

Pure Icon

1904 [c.] | New Elements (Kaina stoiceia) | EP 2:306

...a geometrical figure drawn on paper may be an *icon* of a triangle or other geometrical form. If one meets a man whose language one does not know and resorts to imitative sounds and gestures, these approach the character of an icon. The reason they are not pure icons is that the purpose of them is emphasized. A pure icon is independent of any purpose. It serves as a sign solely and simply by exhibiting the quality it serves to signify. The relation to its object is a degenerate relation. It asserts nothing. If it conveys information, it is only in the sense in which the object that it is used to represent may be said to convey information. An *icon* can only be a fragment of a completer sign.