

Summary

From Transcendental Schematism to Montage. The Poietic and Critical Model of Imagination

The aim of the dissertation is to develop a poietic and critical model of imagination in selected theories of aesthetics which will explain its potential for generating meaning. The project will focus on Immanuel Kant's conception of imagination and its hermeneutical reinterpretations. Kantian conception provides a theoretical basis for answering the question of the creative potential of imagination as well as the principle of the functioning of images.

The adjective "poietical" means in this case: creative, able to create content – fictional chains of meaning. The critical aspect of imagination consists of (1) allowing the emergence of what is new as its condition, (2) enabling judgment, (3) and also the moment of transgression as a part of creative act, breaking the order of classification, enabling perspective change and judgement.

In the dissertation I formulate the following hypothesis: the poietic and critical aspects of imagination converge in the process of uncovering and broadening the sense of experience. This involves understanding imagination as an act of creating and combining images and their work. Because of the wealth of intuition – in the flow of images – one can see connections, similarities and differences, new meanings. The subject imagines and creates as a participant of culture in broader linguistic and pictorial structures. They constitute the order from which he can derive, transform and articulate individual experience.

The dissertation consists of three parts: (1) the presentation of Kant's model of transcendental imagination, (2) the analysis of metaphor and painting as examples of productive and free imagination, (3) the analysis of constructive and deconstructive aspects of imagination in literary works as well as montage of images.

The function of imagination in transcendental philosophy consists of schematizing and synthesizing the content of experience. Imagination combines categories and sensory data. Categories receive their empirical meaning, the sensory data become understandable. In other words, imagination enables gaining knowledge by reading of nature. In the free action of imagination, the world appears as beautiful and symbolic. Imagination through the aesthetic idea broadens the concepts by opening up to the wealth of intuition, and in the experience of sublimity allows us to go beyond the sensual reality.

The metaphor is an example of productive and imaginative action of imagination. As a contact between two distant semantic fields, it exceeds the classification which leads to a shock and allows a new interpretation of the whole sentence. This is due to the flow of

images that the metaphor evokes. It allows the reader to see connections and similarities and notice invisible aspects of reality.

Painting schematicism consists of distinguishing space and creating transitions between what is visual and readable. In this way, a figure is inseparable from the way it is portrayed. It consists of recognizable elements (figures, symbols) and what is visual (colours, contrasts, lines) and what remains invisible. The phenomenological interpretation and the interpretation based on the analysis of the dreamwork (used alongside the iconographic interpretation) allows to reveal the richness of the sense of what is sensual (also related to desire) and the multitude of understandings.

The synthesizing and schematic function of imagination supports the process of construction (in the novel), reconstruction (proceeding the course of events) and deconstruction (of existing content). A plot combines different elements like characters, motivations and circumstances, and organizes events in such a way that they contribute to the development of the story. Recognizing these relationships between elements – which imagination contributes to – allows reconstruction of inaccessible and past events. Imagination works here as a montage in which disassembly is also included. The latter allows to break out of context, questioning the order of presentation and the existing ways of understanding situations, past events etc. Imagination in the work of images as montage supports judging; comparing, looking for relationships and incompatibilities, as well as evaluation.

Dynamics of imagination – forming, combining images, synthesizing content of experience, providing meaning and less catchable, but broader sense – is made in various, often overlapping, tensions, such as: linearity and synchronicity; construction and deconstruction; similarity and difference; determination and reflection; sensual and discursive (related to what is individual and general); pictorial and linguistic. They build the poietic and critical model of imagination.