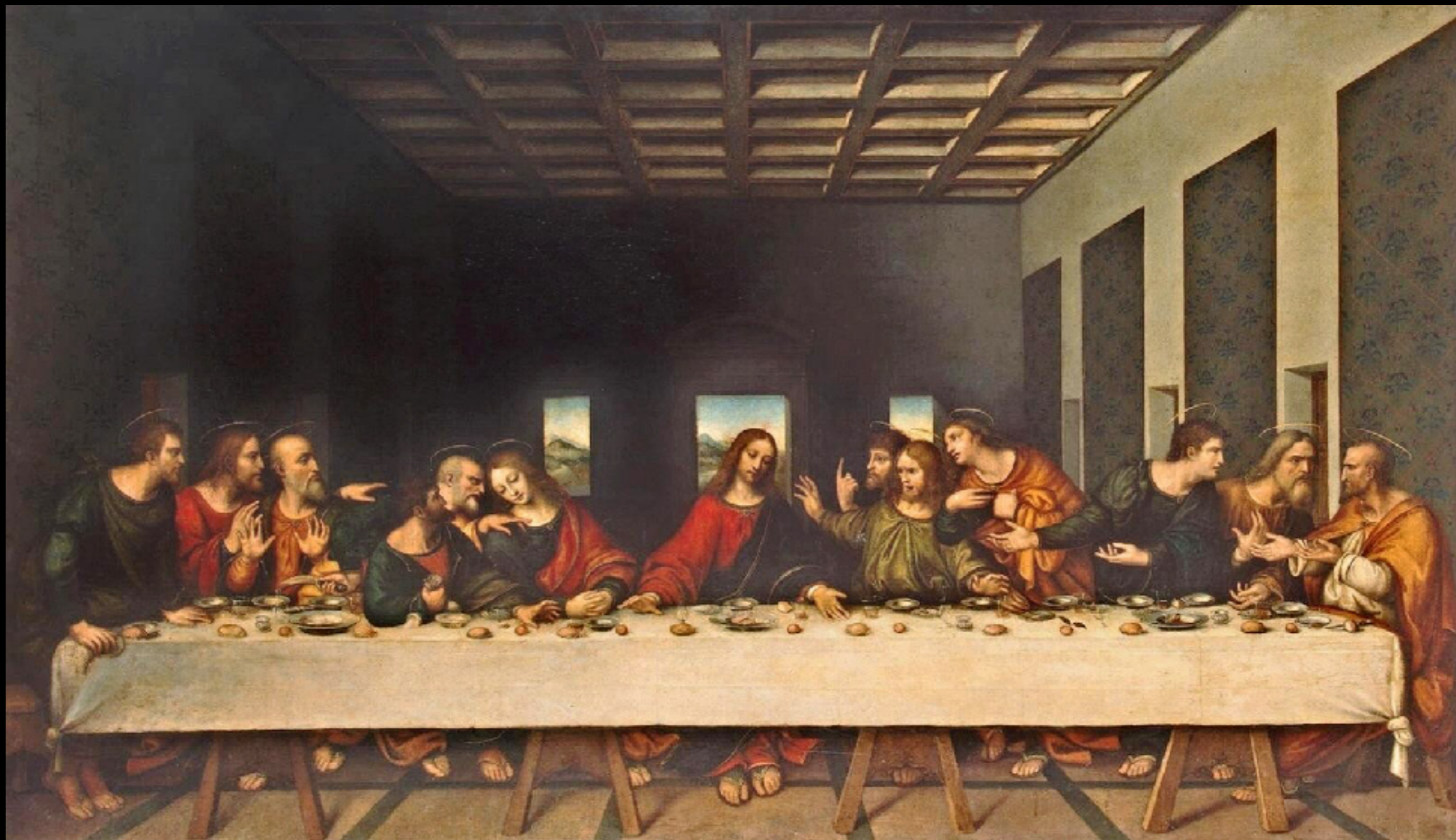


Power of Images. Visual Sources in Humanities

III. Iconography and Iconology

“Australian bushman would be unable to recognize a subject of a Last Supper, to him it would only convey the idea of an excited dinner party.”

Erwin Panofsky



Leonardo da Vinci, *Last Supper*, fresco secco, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan, Italy, 1494

Iconography

- **Iconography:** a scientific method used to interpret the meaning of images
- **Iconography x Iconology**
 - 20s and 30s of the 20th C
 - synonyms/different meaning



Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, 1539

See: https://books.google.cz/books?id=ocsQcOQLh5MC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Cesare+Ripa&hl=en&sa=X&ei=0DWyULahHqi6yAHYtoGgDg&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Cesare%20Ripa&f=false

DI CESARE RIPA. 63

Si rappresenta ch'adopri il suo corpo per cibo, questo significa tutte le cose, le quali per diuina prouidenza sono gouernate nel Mondo.

EVROPA.
Vna delle parti principali del Mondo.



DONNA ricchissimamente vestita di habito Regale di più colori, con vna corona in testa, & che sieda in mezzo di due cornucopia incrociati, l'vno pieno d'ogni sorte di frutti, grani, migli, panichi, risi, & simili, e l'altro d'vne bianche, & negre. con la destra mano tiene vn bellissimo tempio, & con il dito indice della sinistra mano, mostri Regni, Corone diuerse, Scettri, ghirlanda, & simili cose, che gli staranno da vna parte, & da l'altra vi sarà vn cavallo con trofei, scudi, & più sorte d'armi, vi sarà ancora vn libro, & sopra di esso vna ciuetta, & à canto diuersi instrumanti musicali, vna squadra, alcuni scarpelli, & vna tauoletta, laquale sogliono adoperare i pittori con diuersi colori sopra, & vi faranno anco alquanti pennelli.

Europa

17th Century Dutch Realism

- Dutch Baroque Art, Golden Age of Dutch Art:
 - protestant art
 - everyday themes
 - details
- Representatives: Rembrandt, Jan Vermeer, Pieter de Hooch
- Realism/Deep symbolism hidden behind everyday objects



Pieter de Hooch, *Woman with a Baby on her Lap*, oil on 1658

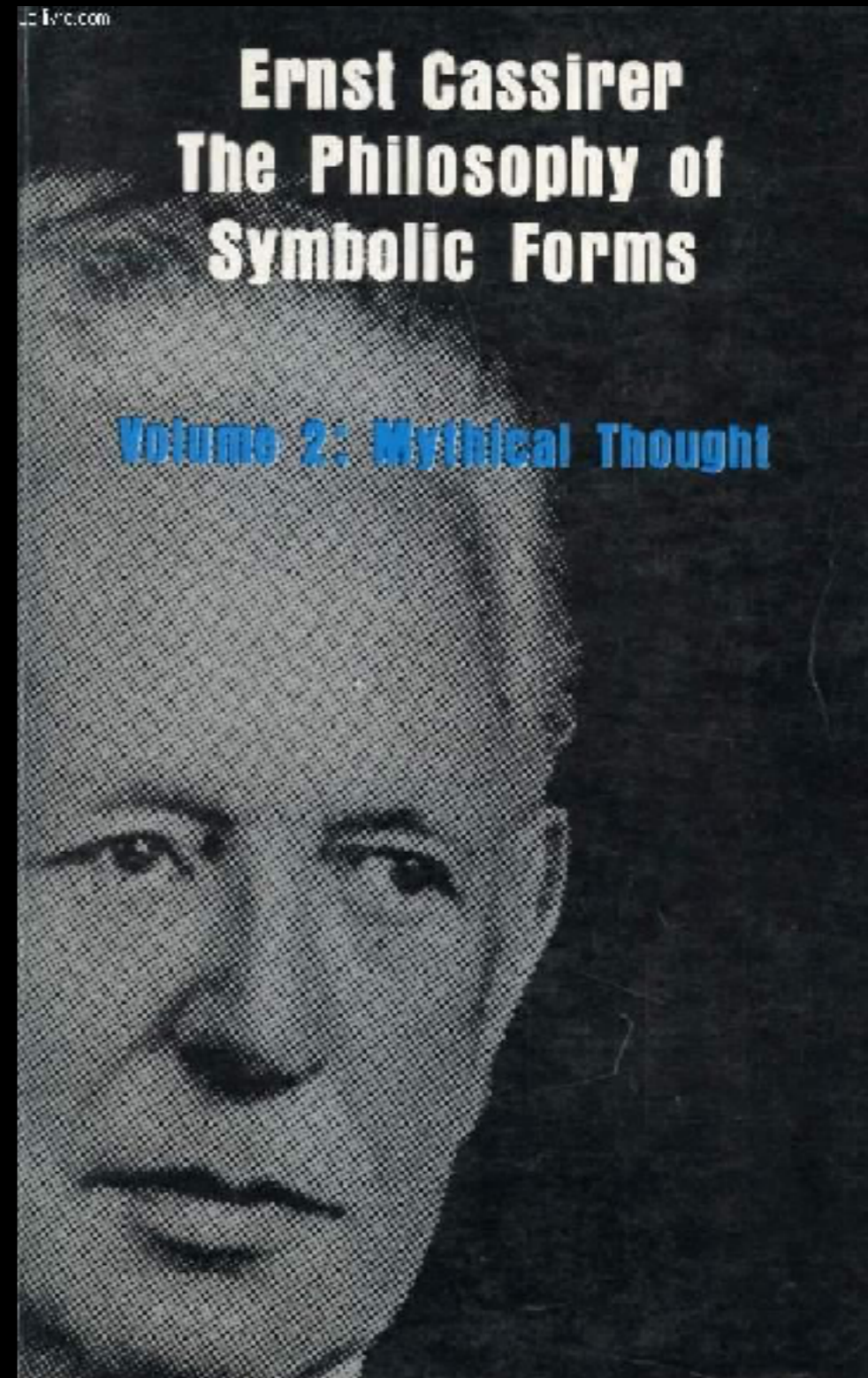
Reading Art

- Roland Barthes, *How to read a film*, (1977):
 - “I read texts, images, cities, gestures, scenes, etc.”
 - “the death of the author is the birth of the reader”
- The idea of reading images is quite old:
 - Pope Gregory the Great
 - Nicolas Poussin
 - Emile Male (1862-1964)



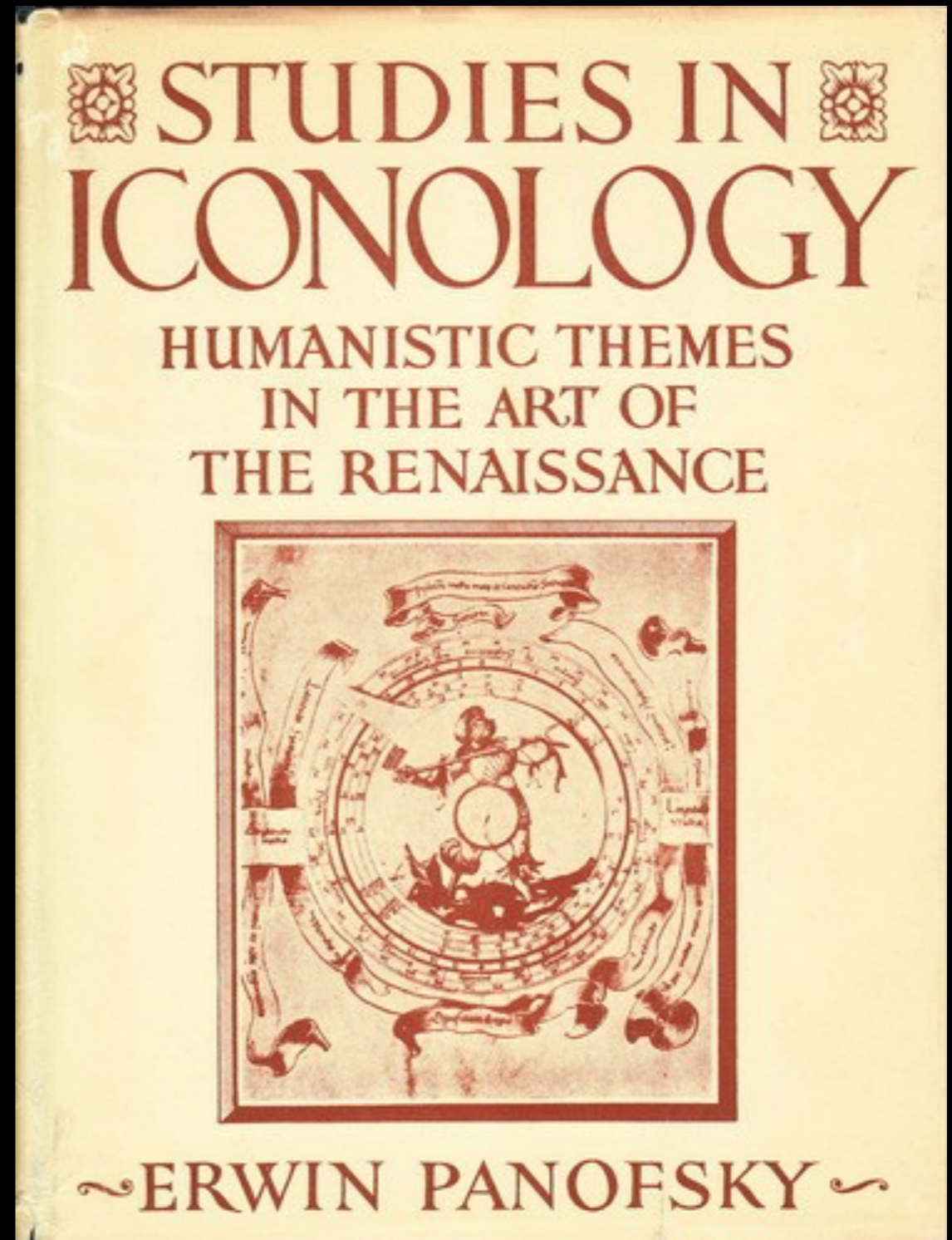
Hamburg Cycle

- Aby Warburg, Erwin Panofsky, Fritz Saxl and Edgar Wind:
 - classical education and interest in literature, history, philosophy and symbolic forms
 - philosopher Ernst Cassirer
- 1933 Hitler's entry into power
- hermeneutics
 - hermeneutic cycle (circle)
 - hermeneutic spiral



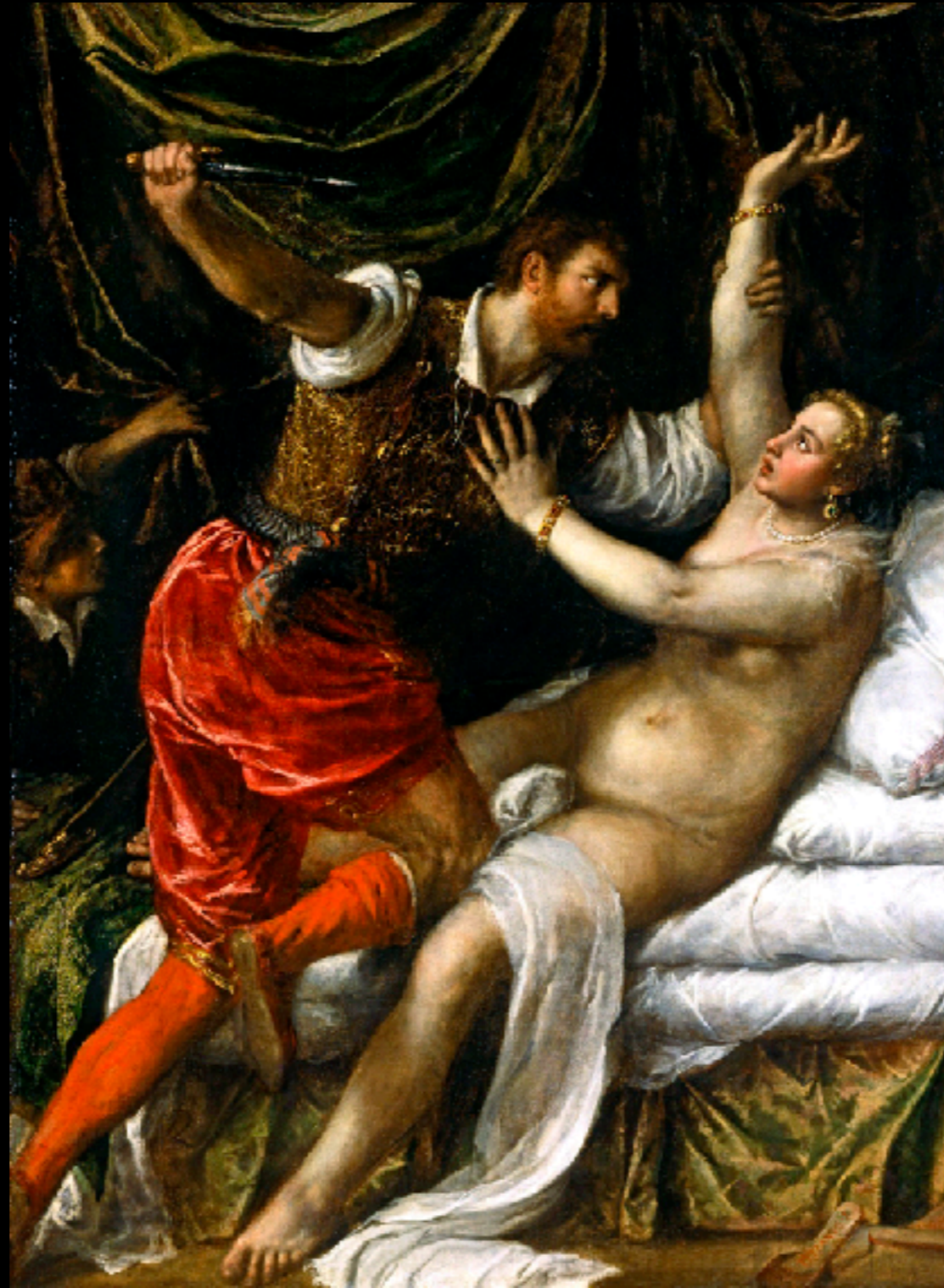
Erwin Panofsky

- *Studies in Iconology: Humanist Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*, 1939
 - EP method is based on interpretation of images
 - 3 levels of interpretation - 3 levels of meaning:
 1. pre-iconographic description - natural meaning
 2. iconographic analyze - conventional meaning
 3. iconological analyze - intrinsic meaning
- *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (1955)
- *Gothic Architecture and Scholastic* (1951)





Sandro Botticelli, *Primavera*, tempera on panel, 1470-1480, Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy



Titian, *The Rape of Lucretia*, oil on canvas, 1571, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England

Iconology and Iconography. Other Meanings

- **Ernst Gombrich:**
 - iconology - reconstruction of a pictorial programme
- **Eddy de Jongh:**
 - iconology: “...an attempt to explain representations in their historical context, in relation to other cultural phenomena.”

The Warburg Institute

- Aby Warburg
- The Warburg Library
- The Warburg Institute:
 - Hamburg
 - London
 - <https://warburg.sas.ac.uk>
 - Cultural history based on visual evidence used as historical evidence
 - Italian Renaissance art



Method Explanation



Titian, *Sacred and Profane Love*, 1514, oil on canvas, Gallery Borghese, Rome, Italy

Problems and Controversies.

- Original context
- Details
- Written text
 - “iconotext” (Peter Wagner)
 - documentary evidence
- “Humanist advisor”
 - artist - patron - artisan
- Too subjective, intuitive and speculative
- Lack of the social context
 - problem of viewer
- Interest in allegories
- Modern art resists the iconographical interpretation
 - surrealism
- Too logocentric (literary)
 - form/content
 - emotions
- The idea that the images express the “*spirit of the age*” (Ernst Gombrich or Johan Huizinga)
 - macabre sensibility typical of the late medieval Flanders/Hans Memling





Ottavio Vannini, *Lorenzo de' Medici with the Major Artists of His Time*, fresco, 1635, Silver Room, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, Italy



The Winged Victory of Samothrace (Nike of Samothrace), 2th century B.C., Louvre, France



The Virgin Mary of Guadalupe (Guadalupe Tonantzin)



Rembrandt, *The Night Watch*, oil on canvas, 1642, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands





Salvator Dali, *Soft Construction with Boiled Beans*, oil on canvas, 1936



Bernt Notke, *Dance of Death*, Talin, Estonia



Hans Memling, *Advent and the Triumph of the Christ*, oil on a wooden panel, 1480, Alte Pinakothek, Munich, Germany

For the next lecture: make a short iconological analysis of a painting (3 points)