FIGURATIVENESS IN THE SENSE OF DISTRACTION  
(STUDIES BY LITHUANIAN AUTHORS)

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The phenomenon of the sense of distraction and the feature of figurativeness in it are analysed with the help of phenomenological description, the concept of sense of Juozas Mureika and the conception of imagination of Kristupas Sabolius. The position is followed that the acts of sense and the being of those existing found in them cannot be known in a purely rational way. Knowing is reached with intuitive insights. The experiencing of distraction is approached as one of the norms or intentions of consciousness. The sense of distraction is acknowledged to be a basic value becoming more and more important in a modern stressful life. The article indicates that the intentional beings of the sense of distraction are expressed in really various human activities and are distinguished with mono-subjectivity and unrepeatable feeling. Figurativeness is perceived as the result of imaginary, creative activity of the imagination and aesthetical quality. The peculiarities of the formation of figurativeness are revealed through the phenomenological description of imagination by Sabolius. Four features of the act of visualisation, determining the quality of figurativeness, are emphasized: intentionality, power of transformation, relation with emotions and the symbolism of the image. The conclusion is made that figurativeness, being the result of the creative act (visualisation) of imagination, appears as aesthetical quality or the ensemble of qualities. Figurativeness sharpens the sense of distraction and calls the wave of new experiences.

Keywords: existential, intentional being, imagination, sense of distraction.

Introduction

Modern humanity has entered a qualitatively new level – to informational, computerised civilisation. Former cultures were bookish, i.e. based on one-trend thinking, written text. Virtual reality, created with the help of new technologies, became widely used in distractions: light effects in shows, media intellectual games, travel websites, imitative fine and applied art internet salons, traditional festivals and many other things are based on a manifold figurativeness. In all times, since the ancient Greece, to these times, astonishing events...
have been a distraction and value. Pictorial-visual component in the sense always takes an important place, as the information, received with eyes, makes a greater part compared to other sensual systems. We would not make a mistake attributing aesthetical qualities for the figurativeness and approaching it as the result of creative activeness of consciousness. Distractions in experience are very important, astonishing views and impressions. Distraction can be explored in various planes as: humane value, cultural phenomenon, need, creative artistic self-action, professional activity, festival or work of art.

The experiences of distraction have been little explored from scientific positions. Their content is comprised of pre-rational senses or sensations, the essence of which is difficult for the mind to reveal. But they can be recognised through intuitive insights and can be phenomenologically described. In this article, we will go deeper into the sense of distraction as to one of the norms of intentionality of consciousness, in which it manifests as a humane value full of the qualities of figurativeness. The activity of imagination is important in the sense of distraction as figurativeness, created in the act of visualisation, becomes a distinctive magnet, combining various mental structures. Figurativeness integrates the images and scenes possessed in senses, perception, imagination and recollections. It is based on primary giving of seeing.

Methodological approaches of this work – aesthetology of Mureika and the concept of sense as well as phenomenological description of imagination of Sabolius. Phenomena of distraction, as intentional being (experience of existentials), manifests with immanent beings (mental reality) and is of mono-subjective nature. In its essence, the sense of distraction is really close to the aesthetical norm of consciousness and the values born in it. Figurativeness is formed from aesthetical ensemble of qualities, becomes the centre of the view of distraction. Personality intuitively attributes features and senses to certain experiences. Distraction can be experienced in very different activities: when satisfying biological needs, recognising the world and training the thinking, being present in extreme situations, being relaxed and playing, communicating with people and art works, when creating, etc. Activities, which train certain human abilities, activate them and at the same time show new possibilities for self-realisation, provide distraction. The greater part of the experiences of distraction are directly related to creative process and artistic activity, participation in distracting events. The sharpness of the sense of distraction is determined by ambivalent emotions (especially in extreme distractions), experiences of pleasure and satisfaction, attraction, unexpectedness, adventure, humour or other individual senses.

The objective of the article is to reveal the formation of figurativeness in the sense of distraction by invoking a phenomenological description.

The topics of visuality are used by many Lithuanian philosophers, for example, Vytautas Rubavičius (2010), Tomas Kačerauskas (2010), Agnieška Juzefovič (2014, 2016), Jūratė Baranova (2005). Symbols and imagination are explored by Algis Uždavinys (2006). The segments of sense are analysed by Kačerauskas (2008), and who goes deeper into the experiences of beauty and attributes to them the function of dual agent between the visible and invisible culture Kačerauskas (2009). Tautvydas Bajarkevičius (2014) goes deeper into the senses evoked by music sounds. Edvardas Rimkus (2012) analyses the conception of Befindlichkeit of Martin Heidegger, the attitude to art works as the agents of emotional states.

**Intentionality of the sense of distraction**

*Sense* is attributed to meta-category which integrates in itself the whole big continuation of direct experiences. The conception of sense is widely covering, integral structure providing understanding-knowing. Its composition has various mental processes, altered states of consciousness, human powers, provisions,
beliefs, the whole palette of intentional norms of consciousness integrated. It is a multi-edged united structure functioning in different dimensions-level. The sense can be attributed with all pre-rational human experiences. Today, no doubts arise that the layers of direct, pre-rational experiences make the greater part of human knowing and provide the material for rational theoretical knowledge. One could not even speak about the knowledge received by the sense which is called emotional intellect by Daniel Goleman (1995).

The significance of sense\(^1\) to the knowledge was raised by the Lithuanian philosopher Mureika. The project of aesthetology is defined by him as new methodological possibilities for the science of axiology, enables the knowledge of different values, open the dimensional spheres of their being. Constructive knowledge of value being is possible when researching specific their kinds and features. The author approaches aesthetology as a peculiar humane science which explores the senses as pre-linguistic institutes of meanings and opens another approach to aesthetical activity and art interpretations. In the monograph *Insights of Aesthetology: Aesthetology and Spirituality*, Mureika states that the person's spiritual existence is determined by a valuable attitude, which results from various components of sense, and “The concept of aesthetology, based on philosophical anthropology, declares that meaning is provided not on the basis of conceptuality. The values of truth, good, beauty, love, sacredness, etc. are made interior, are given a sense and personalised with sense” (Mureika 2016: 42).

The author approaches the word *sense* as the concept of science which generalises many essentially related phenomena. The philosopher determines *sense* as a spiritual and existential state of human powers besides thinking, belief, imagination, language, understanding, meaning and memory, relating with the Greek *aisthēsis*. The emphasis of the role of the phenomenon of sense allows to newly know and interpret pre-rational human experiences and to explain the system and dispersion of meaning and values. The philosopher discusses the language of sense, naming it as the whole of various not-signs-yet which serves for the aesthetical expression as the stock and becomes the experience with the help of perception. We can speak about the art language and its function of rendering feelings which are understood to all people in the way of empathy. Mureika separates three parts in the sense: intentional process; the meaning of its result; the presentation of meaning in signs (Mureika 2010: 469). The process of sense can be expressed in words, symbols, mime, gestures, logical language or can stay in memory. In his opinion, the segments of the structure of sense are heterogeneous, therefore there exist many of its interpretations. The author distinguishes the following ways of sense: extra-sensory, sensory, somatic, emotional, sensual, experience, imagination, association, intuition and value as well as theoretical insights (Mureika 2010: 473). A significant remark of the thinker is that words and concepts as well as the world of values open to the subject and become understandable only by personally feeling and experiencing. Only in senses there reveal human existential (values), such as freedom, conscience, happiness, gratitude and others.

The discussed concept of sense, in our attitude, is the most suitable for the experiences of distraction and for knowing the values which are revealed there. In the plane of phenomenological seeing, the experience of distraction can be described as a phenomenon, intuitive experience and understanding, intentional being, the norm of creating consciousness or mental structure, opening the virtual reality (mono-subjectivity). The act of the sense of distraction is always a correlation (process of sensing) between the human five sense, and later, the switched on more complex mental functions (perception, thinking, imagination, understanding, value system, taste and others).

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\(^1\) The founder of aesthetology Mureika translates from Greek *aisthēsis* into Lithuanian by pajauta, and the English concept for this interpretation could be defined by these terms: senses, feelings, intuition, insights (2008).
and the surrounding objects, characters and creators of cultural environment. The result of the sense of distraction – the state of astonishment and refreshment, renewal and satisfaction, discovering of values. The act of the sense of distraction includes important sensations, observation, understanding, aesthetical experiences and visualisation – the activity of imagination, contemplation, sensing and evaluation. These processes show the multiplicity of the correlation of the subject and object of the sense. They are attributed to empirical pre-reflexive level, which is characterised by the uniqueness and unitedness of individual experiences. All distractions include the data of seeing and hearing, they are as if a crystal which help shining in various colours, spread light and bewitch in the influence of the power of imagination. A human gets into festive world, experiences enthusiasm, elevation, significance of life and renewal.

Distraction, as a value, grows from the layers of human spiritual dimensions and closely correlate with other basic values or cultural-axiological medium. In the system of human values, besides the material values, the values of truth, ethical, aesthetical, vital, sacral and technological values, the value of distraction is equivalent. The experiences of distraction manifest themselves in a wide range. They can emerge when enjoying good food, taking part in entertaining events, cherishing health, solving intellectual tasks, engaging in a hoppy, satisfying the cognitive needs, communicating with the works of art, people and animals as well as in various acts of creation or mystic sensations. The endless variety of the sense of distraction is determined by its universality, commonness with other values and the fact that it is the matter of taste of every person. The same activity for one person is a distraction, and a bore to another person. The subjectivity of the sense of distraction is also influenced by the system of personal values, interests, artistic sensitiveness, curiosity, imagination and fantasy. Various distractions, without any exception, raise many various emotions. In turn, these emotions can become independent values (existential).

Recently, the senses of distraction become more and more relevant because of the speed of life, occupation and fatigue. It provides relaxation, refreshes after hard work, clarifies the commonness, neutralises the stress. Today, it has become the need of a cultured person who knows how to combine the rest and work, who takes care of inner comfort. Distractions can be divided according to what mental functions (powers) they activate most of all and in what activities they manifest. According to the activity, a distraction can be:

- Cognitive – development of intellectual powers;
- Vital – satisfaction of biological needs, body training, wellness;
- Aesthetical-artistic – talent revelation, communication with the works of art;
- Recreational – relaxation, travelling and festivals;
- Creative – revelation of creative powers;
- Self-expression and self-realization – testing of new activities.

The structure of the continuum of sense is in detail described in the article entitled “The Measurements of the Sense of Light-Colours” (Monginaitė 2015: 188). When knowing the composition of sense, it is possible to explain the differences of experiences of distraction. In all areas of distraction, of a real importance are the senses, especially visual ones (the visual channel makes about 80% of received information) or the data of figurativeness. The fine arts and show distractions, first of all, evoke visual impressions. Musical distractions are concentrated on audio impressions and rendering of feelings. A greater part of distractions evokes visual and acoustic-audio impressions, they dominate in aesthetical norm of consciousness. But the effect of distraction can be evoked by the senses of taste (food, drinks), smells (food, aromatherapy, perfume, flowers), touch (massages, water-wind procedures, picnicking) as well as kinetic (dances, sport, exercising, yoga) senses.

Besides the aforementioned levels of the expression of sense, they can be divided according to the norms of consciousness: beauty, good,
truth, sacral, practicality—materiality and vitality. The sense of distraction is one of the norms of consciousness which is over-twisted with aesthetical norm. Distraction, as intentional being, is characterised with mono-subjectivity, is unrepeatable and is born in specific situations. The sense of distraction and the values, which are opened there, are determined by the features of the objects themselves (events, works of art, nature, etc.) and the powers of the subject’s sense (sensitivity, imagination, ideals, needs, taste, etc.). The distraction is similar to the acknowledgement of beauty, who finds what beautiful and what is thought about the distraction is not an object of debates. Aesthetical senses directly influence the act of the experience of distraction and its performance. Distractions, which are experienced when communicating with art, toughly intertwine with the act of aesthetical experience. Much time is necessary for aesthetical sensation of the situation and discovery of artistic values. It is possible to escape from casual routine and to get revival when suddenly getting relaxed, noticing a funny situation, telling funny jokes or anecdotes. One can speak about rapidly reached states of distraction (relaxation) and time-demanding states, when we communicate with people, works of art or when we attend the entertaining events.

During the formation of the whole of the sense of distraction (the state, which can continue during a concert, performance, carnival or in other situations), the essential role is played by emotions and feelings. An exceptional place is taken by a creative process and the altered states of consciousness (which often accompany the creative inspiration). This area demand separate going deeper.

**Imagination – visualisation – figurativeness**

First of all, imagination is defined as ability which can be trained and used in all areas of practical and creative activity. Neither of human mental and work activity is possible if the subject does not have the visual model of the future result in his/her mind. Imagination is from old times related to creativity and the power of its manifestation. It is very difficult to define the nature of creativity even when it visits us. Till the epoch of education, the concept of imagination was the synonym of higher powers. Inspiration, a creating person was communicating with muses, gods were speaking the voice of the poet. Inspiration itself was understood as the manifestation of divine powers and spirits. Imagination was attributed to an unearthly world. The Latin term imaginatio was accepted by many of the old European languages, it is originated from image – image, copy, similarity. In Lithuanian languages, imagination, imagining corresponds to the meaning of image.

It is impossible to explain imagination not embodied with fantasy as in human mind, they act integrally, in a synergetic way and use the resources of each other. The correlation of imagination and fantasy is reflected in the everyday perception of reality and especially get intensified in various creative activities. A close relation exists between the consciousness, imagination and figurativeness. We cannot unambiguously tell what serves what. Figurativeness emerges as the result of observing consciousness, the outcome of its correlations with material and mental reality. In the observation of consciousness, imagination is the one which actively manifests and forms the continuation of many images. Human consciousness, after evoking the senses, perception and thinking, observes the world, its material and expressional being. Figurativeness, as a complex mental fact (being, phenomenon) is born in the act of visualisation, is the expression of creative powers of human consciousness. Transformation and modification of the information, received through various channels of sensation, is already observed in the acts of perception. Imagination helps to create and keep the forms of the data received through the sense-organs. There dominate the visual data-information,
but at the same time, the senses of hearing, touching, smells and kinetic (movement) senses and emotions are attracted. The creating power of imagination can create fully fictitious, fantastic immanent (internal) beings. Images, the imagination and fantasy operate with, are not limited with the perceived material. In the medium if immanent figurativeness, there can emerge the things which cannot be perceived by the subject directly, what was generally missing, what cannot exist in a specific form in reality. The subject gets into an apparent world created by imagination. Covering the images possessed in memory, transforming them, the free imagination extremely widens the view of the expression of senses: creates dreams, evokes suspense and increases sensitivity to beauty. On purpose of experiencing the recreation of distraction, adventure, relaxation, satisfaction, ecstasy and the like, we go to the events with a certain provision, expectations, desires or specific intention. In casual life, often, slight unexpectedness is enough as well as surprising attention or funny jokes to help distract from work tension, fatigue or routine. Imagination and fantasy are especially important in distractions oriented for evoking visual impressions.

The images, evoking in imagination, are characterised by a great suggestibility and punch. It is known in psychology that every image implies and evokes the movements of muscles in itself, raise emotions, influences the sub-consciousness and encourages to act. Magnetic power of imagination becomes the organising centre which intensifies the senses, attracts thinking and evokes creative play. Thanks to imagination, words are related to the images possessed in memory and gains its specific expressions when we hear the narrated stories, read fiction and non-fiction or poetry. The reader or listener has to transform the experiences, fixed by the writer in the schematic structure of the work, to live images and experiences. Then, there begin a spontaneous play of associations and personal creativity manifesting. A new multi-dimensional image, created by the notion of creative imagination, is constructed, transitional, altered and rearranged. Creation of new images is important not only for the perceiver-perpect, but also for the creator of distraction. The experience of distraction is formed by the impulses of sub-consciousness, the power of imagination and empathy. Its created image-result is usually full of novelty and aesthetical qualities, attracts the senses of pleasure. The effectiveness of images, created by the sense of distraction, surprise and attraction do not coincide with distractions nor with the images rendered by the work of art. Figurative impression, created in the experience of the distraction, is personal, intentional, it opens the seeing of the surrounding world and the works of art in a certain aspect-norm in which one discovers a spontaneous creativity and many values of distraction. In the sense of distraction, there crystalizes an organic visual-semantic and valuable unity, expressing the objective of harmony with oneself and the world which is often experienced as renewal or elevation.

A phenomenological analysis of imagination was performed by Sabolius in 2012, in a monograph called Furious Sleep: Imagination and Phenomenology. In the introduction, the author really straightly compares imagination with a green frog living in America, called the artificial frog *pseudis paradoxa* because it breeds the tadpoles which are much bigger than itself. The philosopher notices that imagination, with its content, often erupts together and at the same time – non-correcting, non-retouching, non-maturing, not growing, it synthesises fictions and passively reproduces them using the recollections. Spontaneity, full freedom shows a mysterious anatomy of imagination. Its power manifests through imagination – through what is not relevantly given, and at the same time, what is not real. In imagination, there correlate the internal and external moments of reality. Its power exceeds the internal content of mind and consciousness. We will overlook those features of imagination, analysed by Sabolius, which are important for the formation of figurativeness.
**Intentionality**

Sabolius agrees with the opinion of Jean-Paul Sartre that imagination is not the outcome of perception or thinking, nor is it the process rising from them, it is rather the relation of consciousness as one of possible modalities. Even in the state of the most sober perception, the image never amounts to the object of reality. The image, provided by imagination, is not an object, namely, not substantial, but rather is an intentional state, and Sartre is quoted with the following: “One can distinguish four main features defining the status of image: 1) image is the form of consciousness; 2) image is the phenomenon of quasi-observation; 3) imagination consciousness positions its object as Trifle; 4) imagination consciousness is spontaneous” (Sabolius 2012: 50). The intentionality of image is a synthetic state of consciousness, the form of organised consciousness. By imagining and performing other mental operations, consciousness has business with its own. Imagining manifests as one of possible visions, individual composition of images and their sense. The image provided by consciousness has already been affected by other mental powers as mind acts integrally. Speaking about intentionality, it is important to know that the received internal image and the qualities of figurativeness (colour, form, texture, dynamics, shining, etc.) are transferred to the outside and are attributed to the objects themselves. The creative nature of consciousness manifest in that the world opens to it as the result of qualitative connection and composition, and the conceptual seeing in the works of artist. In many intentions of consciousness, diverted to the object itself, three intentions are of great importance – to perceive, understand and imagine.

**Power of transformation**

The activity of imagination (dynamics) changes, transforms the data, received with the senses and observed in perception, and any observation already is modification. Any picture is perceived and seen (actualised) by adding with then rising images and recollections. “But the images, seen in the processes of imagining, can be understood as certain states. Sometimes consciousness forms them only for evoking one or another engagement, for letting to empathise, for the evoked images to affect us affectively” (Sabolius 2012: 65). The quotation shows that images make influence on the sense through the gamma of individual images provided by consciousness. Imagination acts better when it is evoked more. In the act of the sense of distraction and in aesthetical situations, especially significant is the set off transforming power of imagination. It enlarges, emphasises certain aesthetical qualities or the ensembles of qualities, and this is important for the further development of aesthetical act. The adding of empirical data, received with the help of senses, should be approached as manifestation of creativity, which begins in the process of perception. The dynamics of rising images as well as the abundance become the figurativeness in aesthetical relation.

**Relation of imagination with emotions**

Sabolius observes that Sartre and Edmund Husserl did not discuss the imagination from the sensual perspective. They as if analysed the imagination in clean and pure acts as if observation which does not reveal the state of the observant. The Lithuanian author states that one cannot reject the dimension of concreteness if we want to grope the functional meaning of imagination. “Even everyday experience allows us to notice that imaginary things become more active only when we are emotionally elevated and vice versa – dreaming acts often activate emotions” (Sabolius 2012: 129). Such strong feelings as love, despite, happiness, admiration and other things strengthen the shape of unreality. We all know that not beautiful features of the beloved person become the beautiful ones.
Emotions and affects are also distinguished by the power of transformation. Feelings are really influential, they encourage the appearance of images and can turn to visions and insights. We have discussed the power of imagination to attract and in synergetic way to act with emotions earlier. In all norms of senses, experiences perform a really important role as thanks to them, the values are established.

The feature of synthesis

The author finds the conception of synthesis as one of essential concepts of phenomenological methodology. Based on it, the structures of the expression of consciousness are defined. “Perhaps, it is worth saying in a more radical way – synthesis – the principle defining the harmony of transcendental subject – is a peculiar theorem, applying which, we can receive answers about various processes of the life of consciousness and the nature of phenomena happening in it” (Sabolius 2012: 76). Speaking about imagination, of great importance is the remark of E. Husserl that every being is not only entwined into the public flow of consciousness, but also into the beam of relevant experiences (Husserl 1980: 509). Observing something specifically, at the same time we experience something more than we see at that time that is we anticipate the potential possibilities of the perceived object. The concepts of synthesis, integration and synergy are really close and directly define the process of mental life and the acts of consciousness. Images and sub-images, rising in consciousness, are of synthetic nature, make a certain unity. Imagination manifests as the intermediate of different levels of knowing – between the sensual data, experiences, intuitive insights and intellect. It constantly transmits what is given by the experience for the intellect. Synthesis, provided by the act of visualisation – the whole view – becomes a scheme when processed by intellect. The content of the concept is made of generalised images, certain sketches.

Understanding emerges through a clear and bright image. In aesthetical-artistic activity and creation, especially when communicating with figurative plastic arts, the role of imagination is primary. All aesthetical objects, including distractions, the requirement is attributed for their parts to be harmoniously composed and to make unity. The figurativeness provided by the works of art is distinguished by the ensembles of aesthetical qualities and can evoke many new experiences.

Symbolism of the image

Sabolius agrees with the opinion of Sartre that the function of the image is symbolic. Symbolism is related to the meanings of image as visual shape is not only form. “It is wonderful that the image condensates the totalising impulse of consciousness in which the whole knowing, all circumstances and the whole expression turn to one flash, peculiar dynamic amalgam of mentality, affection and visuality, and in which the meaning merges with intonation and suggestibility” (Sabolius 2012: 164). We have already mentioned the magnetism of imagination which attracts feelings, experiences and implies understanding-knowing which is provided in the form of picturesque symbol. In the course of visualisation act, there is the understanding born which attracts the generalisations of mind. Concreteness of images is paradoxical as they are transparent, clear, and the shape of image is symbolic. Despite the flow of images, in a certain moment, there emerges the vision having strict sketches and is a visible model. A symbol is a concentrated cognitive structure the meaning of which is presented in a visual form. A symbol is an image, which gained a material form, in which the knowledge is entrenched (encoded) as well as meanings and authorities. It is impossible to understand many of arts as the meanings of the symbols used there are unknown (sacral art, architecture, mandala art, emblems, hieroglyphic, etc.).
A symbol encourages admiration, interest, desire to come back to primordial unity, evoke aesthetical experiences. All human language is symbols which organically function in cultures and participate in the senses of distraction transferred by information.

Conclusions

The act of the sense of distraction is a multi-edged structure composed of the continuation of various senses, filled with individual meanings and authorities. The outcome of the act of the sense of distraction – values of distraction – is distinguished by universality as they manifest in correlation with all known cultural values.

The sense of distraction – the being created by the intentional consciousness (norm), which is characterised by mono-subjectivity, unrepeatable and the tangle with the experiences of beauty. Figurativeness sharpens the sense of distraction, evokes admiration and the wave of new experiences.

Visuality, being the result of the creative act (visualisation) of imagination, shows itself as aesthetical quality or the ensemble of qualities.

Four features of phenomenological description of imagination of Sabolius were chosen: intentionality, power of transformation, relation with emotions and symbolism allow revealing the becoming of visuality and structuring the individual flow of multiple images.

References


Reikšminiai žodžiai: egzistencialas, intencionalus esinys, vaizduotė, pramogos pajauta, egzistencialas.