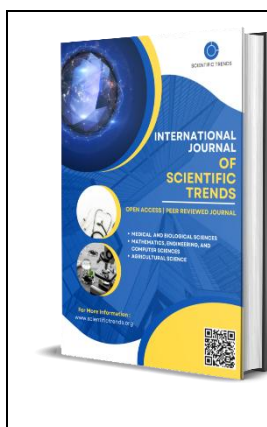


The Concept of the Collection "Ekphrasis in Russian Literature": On the Question of the Theoretical Characteristics of the Term

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Abstract

Within the framework of this article, an attempt is made to characterize the concept of "pictorial ekphrasis", as well as the concept of one of the most significant publications in this field – the collection of the Lausanne Symposium. The category of "ekphrasis" is at the center of many modern hermeneutic studies and significantly enriches the perception of works of art.

Keywords: Ekphrasis, pictorial ekphrasis, art, text, writer, reader.

Introduction

The collection of the Lausanne Symposium "Ekphrasis in Russian Literature", edited by Leonid Geller, is an important literary work devoted to the study and description of the category of ekphrasis in Russian literature. The collection contains articles and essays by leading philologists from Switzerland, Romania, France, Poland, Germany, Russia, and Hungary.

In his article "The Resurrection of a Concept, or a Word about Ekphrasis", Leonid Geller notes that in contemporary art criticism, a painting is interpreted differently than it was done in Lessing's time: it is now something not only flat, but layered and porous, it "breathes", contains the dynamics and energy of the living. The painting has its own time and changes depending on the position and movements of the viewer, reveals more than just what is visible to the eye (we can recall the words of Oscar Wilde that Turner's landscapes taught the English to see the sky).

In the article "Infection with Passions or Textual "Visualization": pathos and ekphrasis in Gogol", Susi Frank compares Pushkin's works "Vesuvius the Throat Open" and Gogol's essay "The Last Day of Pompeii. Bryullov's Painting". The researcher notes that Pushkin conveys in an artistic form what is depicted in the picture, namely: Vesuvius, which occupies a primary place in his painting. Gogol conveys what he sees in a completely different way; He pays attention to how the picture affects the viewer, what impression it causes. The writer notes that the painting depicts not just a "crowd", but people, their individuals, with pronounced feelings and emotions, focuses on the moment of perception of the picture, describes the effect, touches on different types of art as elements of the picture such as: sculpture, music, poetry. Gogol describes not the work itself, but its impact on the viewer. "The text of ekphrasis imitates the impact of the painting, transferring this impact to the reader, infecting him with affect," the researcher concludes. [3, p. 38]

Susi Frank considers the dual origin of ekphrasis: on the one hand, it is an "auxiliary genre" [3, p. 34] which has been used for the purpose of training rhetorical skills since the time of the second sophistry. On the other hand, it is also an (anti)narrative device that goes back to the very beginning of European literature, to Homer's epic, where ekphrasis is used to complement or contrast the narrative in order to give it what it lacks. S. Frank considers the description of the Achilles' shield in the Iliad to be an example of this type of ekphrasis. The researcher singles out the problem of competition between text and painting in Gogol's work, namely the superiority of verbal art over visual art, saying that "the text wants to become painting and overtake it" [3, p. 40].

Jean-Claude Lannes in his article "On Different Aspects of Ekphrasis in Velemir Khlebnikov" notes that Khlebnikov supports an abstract analogy between the art of painting and verbal art, compares the constructive tasks that are inherent in the art of painting and poetry.

In the poem "Burluk" Velemir Khlebnikov emphasizes the formal and constructive side of the "strange breakdown of picturesque worlds". The author transfers "dreams" from reality to painting, since the mystery of painting is equally manifested in both living and dead matter, and asserts: "mystery and mystery can be conveyed through dead matter, such as canvas and paints, then they can certainly also be transmitted to living faces" [3, p. 76]. Khlebnikov adhered to the ideal that art should unite with nature in order to become natural and organic. He strove for the synthesis of various types of art and for the fusion of nature and art, which led to the emergence of a new concept - "naturalness of art" or "artificiality of nature".

Jean-Claude Lannes examines Khlebnikov's essay "Cliff from the Future", the canvas of the same name by M. Larionov, where various aspects are closely intertwined: painting and reality, philosophy and art, as well as the unambiguousness of the narrative and the symbolic uncertainty of images.

Michel Nicke in his article "The Typology of Ekphrasis in The Life of Klim Samgin" notes that in the novel the description of nature actually reflects the description of the picture given not by the main character, but by an extra-plot intermediary, so that the author uses a kind of "mediated" or "reverse ekphrasis". The researcher talks about the mirror function of painting. The mirror motif, like paintings, is associated with the question of reality and its reflection. A mirror shows an objective image, not the one we would like to see. The novel "The Life of Klim Samgin" describes in detail the paintings of Bosch and symbolist painters, for whom the art of painting becomes a kind of reflection and interpretation of the world around us, giving us the opportunity to better understand and realize reality. In the novel, Gorky interpreted the paintings, their symbolic meaning, as if rewriting them. As M. Riffeater writes, this is the "illusion of ekphrasis": "ekphrasis reveals not the picture, but the one who contemplates it." The pictorial ekphrasis in the novel is a component of the plot. Jean-Claude Lannes believes that painting is not a decoration, not an object of furnishing, but a mirror of the soul of the characters or the author's thoughts: "the hero of the work looks at the world as a painting, reads the picture as a book, namely, he learns the world with a painting-book." [3, p. 133]

Roman Bobryk in his article "Scheme and Description in Scientific Texts on Painting. Analysis or ekphrasis?" believes that ekphrasis occurs when we deal with a certain work of fine art, interpret this work, recreating the world depicted in the work, expression and emotional load.

The critic distinguishes different levels of subtexts in scientific texts about art:

- visual representation (text or graphic illustrations and images of the work under study);
- textual description of the work under study;
- analytical explanation and analysis of the work.

The most important role in scientific works on art is played by the textual description of the work, and not its illustration. In texts about art, primarily about painting, two descriptions are given: graphic and verbal. Verbal analysis plays the main role in scientific texts on art, and all kinds of visual illustrations are only a supplement to such analysis. The main purpose of graphic and verbal analysis in scientific texts about art is, first of all, to explain the structure of a given work and how it functions.

Graphic and verbal descriptions in scientific texts about art are usually analytical, since they detail the characteristics of the work. A more effective way to achieve this goal is to present a verbal description of the work.

Summing up, we note that in such an area as the poetics of ekphrasis, the most productive is to address the problem of interaction between literature and painting. Pictorial ekphrasis and the question of its role in a literary text open up new facets in the relationship between the writer and the reader, allowing a new assessment of the author's individual style and the literary text itself.

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