

Philosophical Discourse of Screen Reality

Анотація. Аналізується філософське осмислення кіноекранної реальності як явища сучасної культури. Життя людини сьогодення просмекнуте екранами: вони інформують, виховують, розважають, нав'язують – власне формують сучасне культурне поле, перетворене на екран. Хоча сам екран не дає змістовної характеристики культури, не є її підставою, бо сам екран позбавив людину “вертикалі” трансцендентного, сакрального і метафізичного. Завдяки філософській рефлексії, “вертовському кінооку” людина наділена здатністю “бачити” світ усередині власної свідомості та досліджувати його як своєрідну модель.

Ключові слова: мистецтво кіно, кінописьмо, реальність, екранна реальність, віртуальна реальність.

Аннотация. Анализируется философское осмысление киноэкранной реальности как явления современной культуры. Жизнь современного человека кодирована экранами: они информируют, воспитывают, развлекают, навязывают – собственно формируют современное культурное пространство, превращенное в экран. Хотя сам экран не дает содержательной характеристики культуры, не является ее основанием, ибо сам экран лишил человека “вертикали” трансцендентального, сакрального и метафизического. Благодаря философским рефлексиям, “вертовскому киноглазу” человек наделен способностью “видеть” мир внутри собственного сознания и исследовать его в качестве своеобразной модели.

Ключевые слова: киноискусство, кинописьмо, реальность, экранная реальность, виртуальная реальность..

Summary. The philosophic comprehension of visual arts as cultural phenomena is analyzed on the principle of historic and logic unity, which allows to reproduce the visual arts both from the view of their actual state and proper theoretic interpretations in a following sequence: from the basics, which are forming the rationality through searching for the sense and retrieval of the most relevant for artistic synthesis for portrayal of the man, to the search of visual (screen) forms as an ascent from the new to the newest while each step becomes the ascent and barrier for the next one, trying to deprive and whip off the numb constituents of the precedent achievements. The attempt of the comprehension of the cultural experience between the ideal codes and their philosophic interpretation, the construction of subjectivity is carried out on the principles of Michel Foucault's theoretic thesis of, whose response on the existentialism, meanwhile the exploration of the cognitive process enforces the issue of topos culture between the empiric presentations and scientific theories, a play, the individual is being engaged in nowadays.

Key words: cinematographic art, visual arts, screen-art, screen-reality.

Topicality

Despite a wide range of scientific research on filmmaking, the conceptualization of screen arts within the framework of philosophy of culture is of primary importance for the study of vital reflections on the civilizing process. Screen arts are widespread in different kinds of discourse, which causes difficulties for their conceptualization. The philosopher is aware of the relativity of the discourse and is therefore open to communication in the context of other discourses, which is explored in this article. The search for philosophical sense in screen arts relies on principles suggested by Gilles Deleuze “If philosophy after its death is culture, why not look for it in the cinema” [1]. Striving to construct a theoretical concept through film images, as well as to define the grounds for filmmaking as a combination of cinema writing and philosophical reflection, we elucidate the way cinema affects worldviews providing the examples through cinematographic images and their screen life.

The **objective** of the article is to study the phenomenon of cinema from the perspective of philosophy of culture, which undoubtedly enhances the possibility to deepen the grasping of reality with the help of cinematographic expressive means. The screen reality deeply affects a viewer, his/her world outlook and life. Rapid development of technical devices for visual information transmission and formation of screen culture allow us to open new cultural worlds. I argue that there exist a discrepancy between illusionism aimed at a reflection of reality and a contemporary cinema that constructs a reality, offers a new type of perception, a new system of values, allows viewers to immerse in a cultural reality where there is a prevalence of illusions, myths, ideologemes that have a profound effect on their worldview. The question is how deeply the above mentioned processes affect a person and his/her inner world. As soon as something is defined as reality, thus becoming the status of reality, the question about reality arises. We boldly claim that everything that exists has a reflection of reality and proceed to its decoding, but these are only traces of reality [8, 114-125]. According to José Ortega y Gasset “What we usually call reality or the “external world” is [for us] no longer primordial reality stripped of any human interpretation; rather, it is that which we believe, with a firm and consolidated belief, to be reality. Everything we find to be doubtful or insufficient in the real world obliges us to form ideas about it. These ideas constitute the “inner worlds” in which we live knowing full well that we have invented them” [9, 432]

Russian philosopher S.L. Frank claimed that objective reality is not identical to “real”, because genuine reality is the reality of an inner world, so called primary reality [11, 231-232]. This is what we call many worlds (realities. – H.Chmil), created by a human: simulacra (Jean Baudrillard), “the space of a game” (J. Hasing, E. Fink) etc. Ukrainian scholar V. Korabliova suggested calling the realities created by humans “virtual” ones. She emphasizes that referring the term “virtual reality” to the society and other anthropogenic phenomena as a metaphor leads to distancing from reality and implications incurred by the discourse (cyberspace, network community etc.). V. Korabliova defines a human as a virtual creator whose distinctive feature is an ability (and a need) to create their own realities [6, 123]. It is not about a new type of a human being produced by an information

culture. Virtuality is viewed as an intrinsic quality of a human being capable of building his/her artificial environment in a natural world (M. Scheler) This artificial environment is a givenness opposite to the natural world, a kind of simulated space of nonmaterial objects, something that can be primary givenness for future generations [6].

According to V. Skurativskiy, one of the main reasons for the emergence of cinema as a special technique in human culture is an external projection of such "subjective" internal givenness in all its dimensions and states. It appeared as an attempt to externalize semiotically an inner sign process [10, 52-53]. The process of everyday cognition was defined as "cinematographic" and opposed to inner intuition. In his famous work *Creative Evolution* H. Bergson questions the way we cognize the world and claims that the mechanism of our everyday knowledge is of cinematographical kind. An intrinsic quality of cinema is that it is closely connected with the surrounding and even with the illusion of the reality (the first definition "illusion"). Besides, the majority of cinematographical techniques have not been studied enough in light of philosophy as means allowing us to interpret entrenched notions in a new way as well as illustrate ideas that have already become classical ones.

The contemporary philosophy of cinema shows reality from the perspective of image and even "capitulation of reality" has turned into hyperreality as its self-reduplication and excess [1] and is an entrance into virtual reality (a special screen technique). Structuralism argues that there is no one single way of reading a literary text. Cinema has multiple meanings by nature, therefore a single valid interpretation cannot be given. Poststructural philosophy treats cinema as an excess of reality, when everything is interconnected due to immanency. Consequently, reality is not reflected but is rather constructed, changed or determined by cinematographical images.

Being polymorphic, visual arts acquire spiritual, technical, and psychological connotations, thus forming and transforming communicative senses as cultural ones. Besides, they advocate cultural values and reproduce cultural codes although they are by nature anti-communicative and tend to exist in the field of unworded senses beyond the information flows. Cinema accumulates a range of devices in order to interpret the reality according to directors' desire. These means encompass the usage of special film, visual and auditory effects, colour, music, as well as a relevant type of speech. All this facilitates interpretation for viewers' "smart eye".

Cinematographical means can create new images of cognition and reality, which testifies to interconnection between philosophical and cinema discourses. According to G. Hebel, something that has been regarded as reality turns out to be mere knowledge, and something that has emerged as knowledge turns out to be reality. The imagination becomes a kind of cognition of "Homo Telematicus" (Jean Baudrillard) as a type of a human being in culture. Cinematographical means account for appearance of vital images in philosophy: the image of school by Gaston Bachelard, "the end of the book" by Jacques Derrida, "the Gutenberg galaxy" by Herbert Marshall McLuhan, "imagined communities" the concept coined by B. Anderson to elucidate the causes and spreading of nationalism. The above

mentioned research poses some key questions. How has communication managed to become tmain part of contemporary culture? What has made the border between a word and an image so blurred that the interpretation of cinematographic images is possible only as a game of senses?

This problem entails a number of ontological issues (“reality and fiction” offered by Pierce), realism transformed within the framework of positivism including thus not only reality but also its projection. Due to their informative power visual images are of great importance for projection. Cinema has penetrated in our life as a popular art and produces a deep effect on the choice of people and the projects of their lives (it often determines this choice). A person perceives a film from the perspective of his/her experience. The best directors perform complicated philosophical tasks through cinematographical means, being as well as writers “clinicians of civilization” [3]. Contemporary cinema boasts a considerable experience in virtualizing the reality. Such a valuable experience used to belong only to philosophy. At the same time, verbal means with their reference to language as a reality have entirely exhausted themselves. Being the main source for virtuality, cinema is regarded as an innovative and cutting-edge type of art. Cinema will never be able to achieve sign determination, though a manifold of its screen images (for no one and at the same time for everyone) accounts for permanent changeability forcing the viewers to change their stance. Cinema is a live understanding of modernity and its verbal expression. Each intellectual act is presented as a game that offers its position for reality reconstruction. Contemporary philosophy of cinema deals with sophia rather than with logos whose regulatory idea is outside the brackets and metaphysical superexistence has been changed for semantic presence – cinema writing. Cinema writing demonstrates metalingual capabilities of cinema language in the system of culture.

Modernism offered the logic according to which reality cannot be presented without striving for its objective presentation. Consequently, the problems of reality presentation, copying, and simulation as well as image are in the centre of attention of contemporary philosophy. At the same time, the transition of a number of segments of the world into a virtual reality takes place. This is where Jean Baudrillard saw the capitulation of reality and its transformation into hyperreality as a result of reduplication and excess.

Thus, reality does not reflect and represent the reality, but is distorted, reconstructed and simply determined by cinematographical images. Besides, cinema reproduces communicative senses, advocates certain values as well as forms certain cultural codes. Cinema can be autocommunicative, exist in the space of unworded senses, beyond information flows, which allows it to play with senses, transmit the reflection that was given by the film director. At the same time, a film motivates a viewer to reflect and makes an individual film watching dependent on experience and attitude to actors. Viewers do not only admire a film, but also become part of cinema ideology. The art of cinema has always been philosophical because all renowned directors represented philosophical positions and concepts through images on the basis of intuition and insight. The example is the author of *The Society of Spectacle* Guy Debord whose films are an illustration of his philosophical works.

In fact, all well-known directors are partially philosophers because they raise vital issues. Cinematographic reality is though not a single reality in contemporary conceptualization.

Contemporary cinema is a mediated analogue, an equivalent of the body as it does not give an opportunity to reconsider basic relations, though it offers an inner view, as well as an imagined texture of reality. *The Godfather* is a hidden confession by Coppola who, together with his father, experienced the collapse of the idea of absolute freedom and aspires to greater independence. *The Godfather. Part II* was probably created mainly to prove himself and the others the stability of the world moving in a methodology circle. Coppola managed to step in the same river twice and three times, because while he was busy, natural circulation did not cease. So everything returned to basic things: success, power, and family. Such situation emphasizes the need of cooperation between the artists and philosophers in their attempt to harmonize a personality and culture. It can probably be done through cosmopolitan universal models, because postmodernists added a lot of low notes to disharmonized relations between a human being and the world, thus turning film image into phantom. The language of postmodern works of art is characterized by the gaming nature of signs and impressions, flexible connection between the signifier and signified, which produces new contextual senses and breaks stylistic unity. The research of postmodern cinematographical language is closely connected with the philosophy of structuralism and poststructuralism, which treat language as *modus in rebus* that determines the features of art as well as influences the principles of cognition.

Interested in relations between language, sign, image and symbol, Michel Foucault points out their capability to change as well emphasizes the possibility to study language as a system [12,139]. Michel Foucault focuses on language functions at different stages of cultural development, defining these periods as epistemes. As a result, he concludes that relations between a human being and language are grounded on the principle of mutual reinforcement, which is possible only within modern episteme. The latter is characterized by breaking of connections between entity and idea, as well as by differentiating of language roles and functions. Michel Foucault argues that it is more efficient to elucidate cultural experience, which is between ideal codes and their philosophical interpretation, finding thus means of subject reconstruction. Introducing the notions of language practice, language fact, and episteme, Michel Foucault defines speech conditions and objects of speech, which makes it possible for language to function as a range of signs. While developing his analysis, the scholar takes into account discourse practices. Michel Foucault's research endeavours can be viewed as a reaction to existential approach to cognition. Adopting such methodological grounds as discreteness of the subject matter of the research, its connection with sign and symbolic systems etc. led to denial of cognitive activity. Having analyzed the periods of knowledge development from 14th to 20th centuries, Michel Foucault differentiates three epistemes: 14th century; from the middle of 17th to the end of 18th century; from 19th till the modern period.

The influence of postmodern philosophy (e.g. the theory of simulacra by Jean Baudrillard) can be traced in the construction of images of popular heroes shown in James Cameron's films *The Terminator* and *Terminator 2*. The main character – a

cyborg-simulacra – has a body with mirror surface that does not reflect but pushes away. The term simulacra substitutes the notion of personage (which is central for classical art), thus emphasizing imitative nature of a postmodern character.

Conclusions

Cinematographical images are a transcendental social instance, gradually acquiring a philosophical significance. The research centering on the society of simulacra should be based on a variety of worldviews. Under such circumstances a screen turns into reality where screenplays offer desired roles and disguise and cinematographical discourse plays a leading role for defining strategy and tactics of life. The introduction of the terms “disguise” and “role” and the elucidation of the role of screen technologies will undoubtedly expand the means of philosophical reflection. The latter will allow us to reconsider the standards of contemporary social science.

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