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## Prologue

The chapters in this volume emerged, after an extended process of peer-reviewed selection and rigid editing, from the talks given at the 8th Budapest Visual Learning Conference (VLC8), held on April 26–28, 2018. The volume is the third one in a series of three. The title of the first volume, published in March 2019, is *Vision Fulfilled: The Victory of the Pictorial Turn*, while that of the second, published in May 2019: *Learning and Technology in Historical Perspective*.

As explained in the Preface to the first volume, VLC8 was preceded by seven earlier conferences, which in their turn were based on the activities of the Budapest Visual Learning Lab (VLL – [www.facebook.com/BudapestVisualLearningLab](http://www.facebook.com/BudapestVisualLearningLab)), established at the Department of Technical Education, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, in October 2009, by Professor András Benedek and myself. In his introductory chapter to the first volume Benedek has provided a detailed history of the Budapest Visual Learning Lab, as well as a summary of the fundamental transformations education in the Western world has undergone in the past few centuries, and of the challenges educational theory and practice now face.

The present volume's first part, BEYOND METAPHOR, begins with the chapter “New Extensions of Conceptual Metaphor Theory: How They Apply to Visual Metaphors”, by Zoltán Kövecses. The author has been since many years one of the leading scholars in the field; his present paper amounts to a radically new approach within – or beyond – what is known as the Lakoff–Johnson paradigm. Kövecses starts from the contention that “if conceptual metaphors are indeed conceptual in nature (not simply linguistic), then any expression of our conceptual system can be metaphorical. Consequently, the *visual* expression of our conceptual system can be metaphorical.” He then presents a breathtakingly novel analysis of a painting by contemporary American artist Mark Tansey, arriving at the general con-

clusion that “the interpretation of works of art share a great deal with how the human conceptual system operates in interpreting everyday experiences. By studying visual art, we can find out not only about what happens in the course of understanding a particular work of art but also how we (everyday people) utilize our metaphorical conceptual system.” The second chapter, “Visual Metonymy and Framing in Political Communication”, by Réka Benczes, again emphasizes that if metaphor is primarily conceptual, then it can indeed be “expected to occur outside the verbal mode as well. Based on this assumption”, Benczes points out, “conceptual metaphor has been successfully identified outside of spoken language as well, in music, gesture and images.” She then sets the stage for her central argument by noting that metaphor “is yet only one of the cognitive devices that fundamentally govern and structure our conceptualization; its less appreciated – but even more ubiquitous – sister is conceptual metonymy”. The specific aim of her paper is, as she puts it, to expand the research in visual metonymy into the realm of political discourse. The particular case she studies is the “multiple and interlocking uses of visual (and multimodal) metonymy exploited in an anti-EU television advertisement created by the Hungarian government in 2017”. The following chapter, “Image-Schema-based Folk Models of the MIND”, by Orsolya Putz, builds on the notion which was the first vague indication by Lakoff and Johnson that their theory might be about more than just verbal thought: the notion of “image-schemas”. Orsolya Putz discusses the epistemologically central concept of the *mind*, focussing on how this concept is embedded in folk psychology, everyday thinking confirming the idea of there being “a recurring, dynamic pattern of our perceptual interactions and motor programs that gives coherence to our experience”, the definition of image-schema given by Mark Johnson. Summing up her analysis, the author writes: “I propose that experts whose work is related to the mind to any extent should be aware of the way lay people think about their own mind. Researchers of the mind (e.g. philosophers, cognitive scientists, AI researchers) should be familiar with the folk model of the mind that might be evoked even by scientific jargon related to the mind. Therapists may help their patients struggling with mental illnesses change their meta-

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phors about their mind reflected in their language use. Teachers should treat their students' mind carefully, as even an inappropriate metaphor can ruin the students' view of their own mental ability." With the last chapter in this part of the volume, we remain in the domain of folk thinking. Veronika Szelid's "On the Multimodality of Folklore" is a moving analysis of a minstrel song from Transdanubium, applying the methods of conceptual metaphor theory. The position Szelid argues for is that there is a type of multimodality that is prevalent in Hungarian folklore, a type she designates as *multimodal source domain representation*. The source domains she specifically considers derive from "spoken language, written language, visuals, music, sound, gestures, smell, taste, and touch", but her analysis extends, also, to a possible source domain commonly not taken into account: the *time of performance*, which she sees as providing "an extra dimension and power to the metaphor that is intended to be construed". The intriguing connections between time, visualization, and metaphor certainly deserve being called attention to; I will come back to the issue of metaphor, image, and time in my Epilogue to the present volume.

For the next five chapters, constituting the second part of the present volume, it was precisely the heading METAPHOR AND VISUALITY that felicitously offered itself. The first chapter here, "Understanding Visual Metaphors: A Cognitive Linguistic Perspective", by Xu Wen and Jin Liu, is on the one hand a masterly summary of the array of topics image, metaphor, conceptual metaphor theory, Forceville's studies of pictorial or visual metaphor, visual communication and visual metaphors; on the other hand it as it were continues, and enlarges on, the theme initiated in the chapter by Réka Benczes, that of visual political propaganda. Wen and Liu present a number of classic political cartoons, interpreting them as visual metaphors. And let me quote the concluding passage of their chapter: "Visual metaphors are inherent in our thought, and thus enable us to translate invisible and abstract ideas into a realm of familiar actualities that we can see. They are artistic devices or cognitive strategies used to help us understand the invisible things by relating them to something familiar and visible. ... visual metaphors are, in essence, the realizations of conceptual metaphors in pictures or images, and their tenors are some-

thing invisible. Just like conceptual metaphors, visual metaphors are everywhere in our daily life.” The following chapter, the sixth chapter in the present volume, is Alessandro Cavazzana’s “Imagining: The Role of Mental Imagery in the Interpretation of Visual Metaphors”. It begins by recalling Noël Carroll’s 1994 position, according to which “visual metaphors are ‘visual images that function in the same way that verbal metaphors do’”. There follows a reference to Arthur C. Danto’s view, dating back to 1981, suggesting that verbal metaphors work in the same way “elliptic syllogisms” do. Against these two approaches as a background, and adding the notion of mental imagery, Cavazzana introduces his basic idea: “when interpreting visual metaphors, *mental imagery* plays the role that the inference plays in comprehending verbal metaphors”. At a later point in his argument he provides a detailed analysis of the notion of mental visual imagery, citing, among others, Ganis and Schendan, quoting from their 2011 paper: mental imagery “refers to ‘our ability to reactivate and manipulate visual representations in the absence of the corresponding visual stimuli’”. I take Cavazzana’s chapter to be making an absolutely essential point. I believe human cognition cannot be properly understood if the claim for the fundamental role of thinking in images is not accepted. This is the position I sided with in my Postscript to the first volume of the present series, a position I am defending again in my Epilogue.

We are coming to the next chapter in this volume, “Visual Metaphors and Pedagogical Practices in the New Century”, by Annamaria Contini and Lorenzo Manera. The chapter’s introductory passage: “A particular kind of early active engagement with metaphors happens when children enact them through their actions, in a process where the relevant substitution occurs primarily through gestures.” The authors refer to Lakoff and Johnson’s idea – note that this is an idea not there in the original Lakoff–Johnson paradigm – that “metaphor can be instantiated through nonlinguistic modalities such as gestures and images, if we consider metaphors to be primarily not a figure of speech, but a way of thought”. It is in the light of this idea that the authors reinterpret “one of the earliest informal learning contexts experienced by children: pretend play”. The reinterpretation relies heav-

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ily on the fact that “access to digital technologies for the purpose of creating narrative structures including visual components” very much facilitates designing new types of learning activities, and enhances for preschoolers “the possibility to augment their metaphorical imageries by exploring non-structured materials”. The following chapter, similarly, deals with a phenomenon / scholarly issue that would not be there were it not for new digital technologies. This is the chapter “Metaphors Made Live: Multimodal Metaphor Analysis in Animation” by Gerard Martin C. Suarez. The question Suarez formulates: “how pervasive is a conceptual metaphor when studied as part of an ongoing discourse?” – the background of the question being that while, for instance, “[a] finished movie or a printed political cartoon ... does not change once it reaches the eyes of the intended viewer”, authors of serialized works such as, say, episodic television are in a position “in between the production of each segment, to hear the perceptions and feedback of their audience which can potentially change subsequent content”. Suarez on the one hand analyzes what role conceptual metaphors play in the medium of serialized animation, on the other hand investigates what impact the “established conventions” and “the serialized nature” of animation have on “the structuring and consistency” of the particular conceptual metaphor the chapter discusses. His conclusion: “The representation of the conceptual metaphor remained consistent throughout years of varying situations and representations, adding further support to the claim of the persistence of metaphor.” Our next chapter is written by a world-renowned pioneering expert on visual metaphors, Charles Forceville, who is recurrently quoted in the present volume, too. The chapter’s title: “Reflections on the Creative Use of Traffic Signs’ ‘Micro-Language’”. Forceville begins by making the in my opinion entirely laudable point that it is generally speaking misleading to speak of “visual languages” or “visual grammar”, and specifically refers to Kress and Van Leeuwen as “over-stretching ... the notion of a ‘grammar of visual design’”. However, Forceville suggests, there still are “certain *genres*, or certain visual phenomena within genres ... that one might nonetheless want to call a rudimentary ‘language’. ... We could use the term ‘micro-languages’ for closed sets with only a few items (a ‘micro-

vocabulary’) and just a few rules specifying the relations among these items and their relation with other elements (a ‘micro-grammar’).” In this chapter Forceville describes the micro-language of traffic signs, and analyzes “the way in which traffic signs function as (verbo)visual ‘speech acts’”. The analysis is accompanied by a number of delightful pictorial illustrations. And the specific, very convincing, conclusion he arrives at is that “the genre of quasi-traffic signs enables the creation of persuasive messages, even without the use of language”.

We have reached this volume’s third part: THE POWER OF THE IMAGE. It begins with the chapter by Anna Botalova, “The Visual Perception of Jacques Derrida’s Haunting Philosophy”. My impression is that Botalova has achieved the rare feat of making Derrida’s philosophy fathomable even to those who would otherwise shrug off the same. She analyzes the 2002 film *Derrida: The Documentary*, and let me quote her introductory passage at some length: “We are accustomed to the fact that a text is a traditional way for philosophy to exist. We read a book, we learn philosophical concepts through it, and that is how philosophy had been perceived during the centuries.” However, with cinema, a new way of perceiving has emerged. “The perceptual richness proper to the cinema enables it to reflect on a wide variety of things. So, what philosophical powers do images have? What powers do films have as they operate images in motion? ... it is possible to live through a concept cinematically as it happened to me and the film *Derrida*. But ... why should we prefer a film over a book? ... film-philosophy, this alternative way of concept’s existence, can be extremely vivid, comprehensive, important and, simply, different. During the analysis of the documentary film *Derrida*, we will see how major concepts of Derrida’s philosophy, such as deconstruction, differance, metaphysics of presence, trace, hauntology may be transmitted through the film’s structure and montage.” The next chapter, the eleventh chapter in the present volume, “Omission as Silence: Extending a Theory of Invisuality”, by Trischa Goodnow, continues to pursue a topic that was introduced in a paper given by James J. Kimble in May 2016 at the Budapest Visual Learning Lab, based on research by Kimble and Goodnow. The term “invisuality” refers to the absence of some central element in a visual object –

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a visual omission. In the present chapter Goodnow argues that “omission plays a vital role as a rhetorical strategy of invisibility”, examining the Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe “as an exemplar of omission invisibility”. She focusses on the much-discussed fact that this memorial, also known as the Holocaust Memorial, lacks any listing of the victims’ names: “While traditional memorials reveal elements of those who were lost (absent), the Berlin Holocaust Memorial fails to call to mind the tragedy of those absent.” Goodnow, exploiting a perspective worked out by Walter Benjamin in the 1930s, offers a complex philosophical explanation for this vagueness; but she also sees a much simpler one. As she puts it: “Perhaps ... the ambiguity in possible interpretations of the memorial reflects Germany’s own struggle to adequately memorialize that which they themselves wrought.” The following chapter is by James J. Kimble. This chapter, “Vectors, Left-Right Directionality, and Time”, begins with a reference to Kress and Van Leeuwen’s notion of *image vectors*, applying it to a famous WWII photograph depicting United States Marines as they raise a U.S. flag during the Battle of Iwo Jima. The next reference is to Joost Schilperoord’s observation that “a vital aspect of the photograph’s potency lies in the ‘left-right orientation’ of its flagpole-as-vector. From the viewer’s perspective, the action transpires from left to right, signifying a narrative shift ‘from past to future’”. Schilperoord also observed that if that photograph’s left–right orientation is reversed, “a lot of its pictorial impact gets lost”. The explanation put forward by Kimble for this phenomenon: “horizontal directionality is inevitably fused with the viewer’s conceptualization of time... Numerous fields of inquiry indicate that time, at least in most Western cultures, tends to be understood as flowing into the future from left to right. ... even italic fonts, by leaning to the viewer’s right, convey a sense of forward motion.” Kimble here adds a note: “Many scholars connect this left-right phenomenon to the process of reading. Some cultures, of course, read in a right-left direction. In such cultures, appropriately, horizontal directionality appears to depict time as flowing to the left.” Let me here interject that the primordial – preliterate – notion of time is of course cyclic rather than linear, I will refer to this topic in my Epilogue to this volume. Coming back to Kimble: by

way of conclusion, he offers several examples – presenting highly telling images and commenting on them – from his own area of research: “the imagery of the U.S. home front in WWII”. His summary, analyzing a collection of 108 posters presented online: depictions of American soldiers in combat situations “routinely feature rightward vectors”, with the actors “looking, leaning, or rushing toward” an “often offstage” goal “in an immediate future”.

We have arrived at the next three chapters in this part of our volume. The chapter “Photography and Autobiography”, by Izabella Grexa, is a discussion of the diary, letters and some two hundred private photographs representing the life of a Hungarian marginalized labour woman, Erzsébet Király, living during the Communist and post-Communist era. “As an orphan, without any family ties, moving from flat to flat, changing her workplaces”, writes Grexa, “photographs played important roles in Király’s life, confirming her identity and status in her social group.” The theoretical background of the chapter is sketched by the introductory passage: “Pictures, photos and visuals play an ever larger role. Social sciences look at these objects as valuable sources and not only as illustrations. Applying visual sources for talking of links between society, individuals and pictures has been a practice in the field of ethnography and anthropology for decades. Beside specific themes that pictures portray, one may learn more about family and relationships, value systems and strategy of life. The social network that represents the importance of relationships is a distinguished target in the investigation of photographs. In an analysis of the way of life, photographs are important because they represent the environment of ordinary people, farmers and workers.” As Grexa then by way of conclusion writes: keeping alive, or recreating, her past over and over again, through keeping a diary, letters, and preserving photos, meant a great deal to Erzsébet Király. She must have felt that, as Grexa puts it, she had unconsciously left traces of her life for posterity. On the other hand, she was clearly very much conscious of her own vulnerability, and of the vulnerability of the photographs she so much cherished. “The Vulnerability of Images to Diverse Interpretation: Issue Attitudes, Visual Framing, and Individualized Readings” is the title of the fol-



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lowing chapter, by Erik P. Bucy. To quote from his introductory passage: “To a large extent, public understanding of and attitudes toward important policy issues hinge on the media messaging about them – and, centrally, the imaging used in that messaging. Issue understanding depends not just on the volume of available information”, but also on “how important developments are *framed in media*. Given the cultural ubiquity and psychological accessibility of images, how issues are visually framed in public communication should occupy a central place in our thinking about persuasion.” Bucy’s analysis is based on two case studies surveying the controversial issues, first, of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in the U.S., and secondly, Syrian refugees in Europe. His central explanatory scheme: When “individuals derive meaning from images, they engage in an interactive process” driven, on the one hand, “by the stimulus properties of the visual”, and, on the other, by “their prior knowledge, political and moral commitments, and situatedness”. There is no “fixed relationship between an image and a monolithic interpretation; rather, viewers bring their unique perspectives shaped by their attitudinal priors and individual histories to bear on the image interpretation process”. And a passage from the chapter’s concluding section: “visual portrayals alone do not dictate how individuals construct meaning from images but rather interact with standing attitudes and, depending on the issue, the ideological orientation of the viewer”. The theme “refugees in need of humanitarian relief” reemerges in next chapter, “Visualizing the Alien Other: Science Fiction and Genocide Studies”, by Daniel Conway. Let me quote the opening passages of the chapter: “Teachers and scholars working in the field of genocide studies face the daunting challenge of communicating to their respective audiences the scope of genocide and the motivation(s) of its perpetrators. This is a challenge ... because those who do not already acknowledge genocide as a viable political or military option find its appeal to be virtually incomprehensible. Most civilized audiences, including those that are inclined to accept the possibility of just warfare, dismiss the practice of genocide as primitive, barbaric, inhumane, *and*, as a result, unthinkable. ... At the same time, however, genocide remains a persistent feature of the contemporary geopolitical land-

scape. Moreover, recent history and current events confirm that recourse to genocide is not the exclusive province of barbaric, anti-modern nations and peoples.” Conway proposes that we should “acknowledge the impetus toward genocide as native to the human condition itself”, and he proceeds to throw light on this impetus by exploiting the “visual and philosophical resources available within the underexplored cinematic genre of science fiction”. Pointing to some representative films in the genre, he shows “how unfamiliar *others* – e.g., aliens, avatars, and androids – are subjected to escalating degrees of suspicion, fear, disgust, intolerance, emotional/psychological trauma, abjection, and hatred. As such, these unfamiliar others may be understood to represent the vulnerable minority populations and communities that currently face the gathering threats posed by statelessness, xenophobia, out-group shaming, misogyny, religious persecution, homo- and transphobia, ethnic cleansing, and genocide itself.”

We now come to the last part of our volume: PHILOSOPHY IN THE NEW CENTURY. The first chapter here, the sixteenth chapter in this volume, is Zsuzsanna Kondor’s “Perceiving and Organizing the World”. The chapter in effect fulfills the role of connecting the first and last parts of the volume, mainly since it repeatedly refers to conceptual metaphor theory, but also because it treats a subject with which the chapter by Orsolya Putz was, albeit from a radically different perspective, occupied: namely the concept of mind. Kondor examines the concepts mind/intellect/consciousness, with the central focus on consciousness. As she by way of introduction puts it, she is attempting “to illuminate the intertwined relation between culture and consciousness”, the relation being based on “hard-wired aspects” of human evolution. “I will suggest”, writes Kondor, “despite the fact that the human intellect is traditionally described in terms of visual metaphors, that our conceptual skills are based on a kind of crosstalk between different sense modalities and motor-control, i.e., visual perception and processing alone can not provide sufficient grounds for abstraction, and hence, concept-formation.” A major philosopher on whose ideas Kondor builds is Maurice Merleau-Ponty. It is with reference to Merleau-Ponty she claims: “Consciousness is necessary

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for intentional activity and the capability of forming the world beyond the limits of reciprocal adjustments between the organism and its environment.” Merleau-Ponty saw the human *body* as playing an essential epistemological role. Again with reference to Merleau-Ponty does Kondor write: the body “gains special importance. It provides perspective, ties the perceiving self to ‘a system of things’, accommodates multimodal synthesis, yields perceptual fields and field of practice, and ‘as an active body capable of gestures, of expression, and finally of language, it turns back on the world to signify it’.” Another author whose work Kondor builds upon is Nicholas Humphrey, “a neuropsychologist known for his research of blindsight and work on the evolution of human consciousness, made an attempt to illuminate how the brain and the mind can be the ‘aspects of a simple state – a single state, in fact, of the material world’”. Altogether this is how Kondor sums up her chapter: “As humans are living organisms and have a direct relation with the physical world, they are socially embedded as well, capable of reorganizing their milieu. This creative power relies heavily on the capacity for abstraction, and later on abstract reasoning, and is rooted in a wide range of sensual experiences and motor skills.” The following chapter, “Pictorial (Conversational) Implicatures”, by Tibor Barany, discusses a rather technical philosophical issue, but his way of introducing the subject is intelligible even to non-philosophers: “there seems to be a deep asymmetry between the communicative use of words and of pictures. While it is reasonable to talk about *syntactic rules* operating on linguistic items (by which the syntactic structure of the sentence will be generated) and posit *compositional semantic content* or *conventional meaning* of sentences derived from conventionally encoded lexical word- (or morpheme-) meaning and conventional semantic rules for composition (which correspond compositionally to conventional syntactic rules), pictures appear to lack any kind of syntactic structure or encoded meaning-constituents.” This is possibly not a universally uncontestable position, just recall Forceville’s argument earlier in the present volume – I will return to the subject in my Epilogue. Be that as may be, Barany takes his point of departure from the established notion of what working out the conversational

implicatures of a syntactically complete verbal utterance – a sentence – means: “the *derivation of additional propositions* (supposedly meant by the speaker) from the proposition expressed by the utterance, which is triggered by particular features of the conversational context and the speaker’s communicative behaviour (or on hypotheses thereof formed by the audience)”. He then goes on allowing that the “fact” (I add: the supposed fact) “that pictures do not have syntax and in interpreting pictures the audience normally does not decode visual items does not make the concept of *what is shown* (as analogous to what is said) theoretically useless or unintelligible. We can reasonably speak of ‘meaning (implicating) one thing by showing (a picture of) something else’”. From here Bárány proceeds to put forward his own design, the first step being to endorse “some version of the resemblance theory of depiction, and assume that in normal cases visual features of the picture determine what it depicts. Resemblance theorists contend that the fact that pictures have a certain content (i.e. they represent, or are used by some people to represent objects, persons, events, actions, etc. from a particular perspective) should be explained by appeal to the visual resemblance relation between the picture and its object”, rather than, Bárány writes, by appeal to the fact that pictures belong to some conventional representational system, as most notably Nelson Goodman suggested. I applaud Bárány’s taking stand against the sadly mainstream position initiated by Goodman, but will not here follow in detail his extended and highly interesting argument; instead, I quote his concluding sentence: “conventionally encoded meaning need not serve as a departure point for conversational implicatures – and this holds for language and pictures alike”.

In the series *Perspectives on Visual Learning* we do not follow the today dominant convention of indicating, for internet references, the date when authors last accessed the site they quote. Rather, each internet reference has been checked by the editor in charge; all internet references contained in this volume were valid at the date the material was uploaded to the internet.

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