What is Iconoclasm? „It seems so dated” – says Michael Taussig, but why so many write about it today? New interest in the life if pictures makes us redefine the old issue of “picture-hate”. Thanks to the new research in anthropology of pictures we know now that images can inspire very different reactions; some claim, that pictures can themselves be subjects and influence or manipulate us; some others point out that we have changed the definition of the “icon”. To sum up - the age-old definitions must be revised. In our course we will investigate this new, “extended field of iconoclasm”.

Basic questions to answer:
- How the iconoclasm was developed in antiquity and early Christianity?
- What has changed during the Reformation time?
- Today’s examples of assaults on images – who hates what?
- What is iconoclasm?
- What is a new “icon” – how to be a modern “iconoclast”
- Can the iconoclasm by reshaped by the influence of the internet?
- Is burning a flag an iconoclasm? Is Wikileaks an iconoclastic engine? How human body may be a tool for iconoclastic act?

We will read texts by Friedrich Nietzsche, Michael Taussig, Bruno Latour, W.J.T. Mitchell, David Freedberg and Jaś Elsner and collect modern examples of iconoclastic acts (arts); our goal is to build a modern, extended understanding of the old notion of “iconoclasm”.

**Basic Bibliography:**


Curriculum (outline)

2. Iconoclasm in antiquity and early Christianity and Reformation - David Freedberg “The Power of Images” (fragments)
5. Assaulted images – examples (3): spolia (Jas Elsner - "From the Culture of Spolia to the Cult of Relics” - fragments)
7. What is an icon? Classic and contemporary definition. Does the new understanding of an icon opens the door for a new iconoclasm? (Jas Elsner, “What is an Icon” - fragments)
8. What would it be – an iconoclastic gesture, how to assault the new icon? Bruno Latour “Few Steps Toward an Anthropology of Iconoclastic Gesture” - fragments
9. Polish “Critical Art” – cases of vandalism. Who is the iconoclast: the artist or the viewer?
10. Iconoclasm Dictionary according to Michael Taussig: part 1 (antiquated – sacred - icons – Nietzsche - Sacrifice)
11. Iconoclasm Dictionary according to Michael Taussig: part 2 (effigy- body-suicide bombers-wikileaks)
12. Iconoclasm Dictionary according to Michael Taussig: part 3 (Language: Foucault-author: Barthes)
13. What is Iconoclash – Bruno Latour. If there is a war of images, is the iconoclast needed? The inter-image assaults.
14-15: Presentation of students’ projects