publicly held images – I suggest that 'probabilities' can call

forth visual commonplaces in the mind of the audience. As a technical term among philosophers, a 'probability' now functions as a imagistic starting point for reflection. We must 'recognize' (*anagnorisis* in Aristotle's *Poetics*) that before one can theorize or make conceptual distinctions – both highly literate operations – one must be able to decode or read the written characters placed before our eyes (Heeney 1997). Thus, if enthymemes start with probabilities or signs that carry visual associations, we can say they also represent the visually-oriented thought processes typical or common among a particular group. One of the most common public spaces where an audience would likely hear enthymemes was the theatre, the ancient *theatron* or 'seeing-place' (Staub 1997). And in antiquity, thought is associated lexically with the power of visualization (Jay 1995). An enthymeme, in short, unifies an immediate and often dramatically sensuous image (as content) already found in the popular mind or memory with the more abstract forms of reasoning scholars will later investigate as argumentation. This 'wider conception' of the enthymeme does justice to the natural logic of actual historical, not idealized audiences.

Working backward from the use and abuse of visual images today in our media-saturated environment to the concepts that will describe them, scholars have noted how political campaign commercials, and even graphic cartoons, naturally assume enthymematic form. In practice, public 'intermediated' argument is less rational, and more highly visual and incomplete, than a cognitivist or deductivist would prefer; enthymematic interaction is often quite pictorial and so will "intermediate with words and participate in the arguments they rehearse" (Birdsell 1995: 159). Kathleen Hall Jamieson's work on political advertising is perhaps the most well known and carefully documented; the "complicitous audience" participates by supplying the suppressed premise through visual association. Indeed, "some of the classics in political advertising function enthymematically" (1992: 61).

Returning to the articles and question that inspired this investigation – 'can images be arguments' – we are now better prepared to sketch an answer. Analyzing the visual production techniques common to television, for instance, Barbatsis describes how negative political advertising in particular is self-conscious about 'sightedness': "Each [ad] uses what we see in the literal act of enhanced viewing for background evidence against which it scrutinizes how we see" (1996: 77). This deliberate (and reflexive) visual reference to the camera as conscious viewpoint is called "direct viewer address," and through this rhetorical

mode of audience engagement we "can enter into a communication transaction not unlike an interpersonal face-to-face encounter" (77). Thus, the staged visuals of television can remind viewers of their actual interpersonal encounters.

3. Visualizing Recognition

The problem of *recognition* is best situated as part of the turn toward a practical theory of argument that encompasses the ethical aspects of social reasoning. Contemporary theorists of argument will recognize affinities with the theory of communicative rationality advanced by Jurgen Habermas. Lately, Habermas's interest in the role of argument and social praxis is linked to an engagement with his critics and contemporaries; critical theory now raises the issue of modernity, and with it, recovery of the traditional rivalry between rhetoric and philosophy (Habermas 1987).

Habermas's critique of modernity is focused on revising the classical philosophy of the subject we inherit from the Enlightenment. Specifically, Habermas joins many others and attacks the notion of an isolated, liberal individual as possessor of rights, and one who yet also maintains legal relations with others and the state. Habermas appreciates that Hegel's idea of recognition offers an important *counterdiscourse* against this modernist fixation on the formalist (and thus empty) philosophy of the subject. This turn toward understanding the pragmatics of actual social reasoning is also part of a growing disenchantment with formal logic as at all helpful in understanding the self; here Henry Johnstone's recent revision of his previous commitment to formal logic is indicative of this shift of critical attention (Johnstone 1983, and Heeney 1995).

A major reason the analysis of visual meaning must build upon our everyday experience, and not just isolated sentences understood as propositions, is that form and content cannot be separated if we hope to understand what we see. Formal logic presupposes precisely the opposite, and proceeds on the assumption that "form and content are unrelated and mutually independent, which is itself a metaphysical assumption" (Harris 1987: 24). The philosopher Errol Harris continues his explication of the often disguised or hidden metaphysical presuppositions of formal logic with the generally accepted observation that "validity in reasoning is what guarantees true conclusions from true premises, and that can be ensured only on the ground of some real connection in the content." Visual inference as a form of reasoning offers just such an analogical and internal connection between reality and the content of experience. Harris summarizes these thoughts: "Principles of valid inference, therefore, can hardly

be independent entirely of the nature of the subject matter, unless they are to be altogether trivial and ineffectual" (24).

J. Anthony Blair (1996) offers a fairly Standard Treatment of how concepts and images are interrelated. His strategy is one of *containment* in the double sense of limiting the scope of the issue, and also of incorporating or subsuming the visual within the logical aspects of argumentation. Blair attempts to contain the notorious ambiguity of visual images by reformulating their meaning as a question of how well the image can mimic the traditional logical form of propositional reasoning. Semantic inference, and hence argumentative function, are essentially and equally abstract for Blair whether conducted in images or words:

Visual arguments are to be understood as propositional arguments in which the propositions and their argumentative function and roles are expressed visually, for example by painting and drawings, photographs, sculpture, film or video images, cartoons, animations, or computer-designed visuals. Is it possible to express argumentation visually?

To answer this key rhetorical question, Blair suggests that all explicitly spoken or written use of language (absent counter-indications) can be taken as asserting a propositional content. The mere form of this assertoric statement, whether verbalized or written, nevertheless invokes what Blair characterizes (without argument) as the "default function" of language per se, thus implying a logical claim that can be analyzed explicitly. Everyday speech, whether it recognizes it or not, implies a logically explicable inference.

Not so with visual expression (and by implication most non-verbal communication); without a "default function" for such expressive forms of communication, this content cannot be analyzed on the earlier model of the propositional statement. Blair's argument, therefore, turns on maintaining a rigid and fairly standard distinction between *expression* as a form of showing, and *saying* as a form of asserting. This reproduces the classic dichotomy of image and word, thus containing (or ignoring) the threat and implications of expressivity (Taylor 1989). Recognition is a central concept at issue in the analysis of literature, art history, and criticism generally (Bal 1991). The issue of recognition is raised explicitly if briefly by Blair only in the case of expressive and artistic form, and ignored in the instance of assertoric implicature; this is a telling omission as we shall see.

At a crucial point in the exposition of his argument – significantly at the only point he actually reproduces any visual images in the text – Blair invokes three static but nonetheless compelling frames from a quite innovative and prominent 1996 print advertising campaign by the socially-conscious Bennetton clothing company. Since I cannot replicate the images here, I will rely on the rhetorical gesture of *ecphrasis* to evoke the images before the mind's eye.

In the first of three reproduced illustrations, the ad shows a closeup of three human hearts simply labeled "white," "black," and "yellow" together with an adjacent box containing the trademark phrase – "United Colors of Bennetton" (1996: 30). Blair reduces the propositional content of this 'visual argument' to the inference that humans are all alike under the skin. The second image is a closely-cropped frame depicting the head and shoulders of two nicely-adorned and stylishly-coiffured young girls, one white and one black, and the only words this time are the infamous company slogan. This suggests to Blair the visual proposition that children are innocent of adult prejudices like racism. The final ad is a tightly framed midsection image of two similarly clothed males that focuses on their hands, again one white and the other black, handcuffed together.

This last dramatic image of yoked 'prisoners' contains no words at all, but suggests to Blair that "we are locked together, white and black... and we are prisoners of our own prejudices" (30). Blair does imply, by the very choice of these commercial images, at least two additional issues left mostly unacknowledged. Considered as advertisements, especially the issue-and culturally-sensitive ones in this infamous Bennetton campaign, we should acknowledge that their target audience will be focused on the politics of esteem. This idea is lost in Blair's rather flat sense of *evocative* – he claims only that (presumably sensitive) viewers will identify with the images, and therefore engage in their enthymematic and supplemental reasoning.

Second, Blair's rather flat logical analysis ignores this larger rhetorical situation. This includes the historically based and culturally attuned notion of a *pretext* for the ads (the civil rights and current identity campaigns, for instance), as well as the somewhat ambivalent *context* of their appearance (Bal 1991). In other words, Blair fits the visual storytelling of these ads into the reassuring but empty (ahistorical) context of logical propositions, thus making his act of reading a mere translation from the slavish image to the masterly domain of logic.

The last of the series evokes the following philosophical analogyfrom Blair:

The identical clothing suggests equality. It is possible to find in the photo a

reminder of Hegel's master-slave commentary: the uniformativeness of the picture as to which man is the controller and which is the controlled (if either) reminds us of Hegel's point that the master is controlled by the relationship by which he supposedly exerts control, and the slave has a measure of control in the relationship whereby he supposedly is denied any control, and that thus freedom for either one entails freedom for the other (30).

Obviously, the average viewer's first response does not automatically recollect Hegel's celebrated depiction of the struggle for recognition in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Yet the issue of *recognition* is central to my argument and invoked implicitly, and sometimes explicitly and in contradictory ways, in Blair. This passing and incomplete reference is important, for other than citing contemporary argument scholars and naming several famous paintings or commercial images, Blair does not mention another philosopher.

4. Recognizing Hegel

Turning Blair's rhetorical question around ("is it possible to express argumentation visually?"), I now want to inquire – is it possible to visualize recognition? My argument depends on invoking Hegel's master-slave dialectic as the primary instance of how recognition functions in social interaction, including public argument. The problematic of recognition is found in later works by Hegel as well, but these appearances will not concern us here (see Williams 1997).

The standard treatment of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, if such a thing can be summarized, suggests that Hegel wished to trace the unfolding of the idea of Geist (spirit or mind) throughout history as it temporarily inhabits a local culture or individual, then moves on leaving only a memory. For Hegel, recognition operates as the overarching ethical category within which intersubjectivity operates; the dialectic of 'master and slave' from the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is but one instance, albeit one of the most famous along with the fate of 'unhappy consciousness' perhaps, of how intersubjective
understanding develops (Butler 1997).

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* in notable, even exceptional insofar as the text combines discursive and imaginative aspects in its phenomenological understanding of the journey of consciousness. Donald Phillip Verene's remarkable analysis of the text shows how Hegel "combines the great discursive power of his thought with an equally great rhetorical power of expression." Verene rightly suggests that the book's self-proclaimed "voyage of discovery" introduces a "work of vast imaginative and rational structure, a colossus without

equal in modern philosophy" (1985: ix). In brief, Hegel unites content and form within the notion of the concrete concept, meaning the actually realized form thinking must assume in any age. In our modern and mass-mediated age, this concrete form is almost devoid of actual content, yet retains the residual image or ghost of thought when mediated through the 'consciousness-industry' that substitutes entertainment for enlightenment. Hence, the question before us – can images be arguments – must now recognize the curious relation mediated modernity itself assumes.

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* narrates this struggle between imaginative and conceptual forms of thinking, moving from appearance to reality as if through a "picture gallery." The image (*bild*) offers us 'metaphorical speech' as its proper form, while the concept (*Begriff*) assumes the form of 'propositional speech.' Hegel desires to synthesize both within the idea of the 'speculative sentence' (Verene 1985: 3). I want to suggest, quite tentatively here, that the image as 'enthymematic speech' becomes our way of recognizing the form this unity (of descriptive and normative) assumes today.

Understanding the form recognition assumes can be raised in two ways; first in the rhetorical and imagistic development of Hegel's text itself. Next, by suggesting Hegel's usefulness for understanding the discursive implications of such contemporary normative issues as multiculturalism, feminism, and other such struggles for recognition. Disentangling Hegel's reputation from the myths and misunderstandings that encumber the reception of his work must wait for another occasion (Stewart 1996). I will only suggest that the 'pragma-dialectical' approach (given the tacit Hegelian title especially) should find Hegel particularly useful, but only insofar as the advocates themselves recognize and then distance themselves from the anti-Hegelian bias of Karl Popper, one of their primary original inspirations. Here, Hegel provides all those who want to develop a richer and deeper sense of selfhood with a critique of (metaphysical) assumptions and also with the exemplary arguments needed to confront the 'atomized subject' of traditional liberal democratic theory, or supplement the 'empty subject' of informal logic.

Hegel's ambition is as grand as his language notoriously difficult to negotiate: the *Phenomenology of Spirit* outlines the developmental stages through which all possible forms of consciousness will pass on the way to knowledge of the Absolute. Judith Butler aptly identifies the paradox at the center of the text: since the book is a "*Bildungsroman*, an optimistic narrative of adventure and

edification, a pilgrimage of the spirit… it is unclear how Hegel's narrative structure argues the metaphysical case he wants to make" (1987: 17).

Neither knowledge nor that most abstract of concepts, the Absolute, are themselves realized or assumed as accomplished totalities; both function as *tropes* of the process of the journey of consciousness toward self-imposed goals. This journey of consciousness moves outward initially to become aware of external objects, then detours through a struggle with other persons for mutual recognition, before returning inward and back to itself as a newly won self-certainty of reason; since consciousness is now mediated socially, desire enters this primarily interpersonal scheme in the struggle for esteem (Williams 1992, Butler 1997). Hegel's exposition of the developmental stages on the journey toward certainty starts with the senses, then moves to recognize the agonistic of selfhood, and finally dialectically integrates these outward and inward moments in the question of the actuality of historical reason. Without reproducing all of Hegel's technical language and intricate argumentation, a few more comments in mostly everyday terms are warranted to help us understand the rhetorical tropes animating the first two stages of this dialectical process, anyway. Hegel's later focus on Reason's historical vissisitudes will be addressed another time.

The first and most primitive stage in the formation of consciousness is the basic desire to understand. Our desire to know simply turns outward and so relies on '*sense*-certainty' to grasp what is before us at any moment. This form of knowledge naively addresses things as they actually appear to our senses. This wordless immediacy is the certainty only of a 'this' or 'that,' what Hegel calls pure particularity in the here and now. The 'subject' as agency has not yet arrived on stage – here we encounter only the deceptions of perceptual immediacy. Hegel hopes that we might conclude that all belief in the determinate or in particularity as an absolute starting point is nothing but misplaced certainty (Butler 1987). These supposedly simple and pure sense reflections are certainly only our projections of the need for our inner reality to assume an external and determinate form. Neither consciousness nor world as starting points alone can offer the certainty we desire.

In his exposition of traditional empirical knowledge claims, Hegel believes he has refuted the idea that we can have knowledge at all, or all at once, without the universality of language-mediated concepts. Thus, the claims for sense-certainty or direct empirical knowledge, taken at face value, refute themselves because we really cannot know pure particularity – even sense experience must employ a

conceptual scheme.

In this first stage, and progressively throughout the text, it is fair to say that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* proceeds enthymematically. It is only through a reader's encounter with the text, and then his or her incorporation of its phenomenology of the reflexivity of consciousness, that the 'meaning' Hegel wants to communicate can enact itself. As an incomplete inference, the enthymeme is a trope of this communicative movement of consciousness that requires we recognize another before we can realize ourself. We are asked to identify with each successive stage in the journey, only to learn that our belief in its reality was misplaced because each episode was partial, incomplete, and implies another: this subversion of misplaced identification allows us to recognize that each scene is itself only a false premise or probable starting point (Butler 1987). Each stage, in other words, is enthymematic, inviting audience (readerly) involvement in the movement of consciousness. Each successive premise is only an *eikon* or *semeia*, a probable and partial image or sign along the way to be travelled. Each stage of the journey is only a likely resting point and so infers another as eventual replacement.

The second stage in the journey of consciousness addresses the conditions that make '*self*-certainty' possible. After we recognize that our language-schemes create some coherence out of otherwise unmediated sense-data, we can then face another, even more symbolically mediated form of recognition. In several metaphorically-charged passages, Hegel suggests that we come to know ourselves (instead of the particularity of sense-experience), only in and through a struggle for recognition by another person. Hegel introduces the celebrated 'master-slave dialectic' as a rhetorical figure of thought and dramatic scheme of the agon of understanding itself.

This struggle for mutual recognition is conducted as if it were a life and death battle. What is won is another's esteem – and thereby a potential mastery of self-identity – yet only when we also recognize that we have lost the ability to know ourselves without mediation through interpersonal struggle. These general assumptions are perhaps more familiar today in the (Hegelian) resources provided by George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism, or in the dialectical thought animating the work of Mikhail Bakhtin.

The desire to 'know thyself' must be mediated through this reciprocal engagement of interpersonal communication (Williams 1992). There can be no a priori or even intuitive sense of an independent, purely particular self. Self-understanding is always already dependent upon involvement in the process of

desiring another's acknowledgment and esteem. The turn inward occurs only after we first move outward to confront, and then struggle with another for mutual recognition. We must recognize the world of other subjects as a precondition for self-knowledge. Personal identity is formed, and sometimes malformed, in and through a dialogue with other socially-structured beings. The struggle for recognition suggests that our identity must be negotiated, and can be symbolically withheld or injured by another. Thus, the 'subject' is not a thing, but rather has substance only to the degree that we recognize this reflexive structure of reciprocity (Butler 1987: 8)

'Master' and 'slave,' however, must be understood as figurative descriptions of the unstable and negotiated 'subject' positions in any dialectical process. In the battle for esteem, the master appears victorious by having won the recognition of another, just as the loser appears slave of another's will. Yet Hegel's famous rhetorical figure of master and slave tropes these roles, turning defeat into partial independence, and victory into unwitting dependence. Whereas esteem and consumption are indeed prerogatives of one who has (temporarily) mastered the struggle for recognition, and just as negotiable tokens often register this same achievement, so to must we recognize this victory as entirely symbolic, hence unstable. The 'master' is actually dependent upon another's recognition, and this interpersonal relation is being renegotiated continually. The symbolic 'slave,' however, performs the 'labor of the negative' that figures in all such dialectical thought. For in addition to acknowledging another, the 'slave' transforms the material world through labor. As Marx would later trope Hegel's figure of thought, this actually gives ideas real shape and meaningful existence, and this act informs not just nature, but transforms oneself as well in the same process. This makes the symbolic 'slave,' ironically speaking, more aware of how consciousness really works because one is now able not just to give or receive another's esteem (a symbolic gesture), but actually transform themselves through this interpersonal process.

The dialectical movement of Hegel's text dramatizes just this endlessly figurative aspect of the interplay of substance and subject. Hegel's agon of recognition also implies that we can never master desire any more than we can stop the flow of experience or ignore the encounter with difference. Knowledge is this movement that requires others as the reflexive moment when we discover another consciousness, and so must recognize ourselves differently.

The subject *is* this recognition of the necessity of mediation. Hence, as Judith

Butler (1987) emphasizes, we also must recognize the residually unformalizable aspect of this interplay of grammer and thought – the 'subject' is dramatized *dialexically* by holding substance in suspension precisely in order to be known. The moment we claim a positive extralinguistic reality for the 'subject,' it either becomes our 'idol' or else refutes itself.

5. Conclusion

This long excursus through Hegelian metaphors might yet help us visualize the struggle for recognition that images can evoke, at least tacitly. The image as enthymematic reasoning is addressed to a spectator, and enlists the memories commonplace in the public sphere. This reminder or rediscovery of the original 'rhetorical situation' of the enthymeme can serve as a prototype of how any public uses (and abuses) words and images to constitute itself, and then recognize variations on this theme of identity.

The modern media spectacle offers the theorist an occasion to speculate on the possibility and actuality of visual arguments. This prospect is both comic and tragic, as Hegel recognized. The symbolic form of visually 'intermediated' public argument is enthymematic.

Charles Taylor engages these Hegelian tropes in a thoughtful analysis of the contemporary social debates about the politics of recognition. This current climate of opinion also struggles to reunite the normative and discursive aspects of thought. Taylor argues for two senses of recognition animating our (North-Atlantic) debates about gender, race, and social identity. These debates are (literally) paraded before our eyes in a media spectacle that contests memories, demands recognition of incomplete acceptance in the past, and so visually thematizes the possibility and actuality of public reasoning.

Taylor traces the historical and philosophical development of the concept of recognition, and then distinguishes between (1) a "politics of equal dignity" and (2) a "politics of difference" (1992: 38) The first, the political struggle for the recognition of equal dignity as a person, has been won insofar as states have enacted civil rights laws and courts have recognized entailments that regulate and protect our civil interactions with one another. The second, the currently politicized struggle for the recognition of different socially constituted identities, is ongoing. More symbolically yet, these struggles are in conflict over the principle of what constitutes recognition. Taylor traces the co-evolution of two, potentially conflicting principles of recognition; the first employs a universality, the second a particularized version. Most political theorists define the test of the

first, universalist version of equal respect as a difference-blind treatment of individual cases. This recognizes (and blends) the Kantian ethical principle of universalizability with the respect for individually realized human potential we inherit from Herder in particular (Taylor 1989), and the Romantics in general (Klemm 1997). The politics of difference, in contrast, only recognizes the claims for equal dignity of different groups and demands the right to be different be recognized by all. Visualizing recognition reminds us of the need to include actual public images in any analysis of arguments. Otherwise, we talk only amongst ourselves.

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