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**Iconicity as Spatial Notion  
A New Vision of Icons in Contemporary Art Theory**

This paper deals with the notion of iconicity which changes the entire field of studies in iconic images. It concerns the reconsideration of icons as a spatial phenomenon and removing from the general category of religious pictures based on another matrix. A new view of the icon has been developing in recent years, it differs significantly from our customary approach. For most people, an icon is most likely a flat representation of a religious subject matter, depicted according to convention and usually on a wooden board. For them an icon is a flat, schematic representation which differs essentially from realist painting. In this paper the author suggests that this long established stereotype of icons is deeply unsatisfactory, at least in relation to Byzantium, considering that within this context the icon was always understood as a spatial image, or an image-mediator. And because the ideal icon is not a flat representation, but a spatial whole, connecting earthly and heavenly realms. By no means does it differ exclusively from a religious picture constructed as a matter of principle according to different rules. It is also distinct from the later icon we are accustomed to, as a kind of conventionally depicted representation of some religious subject. There is an internal incompatibility between the flat picture, which still exists in our consciousness as the basic means of describing the world, and the spatial image which is constructed completely differently.