Seminar: Totemism, Fetishism, Idolatry (Art History 463; English 697) CWAC 152 M 1:30-4:30

Instructor: W. J. T. Mitchell
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Hours: Tuesdays 2-4 & by appointment

Texts (available at Seminary Coop Bookstore):

Emily Apter and William Pietz, Fetishism as Cultural Discourse. Cornell U.P.
Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. Free Press
Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo. Norton
Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, Idolatry. Harvard
Claude Levi-Strauss, Totemism. Beacon Press
Burton Feldman and Robert Richardson, The Rise of Modern Mythology. Indiana (out of print, but a few copies are available from the instructor).
W. J. T. Mitchell, Iconology; Picture Theory; The Last Dinosaur Book: The Life and Times of a Cultural Icon (recommended as background).
Friedrich Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols. Penguin

Texts to be scrounged and photocopied (a partial list):

Bible: “The Golden Calf” in Exodus; text(s) of the second commandment
William Blake, “The Ancient Poets” in Marriage of Heaven and Hell
Auguste Comte, “Feticism,” chapter 7 of The Positive Philosophy
Charles de Brosses, On the Worship of the Fetish Gods in Feldman and Richardson, The Rise of Modern Mythology
Sir James Frazer, The Golden Bough. Part IV, Ch. 5.
Freud, “Fetishism” and “The Uncanny”
Kant, on the sublimity of the second commandment, Critique of Judgment Sec. 29
Marx, “On the Fetishism of Commodities” in Capital
Mitchell, “What Do Pictures Really Want?” October 77 (Summer 1997)
Nietzsche, Preface to Twilight of the Idols