

PAREIDOLIA AND VISUAL AGNOSIA

On the Italian Wikipedia website we read that pareidolia is *the subconscious illusion that tends to relate objects or profiles (natural or artificial) with a random form back to known forms*.

This argument is often used to attempt to explain certain mental illusions produced randomly by nature: clouds that become sheep, water that takes on fanciful forms with its movements, smoke in the air presenting images generated by the unconscious. Like the mental images aroused by Rorschach's ink spots.

So far the explanation it is acceptable. But there are some who go further, stating that the images sensed remotely by satellites are also illusions. In other words, the boot shape of Italy, for example, would be a pareidolic image randomly produced by light and shadow. Just as the megalithic sculpture of Rushmore would be the fruit of our mind.



If someone wants to convince you that these images are not real, don't believe him! They are making fun of you!

It is surprising that some people do not know how to tell the difference between mental morphological interpretations (non measurable) and objective morphological interpretations (measurable).

Fortunately the science of psychology succeeds in explaining this attitude, indicating it as *visual agnosia*.

On the Wikipedia website visual agnosia is defined as *an impairment of perception characterised by the failure to recognise objects, people, sounds, forms, in the absence of impairments of the memory and in the absence of lesions to the elementary sensory systems*.

Rudolf Arnheim, a lecturer in psychology of art at Harvard University, specifies that *"to see means to establish through your own eyes that a given thing is present in a given place"* and that visual agnosia is an **inability to grasp a global pattern**. Unfortunately, according to Arnheim *"many people make a use that is not very profitable of their visual organ, when it is not deteriorated, for most of the day"*.