

# Monster

## Representations of the monster in european arts

The first part of the thesis will display the direction change of the idea of the monster. The first images that were associated with this word are the figures of Nero's villa in the sixteenth century. They were decorations on the walls of the room containing some figures being labeled as "grotteschi", indicating that were found under the ground. From the beginning this has been associated with dreaming and Italians called it Sogni dei Pittori, meaning "painters' dreams". The renaissance word "grottesco" was used to denote a decorative style that indicates threat. This depicted a world quite different than ours, with the presence of human figures alongside those of plants and animals whereas symmetry has no value.

The world of the Middle Ages was highly sensitive when concerning the unusual or in this case malformations thus choosing to consider them monstrous. An encyclopedia called bestiary was created to make it easier for the people to understand the emergence of these monsters. These images were conceived as ethical or theological learning issues by mixing the existent with the miraculous. Der Papststiel by Lucas Cranach is an example of this image. Cranach has composed a creature which symbolizes the "monster" in Rome. Therefore this image is no longer an ornament but a violent picture of which monster could become reality.

The XIXth century begins with an interest of writers and philosophers, aestheticians and artists in the ugly part of art signifying a new era of the monster definition. The monster emerges from the shadows and has no peripheral status in the world of visual arts.

The second part deals with the aesthetic analization of ugliness through Karl Rosenkranz's book *The aesthetics of Ugliness*.

Contemporary writers and artists tried to come up with a definition of visual disgust, which is a category of disgust that includes the violation of the body like amputations, wounds or sexual deviations; deviations of the beauty standard that are well established. It offers a phenomenologic expilationation of disgust stating the fact that disgust has a tight link with the organic beings. Things such as blood, fecal matter, mucus, vomit or pieces of meat

that are treated as something disgusting because of their ambiguity or that are interstitial as live/dead or inside/out.

Chapter three will present us a repertoire of contemporary artists which had an extremely important role in the presentation of the grotesque.