Thought as a ‘Territory-In-Between’ for Word and Image

Jūratė Baranova

Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Faculty of History, Department of Philosophy,
T. Ševčenkos St. 31, LT-03111 Vilnius, Lithuania, jurabara@gmail.com

Summary. This article asks the questions: what are the points of semblance between arts and philosophy? How is it possible to reflect them as one moment of creative event? For answering this question first of all, it discusses the clash between the logic and creativity in meeting of philosophy and arts and secondly – the clash between the word and the image, invented by the artist René Magritte and the philosopher Michel Foucault. It returns to the classical disagreement of Nietzsche with Socrates about the dominance of logic over creativity and asks the question: what side is taken by Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995) and Félix Guattari (1930–1992) in this discussion. It seems they reconcile logic with creativity, saying that art is no correlative, no supplement to scientific understanding, that the three great forms of thought – art, science, and philosophy, – are three independent routes, each specific and each as direct as the others. On the other hand, interpreting Kant Deleuze notices the discord between imagination-understanding and reason and following the insights of Antonin Artaud he discerns the new type of a thought as a possible territory-in-between for word and image.

Keywords: Deleuze, Magritte, Foucault, image, concept.

1 The article is based on the investigation included into the project Gilles Deleuze: Philosophy and Arts financed by the Lithuanian Academy of Science (No. MIP-067/2014) and part of it was presented at the conference On Deleuze and Artistic Research (DARE2015 ) in Gent 9–11.11.2015

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.15823/zz.2015.32
Socrates and Nietzsche: a Fight between Logic and Creativity

Philosophy does not rise from the arts and *vise versa*: the arts do not stem from philosophical thinking. Formally these two spheres of culture coexist, but in reality they meet and reflect upon each other in different ways – sometimes critically. Their first meeting in antiquity seems a bit like an ironic fight. Celebrated playwright Aristophanes (445–386) in his play *Clouds* makes a caricature of philosopher Socrates (470/469-399 Cr.). The character Strepsiades is attending lessons in Socrates’ school The Thinkery in order to become an orator, to learn how to turn inferior arguments into winning arguments and beat his aggrieved creditors in court. Socrates appears overhead, wafted in a basket at the end of a rope. Strepsiades asks what he is doing, and the philosopher replies that he is observing the sun. Socrates suggests for Strepsiades a form of meditative incubation in which the old man lies under a blanket while thoughts are supposed to arise in his mind naturally. The incubation results in Strepsiades masturbating under the blanket and finally Socrates refuses to have anything more to do with him. The plot from the Aristophanes comedy becomes the arguments for Socrates’ accusation and trial. In Plato’s *Apology*, Socrates mentions it in the trial: “Socrates is guilty of being a busybody. He enquires into the things under the earth and in the heavens, and turns the weaker argument into the stronger, and he teaches these same things to other people. That’s roughly how it goes. You saw it for yourselves in Aristophanes’ comedy” (Plato, 1997 b, 87). Deleuze in his book *What is Philosophy?* (*Qu’est-ce que la philosophie?*, 1991) written with Guattari (Dosse commented that the book was written by Deleuze alone; Guattari’s name was added only for print (Dosse, 2011, 456)) remarked that “Philosophy can speak of science only by allusion, and science can speak of philosophy only as of a cloud” (Deleuze, 1994, 161). Here again returns Aristophanes’ created parody of the philosopher who is meditating in the clouds.

Plato overturned the irony against Aristophanes himself. In Plato’s *Symposium* all the participants of a symposium in a row are discussing about Eros, god of love, but when it comes to Aristophanes’ turn he gets hiccups maybe “from eating too much, or for some other reason” and is not able to speak (Plato, 1997a, 17). On the other hand, while the artist Agathon and the philosopher Socrates are engaged in ironic dialogue which gives intellectual satisfaction for both men, Socrates is late to the symposium. Obviously Agathon is impatiently waiting, sending people to look for him: he was bored without the philosopher. When Socrates came, Agathon met him with an ironic remark, inviting Socrates to sit next to him with the words: “Then I shall absorb whatever it was you were thinking about outside. You must have found the answer, or you wouldn’t have come in to join us” (Plato 1997a, 6). Socrates willingly accepts the challenge and answers the poet with the same mocking tone, commenting that if ideas could be imparted simply by contact he would be lucky to be sitting next to Agathon himself and getting a nice, substantial transfusion. “My ideas aren’t much use. They have an ambiguous, dreamlike
quality, whereas yours are brilliant, and with so much scope for further improvement” (Plato, 1997a, 6–7). The poet and philosopher understand each other and respect their battle. The day before, Agathon won the competition in Athens with his creation. Socrates demonstrates irony to worldly success. There is an unarticulated meaning beyond his words, saying: wisdom has nothing to do with success. A philosopher, in contrast to a poet, does not look for glory. He does not think that wisdom needs justification from the public. Socrates does not write at all: the thinks, speaks and discusses. Not for the public, but for the narrow group of disciples. On the other hand, this dialogue reveals that irony does not separate philosophy and literature, but instead unites them: Irony can be a common trope not only of philosophy and literature, but also of philosophy and the other arts. One can discern the trope of irony in the cinema and visual art as well. Irony is a common trope for both philosophy of history and history as a science, as Hayden White showed. Deleuze also reflected upon Socrates’ irony in his book *Proust and Signs* (*Proust et les signes*, 1964), but, on the other hand, he discerned that Proust’s humor is something rather different from Greek irony:

In Socrates, the intelligence *still* comes before the encounters; it provokes them, it instigates and organizes them. Proust’s humor is of another nature: Jewish humor as opposed to Greek irony. One must be endowed for the signs, ready to encounter them, one must open oneself to their violence. The intelligence always comes after; it is good when it comes after; it is good only when it comes after. As we have seen, this distinction between Proust and Platonism involved many more differences. There is no Logos; there are only hieroglyphs. To think is therefore to interpret, is therefore to translate (Deleuze, 2000, 101).

Plato’s *Symposium* reveals also some additional aspects concerning the interdisciplinary meeting of philosophy and arts. First of all, in this meeting between philosophy and arts, the philosopher shows himself as the supervisor of an artist. He is much stronger as a person and he is leading the discussion. The end of the dialogue coincides with the end of the symposium. Everybody fell asleep, but Socrates, Agathon and Aristophanes continued their discussion and “Socrates was holding the floor”. The narrator cannot remember most of what he was saying, but “the gist of it was that he was forcing them to admit that the same man could be capable of writing comedy and tragedy, and hence that a successful tragedian must also be able to write comedy” (Plato, 1997a, 58). Socrates formulated the principles of interdisciplinary (inter-genre) creation for the artist. But he kept silent about the possibility of interdisciplinary research in meeting arts and philosophy. Philosophy was considered to be above any artistic creation. Philosopher is much stronger than poet even in the habits of everyday life. As Nietzsche notices in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Socrates “went to his death with the same tranquillity Plato describes him showing as he leaves the Symposium, the last drinker in the early light of dawn, beginning a new day, while behind him, on the benches and the ground, his sleeping
dinner companions stay behind, to dream of Socrates the truly erotic man” (Nietzsche, 2003, 37). The patronizing view of the philosopher towards the artist was expressed in Plato’s other dialogue, Apology, as well. Socrates said he was impressed by the greatest skill of composition in the works of the writers of plays and songs, but when he went to them in order to learn something from them, he was disappointed: “I realized that their achievements are not the result of wisdom, but of natural talent and inspiration. Like fortune-tellers and clairvoyants, who also say many striking things, but have no idea at all of the meaning of what they say” (Plato, 1997b, 90–91). Creation without wisdom seems to be the second-rate activity. Only logic is what really counts.

A rebellion against the philosopher as a mentor for the artist happened in philosophy itself. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) overturns the priority of logic over creation when in The Birth of Tragedy he announces that “only as an aesthetic phenomena are existence and the world eternally justified” (Nietzsche, 2003, 18). Nietzsche does not consider the philosopher Socrates as the main figure in Ancient culture. Even more important and worthy seems to be Homer, Pindar, Aeschylus, Phidias, Pericles, Pythia, and Dionysus. Mainly they express the essence of Greece which “is certainly worthy of our highest veneration” (Nietzsche, 2003, 36). Nietzsche longs for the old Greek tragedy and Dionysian chorus. He announces Socrates as responsible for its death. The tragedian Euripides, saturated by Socrates’ lessons, transformed himself from a poet to a philosopher and flushed out the essence of Greek tragedy: the chaotic spree of Dionysian cult and harmonious moderation of Apollonian cult. So he gradually led to death the Greek art of tragedy. Logic prevailed.

F. Nietzsche is not impressed by Plato’s arguments defending Socrates from Aristophanes’ parody. On the contrary, in this controversy between the artist (Aristophanes) and two philosophers (Socrates and Plato), he takes Aristophanes’ side. F. Nietzsche writes that “the instinct of Aristophanes (which grasped issues so surely) was certainly right when he linked together Socrates himself, the tragedies of Euripides, and the music of the new writers of dithyrambs, hating each of them and smelling in all three of them the characteristics of a degenerate culture” (Nietzsche, 2003, 46).

On the other hand, F. Nietzsche notices that this “despotic logician Socrates experienced the feeling of a gap, an emptiness, a partial sense of reproach for a duty he might have neglected”. F. Nietzsche mentions the confession of Socrates to his friends in prison that he often sees one and the same dream, always with the words, “Socrates, practice music!”.

And in this mood, he composed a poem to Apollo and rendered a few of Aesop’s fables in verse. What drove him to this practice was something like the voice of his warning daemon. It was his Apollonian insight that, like a barbarian king, he did not understand a divine image and was in danger of sinning against a divinity through his failure to understand. That statement of Socrates’s dream vision is the single indication of his thinking about
something perhaps beyond the borders of his logical nature. So he had to ask himself: Have I always labelled unintelligible things I could not understand? Perhaps there is a kingdom of wisdom which is forbidden to the logician? Perhaps art is even a necessary correlative and supplement to scientific understanding? (Nietzsche, 2003, 39).

This fight between philosophy and arts, logic and creativity was initiated by the poet Aristophanes and directed against Socrates. The philosophers Socrates and Plato responded and directed their logic against Aristophanes and other artists’ incredibility. Nietzsche responded and took Aristophanes’ side, but, on the other hand, he discerned a real philosophical problem in the reflections of Socrates: is there any kingdom of wisdom forbidden to the logician?

G. Deleuze and F. Guattari: Reconciliation of Logic and Creativity

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s books can be seen as a possible answer to this old question stemming through Nietzsche from Socrates: Is art a necessary correlative and supplement to scientific understanding?

The two 20th century philosophers answer: no. Art is no correlative, no supplement to scientific understanding. The three great forms of thought – art, science, and philosophy, – according to them, are three independent routes, each specific and each as direct as the others. They are distinguished by the nature of the plane and by what occupies it, by the way they confront chaos. They throw different planes over chaos:

<…> philosophy wants to save the infinite by giving it consistency: it lays out a plane of immanence that, through the action of conceptual personae, takes events or consistent concepts to infinity. Science, on the other hand, relinquishes the infinite in order to gain reference; it lays out a plane of simply undefined coordinates each time, through the action of particular observers, defines states of affairs, functions or referential propositions. Art wants to create finite that restores the infinite: it lays out a plane of composition that, in turn, through the action of aesthetic figures, bears monuments or composite sensations (Deleuze, Guattari, 1994a, 197).

They suppose that art and philosophy crosscut the chaos and confront it, but it is not the same sectional plane. “In the one there is the constellation of a universe or its affects and percepts; and in the other, constitutions of immanence or concepts. Art thinks no less than philosophy, but it thinks through affects and percepts” (Deleuze, Guattari, 1994a, 66). The plane of composition of art and the plane of immanence of philosophy can slip into each other to the degree that parts of one may be occupied
by entities of the other. But in each case the planes of two separate spheres – art and philosophy – remain like two relatively distinct and heterogeneous parts. They are not identical; they do not melt or mingle into one another. Art includes no other plane than that of aesthetic composition. Philosophy is concerned with concepts and events. G. Deleuze solved the problem of the old battle between the philosophers and the poets by separating their territories: giving to them different planes such that no one seems more important than the other. What is the standpoint from which it is possible in one grasp to overview two different spheres of culture, art and philosophy? Where is it? In which territory, philosophy or arts?

Certainly, that is in the territory of philosophy. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari in the book *What is Philosophy?* expressed very similar intentions as Socrates. They are fighting *doxa* and the over-dominance of opinion. For this reason they are criticizing the phenomenological approach to art. Phenomenology, according to G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, is the searching of original opinions which bind us to the world as to our homeland (earth). For this reason, “phenomenology needs art as logic needs science; Erwin Strauss, Merleau-Ponty, or Aldiney need Cezanne or Chinese painting” (Deleuze, Guattari, 1994a, 149). G. Deleuze and F. Guattari see the danger that Husserlian transcendental subject leads back “to the simple opinion of the average Capitalist, the great Major, the modern Ulysses whose perceptions are clichés and whose affections are labels, in a world of communication that has become marketing and from which not even Cézanne or Van Gogh can escape?” (Deleuze, 1994a, 149). Deleuze agrees with Socrates and phenomenology that opinions are one of the conditions of philosophy. But he is very sceptical about the way of deepening opinion and of discovering original opinions by the means of art to raise it to the infinite movement that replaces it with the concept. The phenomenologist can reject: what is the need for art to be replaced by the concept? On the other hand, there are many concepts of philosophy that phenomenology created.

On the other hand, in this final book when trying to answer the fundamental question *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze slides to the question of what is art par excellence without the relation to philosophy. “Art preserves, and it is the only thing in the world that is preserved. It preserves and is preserved in itself (*quid juris*?), although actually it lasts no longer than its support and materials – stone, canvas, chemical color, and so on (*quid facti*?)” (Deleuze, 1994a, 163). G. Deleuze reflects also about the creator, indicating that the independency of the creator stems through the self-positing of the created, which is preserved in itself. “The artist’s greatest difficulty is to make it stand up on its own” (Deleuze, 1994a, 164). G. Deleuze even takes not from philosophy, but from the arts his main used philosophical concept to define specific situation of arts, science and philosophy. The concept ‘chaosmos’ was mentioned by the writer James Joyce and G. Deleuze takes it as opposition to the established cliché of opinions:
Art is not chaos but a composition of chaos that yields the vision or sensation, so that it constitutes, as Joyce says, a chaosmos, a composed chaos—neither foreseen nor preconceived. Art transforms chaotic variability into chaoid variety, as in El Greco’s black and green-gray conflagration, for example, or Turner’s golden conflagration, or de Stael’s red conflagration (Deleuze, 1994a, 204–205).

G. Deleuze ‘borrowed’ from Joyce the concept of chaosmos as Jacques Derrida did the concept of dissemination.

What are the points of semblance between arts and philosophy? How is it possible to reflect them as one moment of creative event? As was mentioned, they are united by their common fate: necessary struggle with chaos.

The other common point uniting art and philosophy is the possibility of both philosophy and arts to rend durable a moment of the world to exist by itself. G. Deleuze in this reflection turns towards abstract or conceptual art. He supposes that abstract art and conceptual art are two recent attempts to bring art and philosophy together, but they do not substitute the concept for the sensation; rather they create sensations and not concepts. In what sense is abstract art more open towards philosophy than the other arts? G. Deleuze says that abstract art seeks only to refine sensation, to dematerialize it by setting out an architectonic plane of composition in which it would become a purely spiritual being, a radiant thinking and thought matter, no longer a sensation of sea or tree, but a sensation of the concept of sea or concept of tree. How is a sensation of the concept possible in general at all? Is the concept not above the domain of sensation? Separated by a gap? G. Deleuze united the gap between sensations and concepts by installing a neutralized plane of composition. He wrote:

Conceptual art seeks an opposite dematerialization through generalization, by installing a sufficiently neutralized plane of composition (the catalog that brings together works not displayed, the ground covered by its own map, disused spaces without architecture and the “flatbed” plane) so that everything takes on a value of sensation reproducible to infinity: things, images or clichés, propositions—a thing, its photograph on the same scale and in the same place, its dictionary definition. However, in the latter case it is not at all clear that this way leads either to the sensation or to the concept, because the plan of composition tends to become “informative”, and the sensation depends upon the simple “opinion” of a spectator who determines whether or not to “materialize” the sensation, that is to say, decides whether or not it is art. This is a lot of effort to find ordinary perceptions and affections in the infinite and to reduce the concept to a doxa of the social body or great American metropolis (Deleuze, 1994a, 198).
The decision whether or not to “materialize” the sensation takes thought. And the heterogeneity between sensation and thought is dissolved. In which territory: thought or sensation? It seems like that at the territory of thought.

Heterogeneity Between Word and Image

The concept of heterogeneity is one of the key concepts in G. Deleuze and F. Guattari’s texts. Heterogeneity moves through all possible spheres of becoming. If one starts to discuss art at this moment, the concept of heterogeneity comes into play. They wrote: “To us, Art is a false concept, a solely nominal concept; this does not, however, preclude the possibility of a simultaneous usage of the various arts within a determinable multiplicity” (Deleuze, Guattari, 1987, 300–301). “A simultaneous usage of the various arts” is the most intriguing possibility in G. Deleuze and F. Guattari’s esthetics. Heterogeneity enables simultaneity.

There is also an essential heterogeneity between the visible and the speakable. Foucault in cooperation with Belgian painter René Magritte in his book *This is Not a Pipe* (*Ceci n’est pas une pipe*), discovered the innate incompatibility between the word and the image. Foucault noticed that Magritte discovered the gulf “which prevents us from being both the reader and the viewer at the same time…” (Foucault, 1983, 36).

In his experiment with the words and the images, Magritte included the words in the pictures alongside the image, or even instead of the image, or in paradoxical correlation with the image. In 1928–1929 he created the famous picture *The Treason of the Pictures* (*This is not a Pipe*), in French *La trahison des images* (*Ceci n’est pas une pipe*, 1928–1929) in which the painted pipe coexists with the explanation written below ‘This is not a pipe’. In 1964 Magritte repeated this surreal word and image puzzle in the picture *This is not an Apple* (*Ceci n’est pas une pomme*, 1964) in which in the same manner a realistic depiction of an apple is accompanied by the subtitle ‘This is not an apple’. In two years Magritte repeated the idea in the picture *The Two Mysteries* (*Les deux mystères*, 1966), in which one sees the painted *This is not a Pipe* painted as an object in the painter’s studio and one more pipe hanging above as an air balloon pretending to be the real pipe. Foucault reflected upon both variants of *This is not a Pipe* in his text with a similar title saying: “The first version disconcerts us by its very simplicity. The second multiplies intentional ambiguities before our eyes” (Foucault, 1983, 15). This sequence of the painted pipes inspires Foucault to ask a number of questions, leading to possible multiplicities as relations between a pipe and its image such as: “Are there two pipes? Or are there two drawings of the same pipe? Are there a pipe and the drawing of that pipe, or two drawings each representing a different pipe? Or maybe there are two drawings: one representing a pipe

---

2 Foucault indicates another date, 1926 (Foucault, 1983, 15).
and the other not, or two more drawings yet, of which neither the one nor the other are or represent pipes? Is a drawing representing not a pipe at all but another drawing, itself representing a pipe so well that I must ask myself: To what does the sentence written in the painting relate?” (Foucault, 1983, 16). These questions open something like a gap between the discourse about the pipe and the visual image of the pipe. G. Deleuze writing about Foucault in the book *Foucault* (1986) would reflect:

In his commentary on Magritte, Foucault shows that there will always be a resurgence of ‘the little thin band, colorless and neutral’ separating text from figure, the drawing of the pipe from the statement ‘this is a pipe’ to the point where the statement becomes ‘this is not a pipe’, since neither the drawing, nor the statement, nor the ‘this’ as an apparently common form is a pipe: ‘the drawing of the pipe and the text that ought to name it cannot find a place to meet, either on the black canvas or above it’. It is a ‘non-relation’ (Deleuze, 2006, 62).

If one accepts this ‘non-relation’ as a conclusion, the other question arises: There is no preformed order between heterogeneities, but is there any possible common point of communication between them? In the book *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (*Mille Plateaux. Capitalisme et Schizophrénie*: 2, 1980) G. Deleuze and F. Guattari noticed that this communication is neither imitation nor resemblance: at the same time, something else entirely is going on. What is this something else? In the early book *Difference and Repetition* (*Différence et répétition*, 1968), G. Deleuze wrote that every system contains its dark precursor–the third party–which ensures the communication of peripheral series. Given the variety among systems, this role is fulfilled by quite diverse determinations. G. Deleuze does not define exactly what this dark precursor or a third party is. In the book on Foucault, G. Deleuze returned to the problem by mentioning that Kant had already encountered a similar problem: he had to find a third agency beyond the two forms – spontaneity of understanding and the receptivity of intuition: the schema of imagination. G. Deleuze discerns that even M. Foucault “needs a third agency to coad apt the determinable and determination, the visible and the articulable, the receptivity of light and the spontaneity of language…” (Deleuze, 2006, 68).

G. Deleuze in his reflection all the time oxillarated between the heterogeneity and multiplicity of becoming and the intention structures this multiplicity into triads. Not only did Kant and Foucault need a third agency, but G. Deleuze as well.

The Lithuanian artist and writer Jurga Ivanauskaitė (1961–2007) was inspired by Magritte’s experimental games in her visual works and in her literature as well (Baranova, 2015, 63). Her poster for the rock group *Antis* (in English, *The Duck*) is based on the heterogeneity of the three meanings of the word “antis” and the impossibility of reducing the three meanings to any single one. This picture raises the questions very similar to what Foucault asked about Magritte’s *This is not a Pipe*: Does the word ‘duck’ (*Antis*) written on the wall...
have anything in common with a real duck or only with a metaphorical duck, meaning
the duck as ‘the forgery in the press?’ Do these three ducks (the painted object, the name
of the rock group, and the word on the wall) have something in common? Is there any
hierarchy between the ducks? Which one of these is the most ‘real?’ What is the possible
point of meeting, the dark precursor of the three heterogeneous ducks in the picture?

Our hypothesis is that G. Deleuze would have answered: it is a thought. This battle
between heterogeneous spheres, the impossibility to be a reader and a seer at the same
time, inspires thought. In his book on M. Foucault and G. Deleuze writes: “Visibilities
are not denned by sight but are complexes of actions and passions, actions and reactions,
multisensorial complexes, which emerge into the light of day.” As Magritte says in a let-
ter to Foucault, “thought is what sees and can be described visibly” (Deleuze, 1988, 59).

How does it happen that “thought is what sees and can be described visibly” and how
can it be that thought but not imagination plays the main part in the process of the creation
of arts? What are the presuppositions for this radical conceptualism of Gilles Deleuze?

**Thought and Imagination: I. Kant in G. Deleuze’s Aesthetics**

For the answer to this question one should return to G. Deleuze’s early writings. The
reflection upon the clash between thought and imagination could be traced in G. Deleuze’s
early reflections upon I. Kant’s philosophy. In 1963 G. Deleuze published the book *Kant’s
Critical Philosophy* (*La philosophie critique de Kant*, 1963). The same year he wrote the
essay, *The Idea of Genesis in Kant’s Esthetics*. In both texts returning to I. Kant’s book
*Critique of Pure Reason*, G. Deleuze notices that it would be misguided to search the
mystery of schematizing for the last word on the imagination in its essence or in its free
spontaneity. “Schematizing is indeed a secret, but not the deepest secret of imagination”
(Deleuze, 2004, 58) writes G. Deleuze. But what is the deepest secret of imagination? And
what role in this secret is left for thought?

One of these is expressed in the book on Kant and the essay *The Idea of Genesis in
Kant’s Esthetics*, where G. Deleuze returns to this conclusion, stating, “The imagination is
liberated from the supervision of the understanding and reason. But it does not become
legislator in turn: on a deeper level, the signal it gives to the other faculties is that each
must become capable of free play on its own” (Deleuze, 2004, 59).

In the text *On Four Poetic Formulas Which Might Summarize the Kantian Philosophy*,
G. Deleuze writes about the “terrible struggle between imagination and reason, and also
between understanding and the inner sense is a tempest in the depths of a chasm opened
up in the subject. The faculties confront one another, each stretched to its own limit, and
fined their accord in a fundamental discord” (Deleuze, 1984b, xiii).

This discord between imagination-understanding and reason would be once more
emphasized in the book *Difference and Repetition*, in which G. Deleuze once again re-
peats that harmony between the faculties can appear only in the form of a discordant harmony. “Kant was the first to provide the example of such a discordant harmony, the imagination and thought which occurs in the case of sublime” (Deleuze, 1994b, 146).

**Eisenstein and Artaud: the Power and Powerlessness of Thought**

A discordant harmony of imagination and thought provides unexpected results when G. Deleuze reaches the philosophy of cinema.

In the philosophy of cinema the deepest secret of imagination becomes the death of imagination, the annihilation of imagination which gives birth to a new sort of thought. In the second volume of *Cinema II The Time-image (Cinema 2-L’image-temps, 1985)* G. Deleuze is seeking to trace the faculties of the mind, which organize the cinema art as the specific art in comparison with the others. G. Deleuze relies not on imagination, but on the thought: “In fact, what constitutes the sublime is that the imagination suffers a shock which pushes it to the limit and forces thought to think the whole as intellectual totality which goes beyond the imagination” (Deleuze, 1989, 152).

The idea of the shock as an effect of the spirit, which forces it to think and to think the Whole is not a Deleuzian invention, but seems to be suggested by the Russian film director Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948). G. Deleuze carefully reads the texts by Eisenstein: *Film Form, Film Sense, Mémoires, Au-delà des étoiles, La non-indifférente Nature*. He refers to Eisenstein not only in the first chapter, when discussing the topic of dialectical montage, but also in the second volume in the chapter *Thought and Image*. G. Deleuze seems to refer to this notion of Eisenstein, in which he considered that internal monologue in the cinema goes beyond dreaming, which is too individual, and constitutes segments or links of a truly collective thought.

But suddenly G. Deleuze turns towards Antonin Artaud (1896–1948), who also wrote about shock as a very important power in his theatre of cruelty: G. Deleuze compares the Eisensteinian insight of the shock, which annihilates the imagination and gives birth to new thought, with a different version of the shock, namely the one expressed by Artaud. Artaud’s “theater of cruelty” is supposed to produce shock in order to revitalize the world we live in. But the real shock discovered by Artaud was the powerlessness of thought. G. Deleuze noticed that for Artaud the problem was not to orientate his thought, or to perfect the expression of what he thought, or to acquire application and method or to perfect his poems, but simply to manage to think something. A different understanding of the genesis of thought creates, according to G. Deleuze, an absolute opposition between Artaud’s project and a conception such as Eisenstein’s. G. Deleuze concludes that

---

for Artaud, contrary to Eisenstein’s concept, what cinema advances is not the power of thought but its powerlessness. G. Deleuze relies mainly on these difficulties and takes the side of Artaud. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze writes: Artaud knows “that difficulty as such, along with its cortège of problems and questions, is not a *de facto* state of affairs but a *de jure* structure of thought; that there is an acephalism in thought (*acéphale dans la pensée*) just as there is an amnesia in memory (*un amnésique dans la mémoire*), an aphasia in language (*un aphasique dans le langage*) and an agnosia in sensibility (*un agnosique dans le sensibilité*)” (Deleuze, 1968, 147). Relying upon Artaud’s insight on the powerlessness of thought, G. Deleuze concludes that thinking is not innate, as Kant supposed, but must be engendered in thought (Baranova, 2014). This genesis of thought, overlooked from the Kantian perspective, but tackled from Artaud’s experience, reveals for G. Deleuze that the problem is not to direct or methodically apply a thought which pre-exists in principle and in nature, but to bring into being that which does not yet exist. “To think is to create – there is no other creation – but to create is first of all to engender ‘thinking’ in thought” (Deleuze, 1968, 147) (*Penser, c’est créer, il n’y a pas d’autre création, mais créer, c’est d’abord engendrer “penser” dans le pensée*) (Deleuze, 1968, 192).

**Conclusions**

1. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari’s philosophy can be treated as a response to the fight between philosophy and arts, logic and creativity initiated by the poet Aristophanes and directed against Socrates. The philosophers Socrates and Plato responded and directed their logic against Aristophanes and other artists’ incredibility. F. Nietzsche responded and took Aristophanes’ side, but, on the other hand, he discerned a real philosophical problem in the reflections of Socrates: is there any kingdom of wisdom forbidden to the logician?

2. The standpoint from which it is possible in one grasp to overview two different spheres of culture-art and philosophy – for G. Deleuze and F. Guattari is in the territory of philosophy. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari expressed very similar intentions as Socrates. They are fighting *doxa* and the over-dominance of opinion. For this reason they are criticizing the phenomenological approach to art.

3. G. Deleuze in his reflection all the time oxillerated between the heterogeneity and multiplicity of becoming and the intention structures this multiplicity into triads.

4. To the question of what is a dark precursor – the third party – which ensures the communication between the word and the image G. Deleuze answers: it is the moment of engendering “thinking” in the thought. The same shock occurs in Magritte’s experimental pictures: when one cannot be the reader and the viewer at the same time. This inability leads to the powerlessness of thought and to the engendering thinking into the new thought, the thought which is able to see.
Literature


