

IMAGES AND PICTURES AS MODELS AND METAPHORS IN LITERARY NARRATIVES

1. Images, Icons, and Iconicity

1.1. Iconicity as a general and an artistic phenomenon represents an old theoretical problem in various disciplines. It can also be fruitfully analysed from a semiotic point of view. This field of investigation includes such intricate questions as, for example, the iconic character of works of art (e.g., in the conception of Charles Morris¹), figurative or metaphorical use of language (e.g., Tzvetan Todorov²), etc. If we are considering the problem more exactly, a common semantic problem, namely the referential relation between object and sign, can be discerned in all different cases (Peirce speaks in this respect of the object relation of a sign). In iconic signs, this relation is characterized by similarity.³ However, the general notion of similarity is, in many cases, not sufficient for an explication of iconicity, and Peirce himself differentiated between different kinds of 'icons', that is, 'images', 'diagrams', and 'metaphors' (Sebeok 1994, 85), which all are explicable by some sort of iconicity, but they also pose such questions as identity, analogy, similarity, arbitrariness, and motivation of such signs (Sebeok 1994, 87).

The problem becomes more complicated if we are dealing with works of art of a verbal-linguistic character, i.e. with literary texts, which — corresponding to Morris — should have a general iconic character, but, as they are composed of linguistic signs, this iconicity can be realized only in an indirect way. Verbal/linguistic signs are, first of all, symbols sharing no similarity with their object, this relation between sign and object being rather "arbitrary." However, it cannot be denied that natural language and verbal/linguistic signs can have a certain iconic character, as e.g. comparisons, metaphors, etc. have, i.e. different means of 'figurative expression/speech'

¹ Cf. Morris 1992, where a very general iconic character of works of art is supposed, and not specified for the different arts, which can naturally lead to some difficulties in the application of Morris' conception.

² For a general outline of different theoretical approaches to the complex of metaphor cf. Todorov 1977

³ "Das *Icon* ist nach Peirce ein Zeichen, das sein Objekt bezeichnet, indem es dieses Objekt abbildet, bzw. imitiert. Es muss gewisse Merkmale mit dem Objekt gemeinsam haben, das heißt, es repräsentiert das Objekt aufgrund von Ähnlichkeiten" (Walther 1979, 63).

are based on similarity, so that they could be called 'second level icons'.⁴ In language and therefore also in literary texts, there are, in my opinion, multiple transitions between iconicity and symbolization, and, although literature has been often considered as "figurative or metaphoric speech," this figurative or metaphoric character arises out of the symbolicity of language as "second level iconicity," and a specific quality of literary texts can even be searched for in the tension between symbolicity and iconicity.

1.2. In a specific case, this tension becomes especially interesting and striking if "primary" icons (or even more so 'images' in the sense of Peirce) are parts of a string of verbal (= symbolic) signs. This is the case of embedding (fictional or also non-fictional) works of art, above all pictures-paintings into a class of literary texts, i.e. into literary narratives, although these texts are in general supposed to have less iconicity. This phenomenon, occurring frequently in literary works, seems to be in opposition to the famous distinction of Lessing between pictorial arts (above all painting) and literature. Lessing himself relies on a long tradition (arising, for example, from Simonides) of discussing the problem by supposing that the categories of 'space' and 'time' could serve as the basis of this distinction, 'space' being more constitutive for painting, and 'time', for literature: painting could represent time relations (acts) only as spatial phenomena, whereby literature is able to represent space ("bodies") as temporal phenomena, i.e. by turning them into actions.⁵

I will not discuss here the importance of 'space' in literary texts and their organisation through spatial categories, I will only emphasize the relativity of Lessing's distinction, which has been often discussed and also questioned, e.g. through the claim of the Romantic aesthetics for a "progressive universal poetry" (= Universalpoesie) the "mission" of which "is not merely to reunite all separate genres of poetry and to put poetry in touch with philosophy and rhetorics. It will, and should, now mingle and now amalgamate poetry and prose, genius and criticism, the poetry of art and the poetry of nature, [...] It embraces everything poetic, from the greatest system of art, [...]"⁶ This conception can also be understood (and enlarged) as dissolving the boundaries between painting and literature. It is not surprising that some of the "early Romanticists" (e.g. Wackenroder, Novalis, August Wilhelm Schlegel and Friedrich Schlegel) were also concerned with paintings and painters in describing and analysing them as examples for romantic art: "Fine poetic Hogarthisms, for example, love. Hogarth's sheets are novels. Hogarth's works are pictured

⁴ Cf. Walther's discussion about verbal signs: "In ihrer Funktion als Adjektive, Bilder, Vergleiche, Metaphern usw. sind sie jedoch von echten, genuinen Iconen abgeleitete, degenerierte Icone (z.B. das Wort »blau« für die blaue Farbe)." (Walther 1979, 63); instead of "degenerierte Ikone," I would rather suggest the terms "secondary icons" or "second level icons".

⁵ Laokoon, chapter XV and XVI (Lessing o.J., 86ff.)

⁶ Schlegel 1982, 126

wit, true Roman satires for the eye. Thus a true musical fantasy should be a satire for the ear. Hogarth is first of the satiric poets; Shakespeare of his type as well"⁷ — as, for example, Novalis emphasizes the eminently romantic feature of Hogarth's art consisting in a universal artistic view of the world. Moreover, several literary texts of the Romantic period contain many 'picturesque' and 'pictorial' elements, in the sense that painters appear there as characters or that pictures having different functions in the story occur in them.⁸ A specific 'verbalizing process' of iconic signs (or — in Lessing's terms — a temporalizing of space) is produced in this way, whereby the iconic elements obtain also a symbolic function. However, the question arises then if such signs really lose their iconic character, or if there exists, on the contrary, a tension, an ambivalence between iconicity and symbolizing which, to some extent, results from the fact that the pictures embedded in literary texts, having a symbolic function, intensify, in addition, the general iconic character of literary works which they are supposed to have in the sense of Morris. In the following considerations, some types and aspects of such embeddings will be discussed.

2. Types and functions of "pictures" in literary narratives

If we are considering the question of embedding "pictures" of different sorts into literary narratives, it is not enough to suppose that there is a general process of verbalizing iconic signs, respectively an ambivalence between iconicity and symbolizing, for the different sorts of pictorial elements can have different forms and they can play very different roles, so that an overview could lead to a deeper insight into this vast field of problems.

At first sight, three broader categories of embedding pictures into literary narratives can be discerned:

- (1) embedding of / relating to pictures outside of fiction;
- (2) embedding of / relating to pictures inside of fiction;
- (3) embedding of / relating to virtual pictures/images.

In the following, I will investigate their most important and striking features, for, in spite of their differences, these categories show some common characteristics, too, which can be explained through the most important common features of iconic signs in general.

⁷ Novalis 1982, 72

⁸ Moreover, there is another important phenomenon in the so-called "Goethezeit," namely the preference for an "optical encoding" of knowledge which appears also in literary texts through a frequent use of optical metaphors and motifs (cf. Titzmann 1984, 110ff.).

2.1. The first category of embedding pictures into literary narratives can be called *embedding of/ relating to pictures outside of fiction* — these are pictures existing independently of the story constructed by the literary text. This sort of embedding/ relating to also has a considerable intertextual power (intertextuality is to be understood here naturally in the largest sense, i.e. including not only textual phenomena⁹), integrating the meaning of the pictures referred to by/in the respective literary texts. This embedding can again have different forms:

(i) *Global embedding of/ relating to pictures outside of fiction*

In this case, there is no detailed reference to a specific picture but there is a general reference to some features of a certain sort of painting or of a special kind of pictures accentuating a general characteristic or some striking features of the pictures referred to which are, in some way, repeated in the structure of the literary text.

The *Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier* of E.T.A. Hoffmann could be considered as an excellent example of this sort of relation. In the introductory part of the stories, Hoffmann emphasizes some characteristics of the paintings of Callot which should be also realized in his own texts as the general text structuring features:

Kein Meister hat so wie Callot gewußt, in einem kleinen Raum eine Fülle von Gegenständen zusammenzudrängen, die ohne den Blick zu verwirren, neben einander, ja ineinander heraustreten, so daß das Einzelne als Einzelnes für sich bestehend, doch dem Ganzen sich anreihet. [...] indessen geht seine Kunst auch eigentlich über die Regeln der Malerei hinaus, oder vielmehr seine Zeichnungen sind nur Reflexe aller der fantastischen wunderlichen Erscheinungen, die der Zauber seiner überregen Fantasie hervorrief. [...] Könnte ein Dichter oder Schriftsteller, dem die Gestalten des gewöhnlichen Lebens in seinem innern romantischen Geisterreiche erscheinen, und der sie nun in dem Schimmer, von dem sie dort umflossen, wie in einem fremden wunderlichen Putze darstellt, sich nicht wenigstens mit diesem Meister entschuldigen und sagen: Er habe in Callot's Manier arbeiten wollen? (Hoffmann 1993, 17f.).

The similarity with Callot's paintings is supposed to be of a very general sort, i.e. general structural and stylistic features of the two artists are similar, respectively.

A very peculiar case of referring to pictures outside of fiction can be identified when their fictional or non-fictional character is itself discussed in the story. An example can be found in Robertson Davies' novel *The Lyre of Orpheus* which is rich in intertextual and pictorial (and also musical) references. This represents a transitory or mixed type as it mentions above all a single painting which is, however, considered as standing symbolically for certain difficult artistic problems of Modernity,

⁹ Eilert argues also for a broader understanding of 'intertextuality' including not only forms of relations between texts but also various forms of relating to other works of art, e.g. pictures, sculptures, works of music, etc. (cf. Eilert 1991, 19).

i.e. for general models of artistic creation, so that this picture concentrates also on the central artistic discussion of borrowing and invention as well as the possible relations between 'art' and 'life', and refers, in this way, to several intertextual sources. The most important intertextual reference made is to E.T.A. Hoffmann, whose art conception functions also as a model — as was the case with Callot for Hoffmann himself — and as a story-creating and -structuring element as well for the whole novel.¹⁰ Here, the picture referred to is a painting of a biblical theme entitled *The Marriage at Cana* (Davies 1990, 196) which is attributed to an "Old Master" called "The Alchemical Master" (Davies 1990, 197):

It was a triptych that hung against the damask covering of the south wall. Its subject was not immediately apparent, for it was filled — filled but not crowded — with figures dressed in the manner of the earliest sixteenth century; figures in ceremonial dress, figures in ceremonial armour, and some figures in the robes that artists have for so long used to clothe characters from biblical history. But a rather longer inspection told Darcourt that he was looking at a representation — a most unusual representation — of *The Marriage at Cana* (Davies 1990, 196).

During the development of the story told in the novel, this curious painting gradually loses its character of being situated outside of fiction, for it turns out to be a 'fake,' i.e. the work of the (fictional) artist Francis Cornish, whose life and work should be registered in a biography to be written by a figure of the fictional story.¹¹ The investigation of the biographer leads to a filling in of the gaps in the biography of the artist but it leads also to a deeper insight into the working process of artists in general, and of modern artists in particular:

"Why did he paint it in this sixteenth-century manner? [...] If it wasn't meant to deceive, why paint it like that?" — "That's where we come to the point that is going to be the making of my book," said Darcourt. "You don't remember Francis in any detail. But I do. [...] That picture is the most important of his conclusions. It represents what he thought most important in his life, the influences, the cross-currents, the tapestry, [...] Francis was making up his soul, as surely as if he had been some reflective hermit, or cloistered monk" (Davies 1990, 339).

¹⁰ The title *The Lyre of Orpheus* is also a direct allusion to E.T.A. Hoffmann and this fact is mentioned explicitly in the epigraph of the book: "The Lyre of Orpheus opens the door of the underworld".

¹¹ In this respect, some similarities with the difficulties of writing a "complete" biography remind us of Hoffmann's *Kater Murr* where the fictional biographer is confronted with similar difficulties and he is reflecting on them as Darcourt also tries to do.

The 'fake,' the seemingly non-fictional, but in reality fictional painting thematizes the main problem of the novel: dealing with the complicated relations between originality, authenticity and "faking," with the possibilities of creating something new and the necessity of unavoidable imitation, a problem recurring in art since the late 18th century, and especially since German Romanticism reflected intensively upon these problems. The texts of Hoffmann represent the most striking examples of writing confronted and playing with them:

"Yes, but why in this mock sixteenth-century style?" — "Because it is the last style in which a painter could do what Francis was doing. After the Renaissance do you see any pictures that reveal all that a man knows about himself? The great self-portraits, of course. But even when Rembrandt painted himself in old age, he could only show what life had done to him, not how life had done it. With the Renaissance, painting took a new turn, and threw away all that allegorical-metaphysical stuff, all that symbolic communication. [...]" (Davies 1990, 339).

Behind the seemingly non-fictional picture as a general model of artistic work, there is E.T.A. Hoffmann's model of creating, so that the novel presents a reflected adoption of "Hoffmann's Manier" on different levels.

(ii) *Particular (concrete) embedding of/ relating to pictures outside of fiction*

In this case, particular and more concrete relations are established between the picture(s) referred to and the literary text, while some exactly defined elements of the picture(s) will be "transformed" into likewise determined elements of the literary text (e.g. moments of the story, properties of characters, etc.).

Hoffmann's "Capriccio" *Prinzessin Brambilla* offers a very good example of this phenomenon: the text, i.e. the story was suggested by a series of engravings of Jacques Callot, so that eight pieces became the basis of certain moments of the story, which is therefore adequately comprehensible only if the reader contemplates the pictures while he is reading and if he is able to find out the details integrated into the fiction.¹² Although the story of the Capriccio exceeds the frame of the pictures, some clear correspondences can be discerned between each of the eight pictures introduced into the text and a corresponding part of the text:

[...] bis ein tanzendes Paar ihm in die Augen fiel und seine ganze Aufmerksamkeit fesselte.

Ein possierlicher Kerl, bis auf die geringste Kleinigkeit gekleidet wie Giglio, ja was Größe, Stellung usw. betrifft, sein zweites Ich, tanzte

¹² For further details concerning the relations between Callot's engravings and Hoffmann's Capriccio cf. Dieterle 1988, 75ff.

nämlich, Gitarre spielend, mit einem sehr zierlich gekleideten
 Frauenzimmer, welche Kastagnetten schlug.
 [...] Er glaubte nie so viel
 Anmut und Schönheit gesehen zu haben; jede
 ihrer Bewegungen
 verriet die Begeisterung einer ganz besonderen
 Lust, und eben diese
 Begeisterung war es, die selbst der wilden Ausgelassenheit des
 Tanzes einen unnennbaren Reiz verlieh (Hoffmann 1985, 902).



The mechanism underlying the similarity relation can here be compared to illustration which goes in the opposite direction as in general: the pictures do not illustrate the literary text, but the literary text refers intertextually to its pictorial model.

A further example of this sort of relating to pictures is represented by another story of Hoffmann (*Die Fermate*), as it arranges a little episode of the fictive events following the model of a picture, whereas, after a global reference to Hummel's painting, and a description of it, the narrative turns to the developing of the story itself:

Hummels heitres lebenskräftiges Bild, die Gesellschaft in einer italienischen Lokanda, ist bekannt worden durch die Berliner Kunstaussstellung im Herbst 1814, auf der es sich befand, Aug und Gemüt gar vieler erlustigend. — Eine üppig verwachsene Laube — ein mit Wein und Früchten besetzter Tisch — an demselben zwei italienische Frauen einander gegenüber sitzend — die eine singt, die andere spielt Chitarra — zwischen beiden hinterwärts stehend ein Abbate, der den Musikdirektor macht. [...] aber ganz wunderbar ist es doch, daß das Bild getreu eine Szene aus meinem Leben mit völliger Porträtähnlichkeit der handelnden Personen darstellt (Hoffmann 1995, 57f.).

A multiple intertextual crossing will be established through a further reference in Eichendorff's narrative *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, as it refers to the same painting of Hummel (after having exactly cited Hoffmann's text and having named it through a clearly marked intertextual reference):

Dort saßen in einer großen, grünverwachsenen Laube zwei schöne Frauen an einem Tisch einander gegenüber. Die eine sang, die andere spielte Gitarre dazu. Zwischen beiden hinter dem Tische stand ein freundlicher Mann, der mit einem kleinen Stäbchen zuweilen den Takt schlug. [...] da flog plötzlich die Gartentür weit auf und ein ganz erhitztes Mädchen und hinter ihr ein junger Mensch mit einem feinen, bleichen Gesicht stürzten in großem Ge-

zänke herein. [...] "Barbar!" rief ihm einer von dem runden Tische zu, "du rennst da mitten in das sinnreiche Tableau von der schönen Beschreibung hinein, welche der selige Hoffmann, Seite 347 des Frauentaschenbuchs für 1816, von dem schönsten Hummelschen Bildes gibt, das im Herbst 1814 auf der Berliner Kunstaussstellung zu sehen war!" (Eichendorff 1955, 228f.).

In this way, a chain of intertextual pictorial and, at the same time, textual references can be established, so that the elements outside of fiction which are referred to are turning into integrated textual elements.

(iii) *Partial embedding of / relating to pictures outside of fiction*

In this third case, the literary text, or an element of it refers to some details of a picture or of several pictures. In this way, the mentioning of (well-known) pictures in the text can contribute to describing a fictional character which, in turn, presupposes an appropriate knowledge on the part of the reader:

Der besondere Schnitt ihres weißen faltenreichen Kleides, Brust, Schultern und Nacken halb verhüllend mit weiten bauschigten bis an die Ellbogen reichenden Ärmeln, das vorne an der Stirn gescheitelte, hinten in vielen Flechten sonderbar heraufgenestelte Haar gab ihr etwas altertümliches, sie war beinahe anzusehen, wie die Jungfrauen auf den Gemälden von Mieris (*Die Abenteuer der Sylvester-Nacht*; Hoffmann 1993, 228).

The similarity between a fictional character and character(s) in pictures can also be discerned in the following example, when, according to the supposed acquaintance of the reader with the picture(s) referred to, a more detailed description of the character can be left out, as the pictorial reference functions, at the same time, also as a description:

Die schwarzen reichen Haare trug er gescheitelt und von beiden Seiten in vielen kleinen Locken herabhängend, so daß er den Bildern von Rubens glich (*Die Abenteuer der Sylvesternacht*; Hoffmann 1993, 333).

Such kinds of pictorial references are also appropriate to deepen and to enlarge the backgrounds of the fictional world constituted by the narrative:

Ich glaube wohl, daß dir, günstiger Leser! kenntest du auch sonst keine Furcht und Scheu, sich doch bei dem Anblick dieses Rembrandtschen oder Höllenbreughelschen Gemäldes, das nun ins Leben getreten, vor Grausen die Haare auf dem Kopfe gestäubt hätten (*Der goldne Topf*; Hoffmann 1993, 280).

The three subclasses of the first category enumerated here represent different sorts of iconicity:

- (i) the first subclass establishes a global model-relation between picture(s) and literary text(s), as the literary text is functioning as a model for the picture(s) which is based on its/their general features;
- (ii) the second subclass brings about a partial model-relation by relating to particular elements of the respective picture(s);
- (iii) the third subclass realizes a clear similarity-relation between special features of pictures and some properties of fictional characters fulfilling thereby a metaphorical function.

2.2. The second category embraces the so-called *embedding of/ referring to pictures inside of fiction*. There are 'inside' fictional elements in the sense that they do not refer to well-known and existing pictures but to fictional ones, as there are works of fictional painters figuring as fictional characters of the fictional world or being represented only through their (likewise fictional) works.

(i) *Fictional picture as integrated thematical element of narratives*

The fictional picture and also the appearance of the fictional artist related to it can give rise to a discussion of difficult problems of artistic representation on a meta-level which is, at the same time, closely integrated into fiction. This is the old problem of 'accomplishing a work of art', and the real difficulty consists in the impossibility of bringing about a total identity between the original intuition or the represented object and the realized work, which should be identical with its "idea." The problem of artistic activity/production can also be defined as a sign-theoretical, i.e. semantical one, namely as that of a total and complete correspondence between signifier and signified, model and representation. The work of art should then capture the ideal state, which could also lead to a suspension of the sign-character of signs, i.e. to an abolition of the moment of representation, of mediation.

The painter Berthold, a character in Hoffmann's *Die Jesuitenkirche in G.* transposes this problem into his own life so that the artistic problem becomes, at the same time, a story developing element. The artist appears as an extraordinary personality able, although only in rare moments, to understand the signs of a lost, primitive and perfect language (which is perfect exactly because of the identity between signifier and signified, object and representation) and to objectify it in a picture:

Der Geweihte vernimmt die Stimme der Natur, die in wunderbaren Lauten aus Baum, Gebüsch, Blume, Berg und Gewässer von unerforschlichem Geheimnis spricht, die in seiner Brust zu frommer Ahnung gestalten; dann

kommt, wie der Geist Gottes selbst, die Gabe über ihn, diese Ahnung sichtlich in seine Werke zu übertragen (Hoffmann 1985, 130).

Other fictional painters in romantic texts (e.g. Ettlinger in Hoffmann's *Kater Murr*, Sternbald in Tieck's *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* or the ironically-parodistically represented painters in Hoffmann's *Meister Martin der Küfner und seine Gesellen* and in *Die Brautwahl*) also represent this problem and the impossibility of a "perfect" solution.

Another — but a somehow similar — aspect of the relations between art, artistic activity and life is represented in Edgar Allan Poe's fantastic story *The Oval Portrait*, where the painting of the portrait of a beautiful and loving woman turns out to be the cause of her death, as if she had been transferred into another sphere of existence: she dies at the moment when the painter puts the last touch to the picture. She begins (in a sort of an inverted Pygmalion-story) her "life" in a work of art after having been absorbed by the painting:

But at length, as the labor drew nearer to its conclusion, there were admitted none into the turret; for the painter had grown wild with the ardor of his work, and turned his eyes from the canvas rarely, even to regard the countenance of his wife. [...] And then the brush was given, and then the tint was placed; and, for one moment, the painter stood entranced before the work which he had wrought; but in the next, while he yet gazed, he grew tremulous and very pallid, and aghast, and crying with a loud voice, "This is indeed *Life* itself!" turned suddenly to regard his beloved: — She *was dead!* (Poe 1994, 303).

Not only the German Romantic period, but also other times can make a similar use of fictional pictures integrated into literary texts for discussing general questions of artistic activity (e.g. Mörike's *Maler Nolten*, Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* or Stifter's *Kondor* and *Nachkommenschaften*):

Ich wollte nämlich [...] die wirkliche Wirklichkeit darstellen, und dazu die wirkliche Wirklichkeit immer neben mir haben. Freilich sagt man, es sei ein großer Fehler, wenn man zu wirklich das Wirkliche darstelle: [...] Freier Schwung, freies Ermessen, freier Flug des Künstlers müsse dasein, dann entstehe ein freies, leichtes, dichterisches Werk. [...] Ich aber sage: warum hat denn Gott das Wirkliche gar so wirklich und am wirklichsten in seinem Kunstwerke gemacht, und in demselben doch den höchsten Schwung erreicht, [...] In der Welt und in ihren Teilen ist die größte dichterische Fülle und die herzergreifendste Gewalt. Macht nur die Wirklichkeit so wirklich wie sie ist, und verändert nicht den Schwung, der ohnehin in ihr ist, und ihr werdet wunderbarere Werke hervorbringen als ihr glaubt, [...] (Stifter 1988, 40).

Here, we are confronted with another art conception as in Romanticism, for reality (although it embodies some poetic features, too) is to be reflected exactly so that a coincidence between model and picture could be realized. It is very characteristic, too that at the end of the story, the painter stops painting as he wants to occupy himself with "true reality."

Painting as an activity allows also for an easier integration of iconic elements into the fictional story, and not only the fictional pictures as products are shown but also the process of their coming into being (which, in Lessing's terms, has more "narrative" character).

(ii) *Fictional picture as integrated story element*

In this case, the fictional picture is integrated into the fictional story not (only) as representing the problems of artistic creative activity but it becomes a story element in the narrower sense, deploying some moments of the fictional story in a concentrated manner.

A subset of these elements is constituted by "pictures producing narration." These are fictional pictures bringing about some moments of a story or introducing some characters, so that they suggest some features of the fictional world in advance.

At the beginning of Theodor Storm's story *Immensee*, a picture is shown which gives occasion to remember the past youth of the central character and, in this way, it motivates the events narrated in the remembered story:

Wie er so saß, wurde es allmählich dunkler; endlich fiel ein Mondstrahl durch die Fensterscheiben auf die Gemälde an der Wand, und wie der helle Streif langsam weiterrückte, folgten die Augen des Mannes unwillkürlich. Nun trat er über ein kleines Bild in schlichtem schwarzen Rahmen. "Elisabeth!" sagte der Alte leise; und wie er das Wort gesprochen, war die Zeit verwandelt — er war in seiner Jugend (Storm 1993, 16).

A similar procedure can be detected in another of Storm's stories, in *Aquis submersus* where a picture and its description are functioning as the starting point of the narration:

Unter all diesen seltsamen oder wohl gar unheimlichen Dingen hing im Schiff der Kirche das unschuldige Bildnis eines toten Kindes, eines schönen, etwa fünfjährigen Knaben, der, auf einem mit Spitzen besetzten Kissen ruhend, eine weiße Wasserlilie in seiner kleinen bleichen Hand hielt. [...] dicht daneben schaute aus dunklem Holzrahmen ein finsterer schwarzbärtiger Mann in Priesterkragen und Sammet. [...] Immer wieder zog es mich zu diesen beiden Bildern; ein phantastisches Verlangen ergriff mich, von dem Leben und Sterben des Kindes eine nähere, wenn auch noch so karge Kunde zu erhalten;

selbst aus dem düsteren Antlitz des Vaters, [...] suchte ich sie herauszulesen (Storm 1993, 129f.).

Another subset of pictures as story elements is represented by those functioning as elements of the conflict deployed in the narrated story. They can be considered as elements of conflict in the sense that the respective pictures symbolize or reflect some turning points of the story or they can even bring them about. The similarity or identity of a fictional character with a picture can point to some hidden and unclear moments of the story suggesting some later events, as happens in Hoffmann's *Kater Murr*, *Die Elixiere des Teufels*, *Der unheimliche Gast* or in Kleist's *Der Findling*, in Storm's *Aquis submersus* or *Im Schloß*.

When, in *Kater Murr*, Kreisler suddenly shows a painted portrait which bears some hidden meaning also for the reader, then it allows for a development of the fictional events, too:

Kreisler zog ein Kästchen aus der Tasche, nahm ein kleines Bildnis heraus, und hielt es dem Prinzen entgegen. Er blickte hin, alles Blut schwand von dem Antlitz, seine Augen starrten, seine Lippen bebten, zwischen den Zähnen murmelnd: Maledetto! stürzte er fort (Hoffmann 1992, 232).

In *Kater Murr*, there is also another picture referring to an event of the fictional story which can be narrated through its iconic representation:

Als nun der Abt mit dem fremden Mönch dicht bei Kreisler vorüberkam, erkannte dieser auf den ersten Blick, daß Bruder Cyprianus eben der Jüngling war, den auf jenem Bilde die heilige Jungfrau aus dem Tode zum Leben erweckte. — Doch noch eine Ahnung erfasste Kreisler plötzlich. Er rannte herauf in sein Zimmer, er holte das kleine Bildnis hervor, das ihm Meister Abraham gegeben; kein Zweifel! er erblickte denselben Jüngling, nur jünger, frischer, und in Offizieruniform abgebildet (Hoffmann 1992, 375).

The prefiguration of a later moment of the story brought about through the similarity between a portrait and a fictional character also plays an important role in Theodor Storm's *Im Schloß*:

Im Rittersaal auf dem Bilde oberhalb der Tür befand sich seitab von den reichgekleideten Kindern noch eine Gestalt eines etwa zwölfjährigen Knaben in einem schmucklosen braunen Wams. Es mochte der Sohn eines Gutsangehörigen sein, [...] auf der Hand trug er, vielleicht zum Zeichen seiner geringen Herkunft, einen Sperling. Die blauen Augen blickten trotzig genug unter dem schlicht gescheitelten Haar heraus; aber um den fest geschlossenen Mund lag ein Zug des Leidens. Früher hatte ich diese unscheinbare Gestalt kaum bemerkt; jetzt wurde es plötzlich anders. Ich begann der möglichen

Geschichte dieses Knaben nachzusinnen; [...] Das blasse Gesicht mit den raschblickenden Augen kam mir bekannt vor; aber ich sann umsonst über eine Ähnlichkeit nach. [...] und jetzt plötzlich wußte ich es, was mich so vertraut aus diesem Antlitz ansprach. Ich schwieg; denn mir war, als fühlte ich das Blut in meine Wangen steigen. Dann aber, [...] suchte ich mich zu fassen und wies mit der Hand nach jenem alten Familienbilde oberhalb der Tür. "Sehen Sie keine Ähnlichkeit?" fragte ich; "der Eine von jenen Knaben muss Ihr Vorfahr sein?" (Storm 1987, 495, 499, 515).

Further examples of the function of pictures in narratives could be found, which often turn the pictorial elements into events of the story, as is the case in Storm's *Aquis submersus*.

The fictional pictures embedded in / related to narratives establish similar relations as those of the first class. The first subclass refers to pictures as general textual elements creating a model-relation between picture and story, for the fictional picture functions as a representation of problems of artistic activity. Pictures as integrated story elements rely on the similarity of the fictional picture with a fictional character or a fictional event and fulfill, in this way, a symbolic function in the text.

2.3. The third class of pictures embedded in fiction is, in a certain respect, fundamentally different from the pictures of the other two types: they are 'virtual' images having neither real nor fictional existence, they have only a 'virtual' one which, in turn, has an explicit iconic character so that they can be considered in the framework of my discussion.

(i) *Mirror image as 'virtual picture'*

Mirror images are, by themselves, iconic, for they seem to represent / reflect an object in all its details, which representation can be considered as an "absolute iconicity"¹³ or realization of a total coincidence of signifier and signified¹⁴ and a resolution of the problem of artistic representation. Although, according to Umberto Eco's concept, mirror images cannot be considered as signs,¹⁵ in literary narratives, they can fulfil a sign-function as they are symptomatic of some general problems discussed in the story and, in another respect, they can, in a very symbolic manner, articulate some features of signs and sign processes in general (as well as the problem of identity between sign and object), and of possibilities and difficulties of sign perception.

¹³ Cf. Eco 1995, 38

¹⁴ As Eco says: "Genau aus dieser Erfahrung des absoluten Ikonismus erwächst der Traum von einem Zeichen, das dieselben Eigenschaften wie das bezeichnete Objekt besäße." (Eco 1995, 38).

¹⁵ Cf. Eco 1995, 46f.

A mirror as an object can function as an 'instrument' of perception and of recognition. Equally it can represent the difficulties of the process of perception and recognition:

[...] da verhüllte alles ein dichter aufsteigender Duft, und als der zerflossen, hatte sich auf dem Kampfplatz der Geister ein herrlicher, himmelsklarer Wasserspiegel gebildet, [...] In demselben Augenblick, [...] war das Königs-Paar aus seinem langen Zauberschlafe erwacht. [...] Sie waren die ersten, die hineinschauten in das Wasser. Als sie nun aber in der unendlichen Tiefe den blauen glänzenden Himmel, die Büsche, die Bäume, die Blumen, die ganze Natur, ihr eignes Ich in verkehrter Abspiegelung erschauten, da war es, als rollten dunkle Schleier auf, eine neue herrliche Welt voll Leben und Lust wurde klar vor ihren Augen und mit der Erkenntnis dieser Welt entzündete sich ein Entzücken in ihrem Innern, das sie nie gekannt, nie geahnet (*Prinzessin Brambilla*; Hoffmann 1985, 824).

The symbol of the lost mirror image shows explicitly the necessary difference between sign and its object (see Eco, *ibid.*), which can clearly be interpreted as an allusion to the problem of individual identity often discussed in German Romanticism:

Ach! — rein und klar warf der Spiegel die beiden Lichter, die Gegenstände im Zimmer, mich selbst zurück, die Gestalt des Kleinen war nicht zu sehen im Spiegel, kein Strahl reflektierte sein dicht herangebogenes Gesicht (*Die Abenteuer der Sylvester-Nacht*; Hoffmann 1993, 339f.).

Although the fictional character in Hoffmann's text pretends to have lost nothing important:

[...] im Ganzen sei aber nicht viel daran verloren, da jedes Spiegelbild doch nur eine Illusion sei, Selbstbetrachtung zur Eitelkeit führe und noch dazu ein solches Bild das eigne Ich spalte in Wahrheit und Traum (Hoffmann 1993, 353)

the loss of his mirror image represents, in the context of the story, his lost identity.

How fragile and arbitrary the relation between image and object can be is shown by such curious cases as the mirror image not being a reflection of the individual looking at it but another image of somebody else not present there. The same phenomenon occurs in Hoffmann's tale *Der goldne Topf*, in which Anselmus can see Serpentina in a crystal mirror, and, in turn, Veronika can contemplate Anselmus in her metallic mirror. The close relationship of this phenomenon to identity problems can also be detected in Hoffmann's story *Das öde Haus* where the fictional first person narrator is able to produce the mirror image of the beloved woman as a projection of his own internal perception, or imagination:

[...] als ich, so wie mein Hauch den Spiegel überließ, im bläulichen Nebel das holde Antlitz sah, das mich mit jenem wehmütigem, das Herz durchbohrendem Blick anschaute! [...] die Holde blickte mich an aus dem Spiegel, aber so wie der Hauch zerrann, verschwand das Gesicht in dem Funkeln des Spiegels. [...] Nur so viel will ich sagen, daß ich unaufhörlich die Versuche mit dem Spiegel erneuerte, daß es mir oft gelang, das geliebte Bild durch meinen Hauch hervor zu rufen [...] (Hoffmann 1985, 180).

In this way, the fantastic play with the mirror image represents the self-identity of the individual appearing as "the dream of the self, the unsteady picture,"¹⁶ and it also functions as a symbolic representation of possible troubles of identity.

A somewhat strange form of using a mirror image can be found in Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. The narrator first becomes aware of the house as its reflected image appears in the pool, i.e. as something unreal or fantastic. In this way, the borders between reality and imagination start to disappear, for the mirror image is related also to dreams, so that it opens a story full of mysterious and ambivalent elements begins to unfold:

I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy — a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity — an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn — a pestilent or mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what must have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building (Poe 1994, 52f.).

Mirror image and dream are related to each other through their basic virtuality which allows for their possible combination in Poe's story.

(ii) *Dreamt images as 'virtual images'*

Since Freud and his theory of dreams, the importance of dreams has been evident, but they were always mysterious and symbolic phenomena and were represented in many literary works, especially in those of the Romantic period. Dreams often have a certain iconic character, for, according to Freud, dreams can 'translate' some un-

¹⁶ "der Traum des Ichs, das unstete Bild" (Hoffmann 1993, 349).

conscious desires and instinctive stimulations into images which are dreamt, making them, in the original sense of the word, really visible.

Hidden fears and unconscious instincts of fictional characters often appear as images dreamt of; in Hoffmann's *Die Elixiere des Teufels*, for example, the dreams of the central character play an eminent role in moving forward the events of the story remembered by him, while the transitions from fictional reality to dream and vice versa become troubles of the self and world-interpretation of the individual in question:

[...] denn die lebendige Erscheinung des grauenhaften Mönchs, hatte sich so fest an das Traumbild gereiht, daß ich kaum zu unterscheiden vermochte, wo der Traum übergegangen sei ins wirkliche Leben (Hoffmann 1988, 130).

The dreamt image can also, as a leitmotiv, prefigure different moments of the narrated story as e.g. in Hoffmann's *Der unheimliche Gast*, where the narration evolves, step by step, an interpretation and revaluation of a dream:

Ich erinnere mich [...] noch sehr lebhaft, wie ich, [...] in der Nacht meines vierzehnten Geburtstages in einem solchen Zustande erwachte, dessen Grauen mich einige Tage hindurch lähmte. Vergebens rang ich aber darnach, mich auf den Traum zu besinnen, der mich so entsetzt hatte. Deutlich bin ich mir bewusst, daß ich eben auch im Traum jenen schrecklichen Traum [...] öfters erzählt habe, aber nur, daß ich jenen Traum erzählt hatte, ohne mich auf den Inhalt besinnen zu können, war mir beim Erwachen erinnerlich (Hoffmann 1995, 608).

The final interpretation of the dream which is, in itself, a symbolic prefiguration of further events of the fictional story, can be attained by encountering the menacing character involved in the dream:

Da gestand Angelika, in dem Augenblick, als der Obrist es ausgesprochen, daß der Graf sie liebe, sei ihr mit vollem Leben der fürchterliche Traum in die Seele gekommen, den sie vor vier Jahren in der Nacht ihres vierzehnten Geburtstages geträumt, und aus dem sie in entsetzlicher Todesangst erwacht, ohne sich auf seine Bilder auch nur im mindesten besinnen zu können (Hoffmann 1995, 619).

Mirror images and dreamt images can also be combined (as they both share the feature of being virtual) in referring to complicated relations between virtual and real perception, i.e. to some ambiguous boundaries of the different modalities of perception. This phenomenon is shown in an exemplary manner in Hoffmann's *Das öde Haus*, where the fictional character is first confronted with a visionlike dream which picks up some elements of his dubious former experience:

Meine Fantasie war im Arbeiten, und noch in selbiger Nacht, nicht sowohl im Traum, als im Delirieren des Einschlafens, sah ich deutlich die Hand mit dem funkelnden Diamant am Finger, den Arm mit der glänzenden Spange. Wie aus dünnen grauen Nebeln trat nach und nach ein holdes Antlitz mit wehmütig flehenden blauen Himmelsaugen, dann die ganze wunderherrliche Gestalt eines Mädchens in voller anmütiger Jugendblüte hervor. [...] versichern kann ich euch, daß der ganze Traum, [...] den vollendeten Charakter der Vision hatte (Hoffmann 1985, 174f.).

The next step is the emergence of the dreamt image as mirror image, namely as one detached from its own object:

[...] hielt mir einen kleinen runden Taschenspiegel, [...] in kleiner Entfernung seitwärts vor. — Ich erblickte das öde Haus hinter mir, das Fenster und in den schärfsten, deutlichsten Zügen die holde Engelgestalt meiner Vision (Hoffmann 1985, 177).

The appearance of the character who functions as a model of both dreamt and reflected images is a further step in the progress of the narrative which, at the same time, raises some frightening effect:

Ich führe meine Dame zu dem offenen Platz, der sich uns darbierte, schaue sie nun erst recht an und — erblicke mein Spiegelbild in den getreuesten Zügen, so daß gar keine Täuschung möglich ist. Daß ich im Innersten erbebte, könnt ihr euch wohl denken, aber ebenso muss ich euch versichern, daß sich auch nicht der leiseste Anklang jener verderblichen wahnsinnigen Liebeswut in mir regte, die mich ganz und gar befang, wenn mein Hauch das wunderbare Frauenbild aus dem Spiegel hervorrief. — Meine Befremdung, noch mehr, mein Erschrecken muss lesbar gewesen sein in meinem Blick [...] (Hoffmann 1985, 190).

In this fictional world dreamt and reflected (that is virtual) images seem more alive and more attractive, since their models (or the object reflected by them) appear sometimes less real and less existent. These narrative elements represent the central problem of identity in Romanticism of which Hoffmann's text are very good examples.

3. Conclusions

This brief survey, which is only intended as an initial approach to a very complicated problem, may perhaps have suggested some ideas about the underlying similarities of various types of images and/or pictures embedded into literary texts as narrative

elements. On the semantic level of narratives, there are, on the one hand, referential relations established by referring to different kinds of pictures, and, on the other hand, there are internal semantic relations brought about through the integration of iconic signs into a chain of signs which are, first of all, not iconic.

The referential relation is realized in each of the three classes of pictorial elements in different ways: in the first case, references outside fiction — and therefore, in the widest sense of the word, intertextual relations — are established; in the second case, reference remains within the domain of fiction; and in the third, reference is made, even within fiction, to virtual or potential objects/entities.

The semantic integration of pictures/images is realized, in all three cases, in a basically similar way: the integrated pictures fulfill a modelling and/or symbolic function, for they represent, in the narrowest sense of the word, some motifs, elements, and moments of the stories, so that they become, in this way, narrative elements. The recipient of such pictorial narrative elements has two tasks: on the one hand, he has to recognize the respective pictures referred to (first of all if they are, at the same time, intertextual references), but, on the other hand, he receives an interpretive key to the narrated story, for the pictures integrated into it embody the function of a node of the narrative structure. The enlargement of this type of investigation toward other literary narratives might reveal some further details of the phenomena discussed above and could also reinforce the relevance of the types which have been discerned.

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