



NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY

Department of Fine Arts

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Art and Poiesis:

Philosophy of Image and Philosophical Figurolgy.

Essays in Epistemology of the Foundations of Art Theory

Abstract

of the

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Science

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General Characteristics of the Thesis

Subject and Perspective of the Research

The thesis “Art and Poiesis. Philosophy of Image and Philosophical Figuorology. Essays in Epistemology of the Foundations of Art Theory” presents my long line of research in the field of philosophy, theory of art and cultural history, delineating its main stages and structural moments. At the heart of the work is the relationship between philosophy and art, a relationship that has defined much of my academic and research work at NBU. This relation will be the subject of neither comparative nor applied research. In other words, the relation between philosophy and art will be considered not from the perspective of the philosophy of art, but from the perspective of an ‘epistemology of the foundations’, which is an investigation of the common grounds, the initial formation of a field of culturally distinct practices, and, respectively, the concepts by which this field is identified – φιλοσοφία, τέχνη / τέχνη and ars / artēs. The structural-genetic analysis is followed by the exploration of the formation and progressive transformation of the modern meanings of the concepts of art and philosophy, respectively – of the cultural dimensions and boundaries of their associated practices, as well as their intertwined complex trajectory.

The aim of the study is to reveal the immanent action of philosophical paradigms and concepts in artistic works, as well as their role in structuring the very idea of art. At the same time, insofar as the dissertation aims to carry out the analysis through a complex optic that implies a “mirrored” view from art to philosophy, it also explores the significance of models defined as “artistic” for the construction of a practice, progressively becoming distinct under the definition of “philosophy.”

With this aim in mind, the thesis sets itself the following main tasks: The study of the structuring role of the idea of *poiesis* – ‘creation’, but also *potential* for creation – creativity – in the formation of the modern idea of art, from the gradual imposition of these tendencies in the philosophy of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance humanism, to their apogee in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and the Jena Romantics; introducing the model of philosophical figuorology with its dual function as an epistemological tool for analyzing the complex relation of philosophy and art, and as a method of reading and interpreting images; the identification of this foundation of the principles of the philosophy of the image, carrying out the relationship between the phenomenological and ontological dimensions of creative activity; the revelation of the key place of

Georges Bataille's anthropological and phenomenological approach for the phenomenology of sensory experience and the anthropology of the image in the last century.

Structure of the Thesis

In view of the specificity of such a large-scale project, as well as its aims and objectives, the thesis presents itself as a three-part study: its corpus comprises three relatively autonomous essays or studies, unfolding the subject of the study in different modalities, thus contributing to a complex, multidimensional and synthetic grasp of the fundamental problem posed. The first part of the thesis is devoted to the establishment of the modern meaning of the concept of art in relation to the category of creativity, poiesis, respectively – to the ability to produce images. The second part of the research presents the project of philosophical figurology, continuing in a practical perspective the analysis carried out in the first part. The part on “Philosophical Figurology” applies the theses of the *general poietics*, transforming them into a methodological program developed within the previous decade, and leading to the publication of a number of studies, including two monographic works. The third part is devoted to the attempts to provide anthropological and psychological perspective of the origins of visual representation and, respectively, of art, on the basis of which a critical phenomenology or aesthetics is proposed. It could be said that the doctoral thesis constitutes a kind of theoretical trilogy and at the same time a meta-theoretical “summa” that develops and splices the connections of the three aspects of the research into a conceptual and methodological whole.

The studies that compose the three parts of the work are the study “The Other Origin of Art” [« L’autre origine de l’art », 2021] and the books “The Alteration of the World. Towards a Radical Aesthetics” [*L’altération du monde. Pour une esthétique radicale*, 2009 / 2020] and “The New Athanor. Principles of Philosophical Fantastic” (2020). The present work is a synthesis of their main points; it also includes a specially prepared summary translation into English of the first two texts. It is noteworthy that, in connection with the preparation of this dissertation, the study “The Other Origin of Art”, written and published in French as part of a larger research project, underwent substantial development and modification in the course of its authorial translation. The proposed result is not identical to the French original: some parts have been abridged and others added and developed, in view of the overall thrust of the present study.

The doctoral thesis is based on these three works, but does not repeat them; rather, it is their “corpus” or attempt at synthesis in Bulgarian. For this reason, the main section of the dissertation will be referred to as the ‘Corpus’: it contains three main parts in Bulgarian synthesising the main points of the three works on which the dissertation is based. The ‘Corpus’ section is followed by a second section, labelled for its thrust as ‘Developments’: it includes synthetic and revised for the

purposes of this dissertation parts of the relevant writings (in the case of the second and third developments) or new research (the first development). The “Developments” constitute a kind of applied (and in the case of the second elaboration, experimental) but at the same time inseparable part of the main body of the dissertation: they unfold in concrete modalities the general theoretical propositions of the “Corpus”.

In addition to the two sections, respectively the six parts, the dissertation includes an introduction, conclusions to the individual parts, a bibliography, an appendix with images to the first part of Section One, and an account of the dissertation’s scientific contributions. The dissertation is about 478 standard typewritten pages (about 860,000 characters) or 390 pages in standard computer typesetting (Times new roman font, 12 point, 1.5 spacing). The attached bibliography is mostly limited to monographs cited or used and contains only a few studies and articles; it includes 410 titles, of which 196 are in Cyrillic and 214 in Latin.

1. Art and Poiesis

The first part of the study fosters the hypothesis of the historical and structural significance of the notion of poiesis for artistic creation and art, primarily in the context of the philosophy and artistic practice of Renaissance humanism. The notion of poiesis was formed on the basis of Aristotle's linking of the Greek term ποιήσις (“making,” “producing,” “fabricating”) to historically formed artistic practices, which after Aristotle, through the mediation of the Roman reception of his Poetics, would be defined as “art”. The basis of this first and main part of the thesis part is the study « L'autre origine de l'art », “The Other Origin of Art”, published in French and Portuguese in the collective monograph “The Persistence of the Work”. The first part of the dissertation presents the text in a revised version in Bulgarian.

The next key period in the historical development of the idea of poiesis in terms of the relation between philosophy and art occurred in the 18th century, on the one hand under the influence of Abbé Batteux's theory of the arts, and on the other hand under the philosophical turn made by Immanuel Kant. I consider as the apogee of these new trends the conceptions of the Jena Romantics, in particular the theoretical views of Novalis. The Romantic philosophy that inherited the humanist legacy, following Immanuel Kant's Third Critique, conceived of art as a model of poietic activity, thus overturning – from Novalis to Nietzsche – the hierarchical model inherited from Platonic idealism, which placed the image in a subordinate, secondary ontological position. According to my hypothesis, it is these conceptions that underlie the modern conception of both art and philosophy. The “elaboration” appended to Part I of the study is devoted to the views of Kant and Novalis; it is a reworking of a chapter from the as yet unpublished second volume of the work *Freedom in Spite of Everything*.

2. Philosophical Figuorology

In direct relation to the previous section, the second part of the thesis is devoted to the method of “philosophical figuorology”. The project of philosophical figuorology, developed as one of the essential aspects of general poietics in direct relation to the philosophy of the image, explores the creation of stable images and figures that acquire conceptual significance and even pro-ontological status, and in this sense structure both philosophical language and artistic practice. The second part includes a programmatic introduction to the problems of philosophical figuorology (chapter two of the Corpus), accompanied by the book *The New Athanor. Principles of Philosophical Fantastic*, attached with abbreviations as Part Two of “Developments”.

The second part of the dissertation raises the question of the image as the ontological matrix of the philosophical concept. The “poietic” image, a pro-conceptual aesthetic structure, appears as an element of the breaking away from the figurative and unfolding abstract consistency thinking in pre-Socratic philosophy. The structuring of the pro-(onto-)logical order of Greek philosophy from Anaximander and Heraclitus to Aristotle and Epicurus is the first subject of philosophical figuorology, here conceived precisely as a kind of epistemology of the grounds or principles of philosophical knowledge and/or the creation of (an image of) the world. It has been suggested that this new form of pro-conceptual consistency leads to the progressive autonomization of the aesthetic field, which also allows for an autonomous idea of a “mode of visual representation”, or to put it more simply and descriptively, of organizing experience and conceptions of the world through a system of images, a mode that also progressively acquires an autonomous poietic function (thanks to the allegorical reworking of mythological “image material”, as well as through the ad hoc production of new images). Thus, the third part of this dissertation develops the idea of images as a poietic kernel that underlies not only the representation of the world, but also the experimentation with possible images of the world. That is, here the image acquires the status of an ontogenetic agent.

3. Philosophy of the Image

The third part of the thesis, is devoted in turn to the project of a philosophy of the image. The philosophy of the image is a long-standing theoretical project, aiming to outline a new research field in which philosophical, art historical and cultural-historical methods are mobilized for joint work. This project is situated at the heart of the epistemology of the foundations of art theory and is a direct extension of the historical ontology of poiesis.

The philosophy of the image explores the image on the one hand as an anthropological, cultural and artistic phenomenon, and on the other hand focuses on the emergence of the idea of the image and the subsequent progressive construction of a philosophical, psycho-physiological and aesthetic concept of the image. In view of this research perspective, the concept of image is considered not only as an anthropological or cultural phenomenon, but also as a central concept of the philosophical mode itself. The image is an active structuring element of the field of knowledge and/or (transformative) contingency of the world – of the creation of an image-of-the-world, defined as philosophy. Thus, the philosophy of the image places the image in a synthetic perspective – as a central cultural phenomenon and as a nodal philosophical and art historical concept. Such a complex approach is necessary for each of the disciplinary fields mobilized by it, insofar as none of the historically distinct disciplines in question can capture the structure and historical complexity of the phenomenon of the image and, respectively, of the concept of the image.

It is noteworthy that the first manifestation of this quarter-century project was the work *The Unimaginable. Essays in the Philosophy of the Image*, published in 2003 by the NBU. I developed in it the initial ideas about the image as an anthropological phenomenon, on the basis of which the attempt to conceptualize the image as a philosophical concept with ontological status, transcending the field of phenomenology, began. At the same time, the lecture course “Philosophy of the Image,” taught continuously for nearly twenty years in the NBU’s BA Program in Art History and Art Management (and developed by a number of Master’s courses), constituted an invariable focus of theoretical and historical research, and often served as an experimental laboratory of research work that was enriched by exchanges with students and colleagues.

The opening chapters of the third part focus on the question of the origin of images, posed as a central problem in modernity in relation to the formation of an autonomous idea of image and image art. The hypothesis is put forward that the image has a key role to play in the modern idea of artistic creation as an autonomous process, and consequently in the conception of its ontological and even ontological dimensions. The image (respectively, its continuing notion of representation /

représentation / Vorstellung) is at the heart of the aesthetic mode of art – a paradoxical but not tautological definition related to the paradoxical genesis of the modern idea of art.

A privileged object of study in this respect is the theory of the origin of visual representation developed in the early texts of Georges Bataille (better known as a writer and philosopher, although his anthropological studies constitute a significant and original contribution to modern anthropology). The texts in question take on a symptomatic significance in the context of late modernity insofar as they combine models of late nineteenth-century positivist art history and psychology with new theoretical paradigms of anthropology and phenomenology, which in Bataille are radicalized through their engagement with the artistic practices of the early twentieth-century avant-gardes and psychoanalysis. Based on the systematic deployment of the genetic notion of *altération* ("alteration," "change," but also "damage," "impairment") introduced by Bataille, this part of the work proposes a new reading of Aristotle's theory of αἴσθησις in relation to the notion of ἀλλοίωσις ("change," "exchange"), allowing the axiomatic delineation of the principles of a phenomenological aesthetics, that is, a theory that attempts to hold simultaneously the principles of the phenomenology of visual and more generally sensory perception and of aesthetics, in the narrower, post-Kantian sense of the term, conceived as a philosophy of artistic practice. This perspective of research is represented by the book *L'altération du monde. Pour une esthétique radicale* (*The Alteration of the World* [or literally: *The Becoming-Other of the World*]. For a Radical Aesthetics). The monograph published in French, a revised edition of which appeared in Japanese translation last year (parts of the work have been published in other languages), forms the basis of the third part of the dissertation. The third part of the "Corpus" presents in English, in summary form through an abridged translation of its first part, the main theoretical premises of *Changing the World*, while the transformative idea of the origins of visual representation developed in the book is continued with a synthetic presentation of three of the parts of the book itself in French in the concluding third part of "Developments".

In conclusion, the conceptual emphases of the three parts, respectively the three constituent works of the thesis, can be described as follows: the first part is devoted to the notions of poiesis, image and art, the second to the notions of image, figure and concept, while the third to the notions of aisthesis, alloiosis and image. Accordingly, the first part has an epistemological-art-scientific orientation (referring to the epistemological foundations of the very idea of an autonomous knowledge of art), the second – an epistemological-philosophical one, and the third – an

anthropological-phenomenological one, with the ontological horizon – the horizon of general poietics – uniting the three phases of the study.

**Methodological stakes and disciplinary framework of the study:
an attempt on the epistemology of the foundations of art theory**

The stake of the proposed research perspective is not a purposeful interdisciplinary intervention per se; it boils down to an attempt to uncover the structural and genetic significance of categories – poiesis, image, figure – that cannot be exhaustively defined within any of the above disciplines, despite possessing key significance, according to our initial hypothesis, for each of them. The disciplinary framework “translating” into contemporary disciplinary terminology the epistemological foundations of the study can be most simply described as follows: if the structural-genetic study of the category of poiesis, in particular the philosophy of the image, is relevant to philosophy, it is because their fundamental operation, which allows the intensification of philosophical knowledge itself, is the poietic dissolution towards the image: that is, it is a philosophy of the image. In other words, the philosophy of the image presupposes the introduction of a poietic presupposition into philosophical practice. Or to put it more directly, the perspective of a general poietics would allow the ‘artistic’ origin of philosophical practice itself to be revealed.

The proposed work takes art as the paradigmatic model of such a poietic activity, attempting to systematize presuppositions drawn from the philosophical writings of Aristotle, Marsilio Ficino and Immanuel Kant. According to the work’s implicit anthropological hypothesis, the latent basis of what we call “art” is precisely the autonomizing manifestation of poietic potentiality, which in this case becomes not just the object but also the immanent operator—that is, the agent, the “subject”-of philosophical activity. General poietics, the philosophy of the image and philosophical figureology therefore do not constitute a philosophy of art on a more abstract level, but a kind of complex unity of philosophy and art studies as knowledge of the shared grounds of art and philosophy – the poiesis and its dynamic “structural unit”, the image and/or the figure. General poietics, the philosophy of the image, and philosophical figure studies presuppose the study of the becoming-art of art itself, on the basis of the study of the development of the idea of art and the related concepts of creativity or poiesis and image/representation, as well as their manifestation in historically determined artistic phenomena.

Therefore, while being an art historical study, this work is essentially philosophical; at the same time, while it declares itself to be a philosophical work in its title, it is necessarily, according to its justification, also an art historical work. I define the peculiar methodological framework of the study as an epistemology of foundations or a historical ontology of image and art. This complex

metatheoretical research method not only locates itself in a field shared by contemporary academic disciplines, but also presupposes a consideration of their genesis, historical delineation, and disciplinary functions. The epistemology of foundations is developed on the basis of the pioneering studies for contemporary epistemology of the authors of the French epistemological school of the middle of the last century – Gaston Bachelard, Georges Canguilhem, Jules Vuillemin, and François Dagognet – as well as on the legacy of the school of historical anthropology (Jean-Pierre Vernant, Pierre Vidal-Naquet, Marcel Detienne, Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux). Deployed in relation to the concept of art, in its relation to the concept of philosophy, the epistemology of foundations aims to broaden the perspective of art theory and history, especially the achievements of Warburg's iconological method, Saxl, Panofsky, and Klibansky developed by critical and unorthodox followers of iconology (from Paul Oskar Kristeller and Rudolf Wittkower to Hans Belting, Georges Didi-Huberman, and Angel Angelov), by exploring the origins and philosophical underpinnings of some of the foundational concepts of both art theory and history and artistic practice in the age of modernity.

The epistemology of foundations proceeds not so much from the task of exploring the structuring of the art system, and of the modern idea of art itself, aiming to reach their contemporary form, as from the attempt to explore the dynamic unfolding of the reflexive character of creative practice, which itself reflexively produces its potential and thus gives rise to a pro-conceptual substrate. In other words, an epistemology of grounds would not presuppose the epistemic frames of the goal; it would explore the production of the grounds themselves in parallel to the effectively (self-)constituting frames. An epistemology of grounds must not lose sight of the material dynamics not only of practice but of the idea itself: the dynamics of time and conceptual matter that are formed within it.

I. CORPUS

PART ONE.

Art and Poiesis. General Poietics and Art Theory

From cultural history to philosophy of dynamic forms.

Methodological considerations

The study of the totality of a cultural phenomenon, and even more so of a system of cultural phenomena, is unattainable, and probably impossible; the derivation of the lines of force of an “epoch” or historical process must necessarily be tied to the premise of a philosophy of history or, as will be the approach of this study, of a philosophy of the dynamics of cultural forms. In this respect, twentieth-century philosophy and the human sciences offer influential possibilities, from sociocultural determinism along the lines of Burckhardt to Cassirer’s dynamics of immaterial cultural forms and the attempts of iconologists and hermeneutics to relate the intellectual substratum to historical matter, its historical consistency – for example, the attempts of Warburg, Panofsky and Klibansky on the one hand, and Blumenberg and Jauss on the other. Last but not least, the new-age attempt of the archaeology of concepts, starting from Foucault’s archaeological perspective but going beyond it, to make a kind of *longue durée* of the history of ideas as a hermeneutics of concepts, somewhat akin to the material hermeneutics in the line of Peter Szondi and Jean Bollack.

But the attempt to investigate a process of cultural transformation and to conceive of it as totality is doomed to failure, above all because the object of study and the significant problem should be of a completely different order. In this case, the significant question should not be the emergence of the supposed “new” – the value form of phenomena, which is precisely the effect of an ideological production possessing a transhistorical momentum: the problem is not limited to the discovery of influences and “progenitors”, hypothetical prime movers. Instead of the problem of value, we should focus on the generative kernel, on the immanent cultural dynamics that lead to the emergence of the very idea of value; of precisely these material and intellectual operations, of precisely this dynamics of forms, which is secondarily “compressed” into an epistemological order of historical or other type. In other words: could we confront the cultural phenomena of the Renaissance or humanism without ever resorting to the explanatory potential of the concept of

“Renaissance”, that powerful teleologism which also determines the value canvas of the epistemological transition? What is the significance of the cultural phenomena under consideration, apart from being Renaissance? Is it not a circular argumentation, where the connotative dimensions or attributes of the term “Renaissance” describe “Renaissance phenomena”? In order to overcome this vicious circle, we need to devalue the hidden ideological modes that predetermine our own research perspective. Only such a radically critical stance with regard to the semantic, ideological in depth, investments of cultural value, as well as a critique of the very notion of value itself, would allow us to “generate” value anew in order to also allow meaning to be actualized anew, or purely and simply produced. Does not what is called “Renaissance” represent precisely the totalization of a similar operation, of an enormous value investment and transformation?

Art and the idea of art

In embarking on the perilous enterprise of grasping both the historical dynamics of the practices retrospectively subsumed under the notion of art and the idea of art itself, we find ourselves caught between the Scylla of a doxic historical approach and the Charybdis of a new normative historical scepticism, we must first of all be careful not to succumb to anhistorical inertia and approach the question of art – and especially its “other origin” – without taking into account the dynamics and complexities of the history of the idea of art itself.

The fundamental naïveté of pioneering Renaissance studies and humanist thought, from Michelet, Ruskin, and Burckhardt to Chastel, was to intuitively rely on (or at least not relativize or problematize) an essentially substantialist idea of art as a self-evident and self-sufficient given. The starting point – but also the touchstone – of this approach might be Paul Oskar Kristeller’s essay “The Modern System of Arts” (1951) In this brilliant and erudite reflection on the historical variability of the art system, and its progressive, more or less vectorial structuring, the renowned historian of ideas reserves pride of place for philosophers who, from Plato and Aristotle to Abbé Batteux, Kant and Hegel contributed to the development of a systematic idea of the arts, as well as to the emergence of the modern paradigm of art itself (which, according to Kristeller’s hypothesis, will be finally established only in Kant’s work, on the basis of the epochal critical turn, cf. c. 42-44). The analysis of the study concludes that Kristeller separates the historical analysis of the “system” from the immanent dynamics determining its self-perception and founding its initial concepts – above all the concepts of creativity and *poiêsis*, beauty and creative genius – whose founding role in the emergence of a new idea – the idea itself – of art is indisputable. The task before us is not simply the historical registration of new concepts and meanings – that peculiarly distributive historical semantics – but the grasp of their generative or, more precisely, operational depth. In other words, we have to seek an answer to the question why these particular concepts develop, what is their semantic motivation, to what semantic operations and potentiality do they correspond? The task of the present study is therefore presented as an attempt to shed further light on this immanent dynamic that makes possible a reflexive attitude towards art as a form of meaning production, and therefore of original forms of reflexivity and semantic organization.

PART TWO.

Principles of Philosophical Figuology

The idea of figure. Genesis and historical semantics

The second part of the thesis proposes the project for *philosophical figuology* having the dual function of an epistemological tool and a method of reading and interpreting images. The model of philosophical figuology complements the hypothesis of the constitutive role of philosophy in the formation of an autonomous idea of art in modernity with the assumption of an artistic or poietic modality of the formation of philosophical notions and concepts, as well as the self-legitimation of philosophical practice.

The notion of the figure, long trivialized by the humanistic doxa as a traditional category of rhetoric and the plastic arts, in fact has a complex and contradictory conceptual fate. It is articulated in a historical field of meaning and value forces and has dynamic, often dramatically shifting stakes, from Latin rhetoric and poetry, through Christian patristics and early exegesis, to medieval philosophy, and beyond, into Renaissance humanities and the philosophy of modernity. Indeed, the idea of the figure reveals both the historical horizon and the structural genealogy of the concept of interpretation, that practice of meaning production that became fundamental with Roman and especially Christian exegesis. In other words, the figure has a fundamental relation to the idea of history, and therefore eschatology, and therefore narrative; more generally, from this perspective, being more than a fictional image, the figure participates in the very form of the becoming of meaning.

The conceptual genesis and historical structuring of the notion of figure is explored in detail by Eric Auerbach in his famous study *Figure*. If Auerbach's book provides, on the one hand, a conceptual genealogy of this concept, it offers, on the other hand, a strong and original interpretation of the uses and historical valences of the figure. Before discussing the figure as such, it is necessary to delineate the semantic field of the concept, insofar as the existing quasi-synonymy between it and cognate concepts in Greek and Latin seem to be central for our purpose. Thus the figure would translate the Greek *plasma*, but also *morphé* et *schéma*, "the wholly sensuous of the pure aspect of that form," "external form" (p. 15). It seems possible to describe the chain of semantic correspondences-or quasi-equivalences-that would make it possible to reflect on the transformations of the conceptual scope of the concept of figure. In this respect, it seems to me

crucial to highlight the dynamic aspects of this concept in order to arrive at a possible deduction of a dynamic core of figural representation, its presumed immanent engine.

I will focus here mainly on Latin texts. In the perspective of the present experimental development, several structural-genealogical moments described by Auerbach are particularly significant. In the first chapter of his book, Auerbach discusses the emergence and conceptual hegemony of the notion of figure in Latin contexts, starting with Terence, moving through Varon and Cicero, and reaching Quintilian, dwelling on two key authors, Ovid and Lucretius. Insofar as the corpus of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* constitutes the center of my figural studies over the last decade, I will emphasize Auerbach's suggestions on Ovid's text. In this respect, one important element is evident. It turns out that within this corpus-undoubtedly fundamental in terms of history, but also of literature and Western thought in general, because of the place occupied within it by an idea central to that tradition, the idea of form, or trans-formation-the Latin notion of form, *forma*, is in fact overshadowed by the notion of figure, *figura*. In other words, the basic concept used by Ovid to describe what we call form today is figure, not shape. *Figura* would therefore be the first name of metamorphosis used by the very inventor of this concept.

If we follow Ovid's semantic intuition, we would conclude that the Latin term "metamorphosis" should be translated as transfiguration rather than transformation. We obviously cannot avoid the sacred connotations here, since, although Ovid predates this tradition, Christianity makes the transfiguration of Christ – that is, the Transfiguration, namely, the miracle that reveals his divine nature – one of the main motifs of its dogma of the Incarnation. However, the choice of the Latin word is probably not accidental; it reveals the same tendency of privileging the word *figura*. We must remember that the Greek word in the Gospel from which transfiguration is derived is none other than metamorphosis. The transfiguration, the transformation of the bodily form of Jesus, which, according to Christian exegesis, precedes the final transformation of the Resurrection, is not something else, but precisely a metamorphosis. Therefore, to approach the idea of a dynamic figure, one should at all costs take into account the fact that the dominant term in both Ovid and the Gospel is not *forma* but *figura*.

In this respect we can find support in Auerbach's interpretation: 'Figura is not only a more plastic concept, but it is also more mobile, more radiant than schema. It is true that the latter also has a more dynamic meaning than our borrowing of 'schema' [...]; the meaning of 'living form' is by no means absent from the word schema; but *figura* develops much more consistently the connotations associated with movement and change' (ibid., pp. 16-17). Continuing Auerbach's

thesis, we might suggest that before the modern era reduced the term to the idea of a stable and established form, *figura* represented a dynamic (re)concept, a dynamic pre-concept: the idea of a dynamic figure. Such a thesis provides, no more, no less, key support for the theory of dynamic forms, of change or alteration. It has important implications for reflection not only on the notion of form but also on the notion of transformation.

Thus, this historical and genealogical excursus may allow us not only to reformulate the question of dynamic forms, but also to imagine the possibility of a dynamic concept—that is, a concept that would be structurally mimetic of dynamic phenomena themselves. This problem has been posed all along the history of philosophy at least since Heraclitus; it becomes foundational anew in the age of modernity in Marx, Nietzsche, Bergson, and closer to us in Bachelard, Guillaume, Prigogine, and Deleuze and Guattari.

Methodological foundations of the project of philosophical figurology

As is clear from the experimental work that has already been done on the figures of Chaos, Eros, Gaia, Dionysus, Phaeton, Arachne, Pandora, and why not Mary Shelley's Monster, in working with the mythic or classical literary text, the plastic conceptual potency of the images is of key importance for us. Our work with them is not a new form of allegorical reading or allegorical instrumentalization, but an attempt at an immanent critical-hermeneutic operation in which the internal form, as we will call it operationally, of what we no less conventionally call ("mythic") figures or images is made manifest and modulated. In order to present the methodological tools relevant to this experimental project, I will first of all introduce the operational distinction between two aspects of the figure, respectively of figuration: on the one hand, the figure-object, the figure in the more conventional sense, that is, the figure represented in a literary text or a plastic work, and on the other hand, the figure as a critical tool enabling interpretative operations within an artistic corpus. I define this second aspect as the figure-subject. I have introduced the term figurology precisely to denote the experimental method of reading that is based on the critical potential as well as the interpretive mobilization of the figure-subject.

It is necessary here to make a clarification about the conceptual genealogy of the notion of "figurology" – which, to my delight, has recently been the focus of interest of younger Bulgarian researchers as well (probably related to the interest in the method of modal ontology and the consistent attempt to work with themes and concepts that resist philosophical dogmatics, such as metamorphosis, the body, the formless, chaos, disorganization). The methodological notion of 'philosophical figurology', introduced in my work of the last decade, draws direct inspiration on the one hand, as has become clear, from the historico-philological studies of Eric Auerbach, and on the other hand from the method of historical anthropology; it is also indebted to the onto-typology or ontomethodology of Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, whose early works offer a significant genealogy and philosophical analysis of the concept of "figure," especially with regard to its relation to the concept of "fiction." In a series of foundational studies, Lacoue-Labarthe, following but also radicalizing and deconstructing Nietzsche and Heidegger (in particular, Heidegger's analysis of Gestalt as a modality of "Ge-stell, that word which denotes the unity or gathering of all modalities of *stellen*, of installation or representation in general, of *Vorstellung do Gestalt*"), Lacoue-Labarthe conceives of the figure and the figural as a fundamental modality of modern ontology: "everything that modern ontology elevates to the status of Gestalt, of figure or of type, when, ceasing to present

itself as an onto-theology, it is transformed into an onto-anthropology, or, as I have suggested, into an onto-typology.”

Of course, Lacoue-Labarthe is by no means the only philosopher or art theorist for whom the notion of the figure has a special significance. A systematic review of the uses of the concept of figure in philosophy and art studies of recent decades is not the task of this text, especially since the concept of figure is used here in a strictly specific perspective, which will be outlined below, and for which the method of historical anthropology, which does not explicitly use figure as a methodological concept, remains the most significant example. Nevertheless, I cannot but at least mention Gerard Genette’s series of studies under the title *Figures*, which began to appear in the 1960s, and in which the French literary scholar, starting from the rhetorical tradition, proposes an innovative reading of the notion of figure as a specific semantic operator of the literary text, as well as Jean-François Lyotard’s influential essay *Discourse, Figure* (1974), in which he introduces a kind of dialectic of discourse and the figure, conceiving the figure as a visual field, as a kind of rupture of discourse, an interest that will be expanded later in the direction of the problem of “negative representation.”

In the French philosophical tradition of the same era, the notion is also associated with the “post-phenomenological” method of Michel Guérin, who probably offers the most systematic development of the notion of “figurology” (of which he is probably the inventor). Although his work has no direct connection to the development of the methodology I have proposed, it is important to note that it predates and influenced the idea of the “conceptual figure” of Deleuze and Guattari, who discuss Guérin’s notion in *What is Philosophy?*: ‘Within contemporary thinking, Michel Guérin is one of those who most thoroughly discovered the existence of conceptual personages at the heart of philosophy; however, he defined them within the limits of “logodrama” and “figurology”, which embed affect in thinking. ‘At the same time, Deleuze and Guattari’s famous thesis of philosophy as the creation of concepts (conceptions) from their later book cannot but recall t Guérin’s Nietzschean thesis from *The Genius of the Philosopher* (1979) of thinking as the creation of figures. In general, Guérin’s interest is in the relation between affectivity and truth, and in the ‘teaching’ of philosophy, of which the figure is a refined ‘instrument’ or ‘mediator’. Here is a synthetic definition of the notion of figure in Guérin: “The figure weaves together the real and the ideal: what we call the ‘fictual’ [fictuel] is a representation ‘marked’ by its object. If the figure is indeed the instrument through which the relation between affectivity and truth is thought, it is also the very form of that relation.”

Beyond these ‘genealogical connections’, the notion of ‘figure’, respectively ‘figurology’, in fact has much narrower and concrete epistemological tasks within the project described here. It has to do with the attempt to relate the propositions of the perspectives of modal narrative analysis and modal ontology proposed in the last two decades, both inspired by the linguistic models of Gustave Guillaume and Krassimir Mantchev. The idea of dynamic forms, respectively dynamic concepts, possessing the plastic potentiality to express dynamic phenomena without reducing them – to grasp without grasping, uniting the two perspectives, is associated with the notion of the figure precisely as a plastic reflexive agent and mediator between the level of ontological “plasticism” and its poietic manifestation or “figuration”. The figure thus turns out to be both an agent and an epistemic mediator, and therefore figurology appears primarily as a methodological disposition, not so much as a field of research, much less as a hypothetical “discipline.”

On the other hand, the notion of ‘philosophical fiction’, which I have introduced in parallel to ‘philosophical figurology’, aims at the experimental radicalisation of the premises of philosophical figurology, and must therefore be clearly distinguished from it – which cannot be done within the modest scope of this prolegomena methodological text. In a sense, the definition “philosophical” is unnecessary. Fiction, as the Greek suffix indicates, could be a discipline, or rather a philosophical field, in the same way as physics, metaphysics, logic, or poetics. It is in this sense that the term appears in one of Novalis’s fragments, as *Die Fantastik*.

Historical anthropology and philosophical figurology

It becomes clear that one of the specific tasks of figurology is to deploy the possibility of a philosophical mobilization of the method of the historical anthropology of Jean-Pierre Vernant, Marcel Detienne and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, and above all to develop in a philosophical perspective, in accord with the requirement of the fantastic horizon, the analyses of metamorphosis proposed by Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux. My aim will be, following the methodological achievements of the remarkable authors of this French school, to work with mythical figures not in an allegorical, and not even so much in an analytical – philological or historical-anthropological – modus, but in a modus that I designate as pro-conceptual. Working in a pro-conceptual modus implies an attempt to derive the conceptual potential through the analysis of structural and semantic series, kernels and relations, on the basis of which the complexity of concrete images is revealed, through which the conceptual-semantic register of their field of action is accordingly delineated. On the one hand, in Vernant, Detienne, Vidal-Naquet, and Frontisi-Ducroux, this operation clearly has the status of a conceptual-functional analysis; on the other hand, however, it presupposes its own field of conceptual relations, which clearly has a productive character even if it is not activated or instrumentalized as a field of autonomous conceptual action. In other words, historical anthropology constitutes a philosophical hermeneutics in potentia of the mythico-literary text. In turn, philosophical figurology aims to actualize – to make manifest *in actu* the pro-conceptual modus of mythic figures, as well as the meta-figure that weaves them into a common fabric – the ‘fabula’, that is, the narrative order.

Thus, the methodological task of the final part of the study is to think and experiment with the possibilities of a philosophical figurology. Drawing on the legacy of historical anthropology, philosophical figurology will attempt to radicalize it into a critical experimental modality, exploring the poietic potentiality of the figures of mythic fiction themselves.

PART THREE.

The Origin of Art and the Becoming-Other of the World

If the first two parts of the thesis attempted to make explicit the importance of the relation between philosophy and art in the age of the formation of the modern meanings of these concepts and cultural practices, on the basis of the hypothesis for a shared poietic dynamic ontology, the third and final part of the study is devoted to the unfolding of a new dimension of this perspective. It examines, on the one hand, the attitude of modern anthropology towards the study of the origins of art (an attitude that will itself be conceived as symptomatic of the ‘Poietic turn’ that took place from the fifteenth to the end of the eighteenth century.), and on the other hand, on the basis of Georges Bataille’s theory on the origin of visual representation, the analysis of Aristotle’s ontology of creativity is supplemented and developed, in the perspective of Aristotle’s theory of sensory experience and its relation to the production of (artistic) images.

Sensory modification and image philosophy

In issue 7 of the second and last year of *Documents* (1930), Georges Bataille published a short text entirely devoted to the problem of the origin of representation. This text is not among his most illustrated articles, several of which became part of the famous *Critical Dictionary*: ‘The Language of Flowers’, ‘The Human Body’, ‘The Big Toe’, ‘Slaughterhouse’, ‘Formless’, ‘Base Materialism and Gnosticism’, ‘The Deviations of Nature’, and others. In fact, it is a review that bears the title of Georges-Henri Luquet’s revised work, *Primitive Art*, which appeared in 1930. The text predates *Lascaux or the Birth of Art* (1955), published a quarter century later, which would be entirely devoted to the same problem, yet Bataille does not present the review as a first draft of his later work. In fact, “Primitive Art” and *Lascaux or the Birth of Art* offer two different visions on the “origin of pictorial representation.” And it is precisely the thesis put forward in the 1930 review that is of great relevance in the present case. We need, therefore, to spend a little more time examining it in detail.

The author of the reviewed work, Georges-Henri Luquet, a philosopher by training and a disciple of Bergson and Lévi-Bruhl, is one of the advocates of E. Ivanov in 1908, juxtaposing children’s drawings and images of primitive art in terms not of their meaning but of their

mechanisms of representation and of the “individual psychology” that serves as the basis for these mechanisms. In theoretical terms, Luquet undoubtedly falls under the influence of Haeckel’s theory of recapitulation, according to which “ontogenesis generalizes phylogenesis” (a thesis rejected by Bataille), in whose perspective it is precisely the origin of representation that would correspond to the emergence of the image in children.

Bataille’s review of Luquet’s book does contain, in its modest size, a real programme. It sets the guidelines for a future theory of the emergence of pictorial representation. (The basic concept used by Bataille to designate the dispositif of representation is depiction [figuration]. The term representation itself is used primarily in the more specific sense of the result of a process of representation: ‘pictorial representations’ [représentations figurées]. The general problem of the emergence of representation is defined as “the emergence of the pictorial representation”). In order to formulate his thesis, Bataille chooses as a point of departure a point in Luquet’s work that seems to him “undeniably very satisfactory”, namely the convergence of the spontaneous desire in children to leave traces (desire and gesture, which will underlie the origin of primary representation) and the destruction of objects, both of which are seen as manifestations of the need ‘to affirm personality’ (‘Such traces seem ‘to be explicable as mechanical affirmations of the personality of their authors. ‘ And, as such, Professor Luquet brings them closer together with an unusual means by which children affirm their personality – the destruction of objects, the feats of ‘children who break everything’ – a convergence that needs to be emphasized more.” Bataille picks up the theme again a bit further: “Without emphasizing this enough, Professor Luquet draws a comparison with these gestures of destroying objects in children. It is extremely important to notice that in these cases it is always a question of modifying the objects” (ibid., p. 252). ” (ibid., p. 252). In fact, it is through this repeated reference that Bataille introduces his thesis. He first replaces the criterion of convergence launched by Luquet with one other common point, namely the modification of objects. The notion of modification is unquestionably central to the economy of this text. It is, if you will, its regulative concept. It appears for the first time in connection with the ambiguity of representation, and more precisely with the insufficient representation – distorting, even formless (both words are present in the text) – in humans: “An art which is called primitive only by virtue of an abuse can be characterized simply as a modification of existing forms; such an art has existed with a rather tainted profile from the beginning, but this crude and distorting art will have been reserved for the representation of the human form. ‘ The notion of alteration takes centre stage in the second part of the text, which is devoted to ‘the emergence of pictorial representation’ (pp. 252-253). In as many as three paragraphs, occupying at most two pages, it is applied analytically, allowing three different

uses of it to be identified. First, in the general sense of modification of objects: ‘It is extremely important to notice that in these various cases it is always a modification of objects’ (p. 252). At the same time, the notion of modification is immediately endowed with a conceptual meaning. There can be no doubt that the choice of the concept is determined by the possibility of such a conceptual use. The first use of the term in the quoted sentence is accompanied by the following remark: “The term alteration has the double advantage of expressing a partial decomposition analogous to that of a corpse, and at the same time a transition to a perfectly heterogeneous state corresponding to what the Protestant Professor Otto calls the wholly other, I will say the sacred, materialized, for example, in a ghost” (p. 251).

We should note two important elements of this statement: on the one hand, the alteration is qualified, in agreement with Aristotle (cf. *infra*, pp. 63-65), as a “partial decomposition” and at the same time it denotes not only the transition from the same to the other, but alongside this the transition to the domain of the wholly other, the domain of the sacred. It becomes clear that what is at stake in Bataille’s conception of the “origin of pictorial representation” goes beyond the field of the theory of “pictorial representation” (and therefore of aesthetics). To grasp the scope of this pledge, we need to consider it in a semantic sense and in a broader context. The starting hypothesis of this study is the following: the operational value of the concept of change allows it to be posited as the axis of force of Bataille’s supercritical thought.

It is through the direct association of these two aspects, two meanings or two values of conceptual use – the literal value of the general meaning and the conceptual value of the term – that Bataille’s peculiar concept emerges, which we will designate as the genetic aspect of the concept insofar as it functions as the central operator in Bataille’s theory of ‘the emergence of pictorial representation’. The genetic aspect of the notion of change in turn divides into two ‘phases’.

1. First, alteration denotes the “usual conditions of graphic art. Above all, it is a matter of modifying what we have at hand”. The starting point is nothing else but the very condition (“the usual conditions of graphic art”) of representation. Bataille’s modest formulation actually sets out a radical thesis about the origin of representation: the alteration, the altering gesture, is the origin of representation.

2. However, this first phase of the amendment is not the main one. “It is true that the amendment is not fundamentally that which bears the drawing as its support. The drawing itself unfolds and enriches itself with variations, highlighting in all senses the deformation of the depicted object [...]

This unfolding is easily traced from the initial scribbles. Chance liberates from a few strange lines a visual similarity that can be fixed through repetition. This stage represents in a sense the second stage of alteration, that is, the destroyed object (the paper or the wall) is altered to the point that it is transformed into a new object – a horse, a head, a person.”

The two structural moments of modification in the genetic meaning of the word can be seen – but only conventionally – as one “negative” moment and one “positive” moment. The “negative” moment would be the moment of deforming change, while the “positive” moment would be the moment of transforming change. It is clear that we are not talking about temporal moments – nor, for that matter, about any dialectical scheme – but, above all, about degrees of intensity (Bataille himself uses the word “degree”: “This stage represents in a sense the second degree of change”), which would mean not quantitative but qualitative moments. Transformative change is not the transformation of a negative (reactive) force into a positive (active) force, still less any dialectical taking away [*relève*] of negativity. Transformative change is an amplification and compression of deformative change.

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II. DEVELOPMENTS

The second major, “applied” section of the thesis is described as “Developments”. As stated in the Introduction to the thesis, the “Developments” include synthetic and reworked for the purposes of the dissertation parts of the underlying monographs (in the case of the second and third developments) or new research (the first development). They are intended to present the possibilities of the theoretical propositions of the main part of the thesis, unfolding them in concrete experimental modalities. Thus, the first part of the thesis, devoted to the relationship between art and poiesis, is extended by the study “The World as a Task, or Philosophical Reason and Poetic Madness”, developing the problematics of poiesis in the period of Late Modernity and introducing the phase of the final formation of concepts and disciplines, respectively of the completion of the process begun with Renaissance Humanism. The subject of the study is the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and the theoretical views of the Jena Romantics, in particular Novalis, and their reworking in modern philosophy. The second chapter of the Corpus, dealing with the problems of philosophical figurology, is unfolded through the development *The New Athanor*, including with abridgements the five chapters of the book *The New Athanor*. Beginnings of Philosophical Fiction.” *The New Athanor*, a book written in the experimental genre of philosophical fiction, poses the question of the beginnings of philosophical concept in relation to sensory experience and the poietic image. It thus unfolds the practical premises of general poietics and the philosophy of the image, organizing them around an unfolding allegory of the alchemical furnace Athanor. Finally, the problematic of Part III, corresponding to the book *The Alteration of the World* and the transformative idea of the origin of visual representation developed in it, is continued with a synthetic presentation of three of the parts of the book itself in French.

List of the main publications on the subject of the thesis

I. Monographs

I. A. Main monographic works:

1. Boyan Manchev, *L'altération du monde*, Paris, Lignes, 2009.
2. Превод на японски език (преработена и разширена версия):
世界の他化 ラディカルな美学のために, [*L'altération du monde. Pour une esthétique radicale* / „Изменението на света. За една радикална естетика“, превод от френски на японски език: Юмико Йокота], на японски език, Hosei University Press, “Universitas”, Токио, 2020, 316 с.
3. Боян Манчев, „Новият Атанор. Начала на философската фантастика“, „Метеор“, София, 2020.

I. B. Additional monographic works:

4. Боян Манчев, „Невъобразимото. Опити по философия на образа“, НБУ, София, 2003.
5. Боян Манчев, „Тялото-Метаморфоза“, „Алтера“, София, 2007.
6. Boyan Manchev, *La métamorphose et l'instant – Désorganisation de la vie*, Paris-Strasbourg, La Phocide, 2009.
7. Boyan Manchev, *Miracolo*, trad. di Alessandra Salvini e Federico Ferrari, Lanfranchi Editore, Milano, 2011.
8. Облаци, „Философия на свободното тяло“, „Метеор“, София, 2017 / Boyan Manchev, *Clouds. Philosophy of the Free Body*, translated by Katerina Popova, Metheor, Sofia, 2019.

II. Book chapters and articles

II. A. Main book chapters:

9. Boyan Manchev, **La persistance des formes. Pour une nouvelle politique esthétique**, in Boyan Manchev, Jean-Luc Nancy, Federico Ferrari, Tomás Maia, *PERSISTÊNCIA DA OBRA / PERSISTANCE DE L'OEUVRE*, Documenta, Lisboa, 2021, Tome I: *ARTE E POLÍTICA / ART ET POLITIQUE*.

10. Boyan Manchev, **L'autre origine de l'art. La poiésis ontogonique et le nouvel enchantement du monde**, in Boyan Manchev, Jean-Luc Nancy, Federico Ferrari, Tomás Maia, *PERSISTÊNCIA DA OBRA / PERSISTANCE DE L'OEUVRE*, Documenta, Lisboa, 2021, Tome II: *ARTE E RELIGIÃO / ART ET RELIGION*.

11. Boyan Manchev, **The New Arachne. Towards a poetics of dynamic forms**, in *Performance Research*, n° 20:1: *On Poetics and Performance*, Issue editors: Ric Allsopp & Kristen Kreider, London: Routledge Journals, Taylor & Francis, 2015.

12. Boyan Manchev, **Was wollen die Dinge? Dynamische Ontologie und die Zukunft der Performance**, in *Theater der Zeit*, 3/2015, Berlin.

13. Boyan Manchev, **Météores, le désir de la matière. Pour une ontologie dynamique**, in *Lignes*, n°51 : *Quels matérialismes ? Pour quels mondes ?*, Numéro pensé et conçu par Martin Crowley & Michel Surya, 2016.

14. Boyan Manchev, **Възможността, която желае. За една динамична онтология**, В: *Философски алтернативи*, съст. Кристиан Енчев, май 2017.

15. Боян Манчев, **Възможност и промяна. Аристотеловата задача днес**, В: „Предизвикателството Аристотел“, съст. Димка Гичева-Гочева, Иван Колев, Хараламби Паницидис, УИ „Св. Климент Охридски“, София, 2018.

16. Боян Манчев, **Философска фигурология и теория на повествованието. Встъпителни методологически бележки**, В: *Пирон*, бр. 15: “Нова наратология”, 2018.

II. B. Additional book chapters and articles:

17. Boyan Manchev, **La métamorphose et l'événement**, in: *Rue Descartes n°64 : La métamorphose*, sous la dir. de Boyan Manchev, Paris, PUF, 2009.

18. Boyan Manchev, **The Dangers of Philosophy**, in: *Inaesthetics*, 4, ed. by Marcus Steinweg, Berlin: Merve Verlag, 2015.

19. Boyan Manchev, **The Sublime Paradox**, in *UTCP 27: Sublime and Uncanny*, ed. by Futoshi Hoshino and Kamelia Spassova, 2016.
20. 世界の欲望 —ジャン=リュック・ナンシーと存在論的エロス (Boyan Manchev, **Le désir du monde**), in *The journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (Jimbun Gakuho)*, No. 513-15 March 2017 (Numéro Spécial : *Pulsations philosophiques chez Jean-Luc Nancy* (éds. par Y. Nishiyama et R. Kakinami)).
21. Boyan Manchev, **Pandora's Toys or zoon technicon and the Technical Ghosts of the Future**, in *Epidemic Subjects. Radical Ontology*, Edited by Elisabeth von Samsonow, diaphanes, Zürich-Berlin, 2017.
22. Boyan Manchev, **La politique des météores**, in *Revue Lignes n°54 « ICI ET MAINTENANT » | Lignes : 1987-2017*», Париж, 2017.
23. Boyan Manchev, **À même l'impossible, la puissance qui persiste**, in *Lignes n°52 : Vouloir l'impossible*, sous la responsabilité de Mathilde Girard, Frédéric Neyrat et Michel Suria, 2017.
24. Boyan Manchev, **Von der Kritik der Institutionen zur Institutionalisierung der Kritik. Post-Spektakuläre Wertschöpfung**, in *Paragrana 26 (2017) 1*, Ed. by Ludger Schwarte, De Gruyter Verlag, 2017.
25. Boyan Manchev, **Le reflet d'Eros. Réversibilité et altération**, in *El Cuerpo en Acto*, Universidad Catholica, Santiago de Chile, 2017.
26. Boyan Manchev, **Clouds and Fronts. Onto-meteorology and Philosophical Fantastic**, In *Identitese*, ed. by Stanimir Panayotov and Slavco Dimitrov, Belgrade, 2018.
27. Boyan Manchev, **Figure et figurologie**, in *Pour un atlas des figures*, CND / Manufacture, Paris / Lausanne, 2018.
28. Боян Манчев, **Отвъд творбата: метаморфозата на разказа**, В: “*Метаморфозата*”, съст. Миглена Николчина, “Изток-Запад”, 2017. Новата Арахна: Биополитика на мита и техники на живота, В: *сборник “Философия на тялото”*, София: УИ “Св. Климент Охридски”, 2018.
29. Боян Манчев, **Театър на чудесата, или фотография и нечовешки техники / Theater of Miracles, or Photography and Non-Human Techniques**, В: *Фотоарт/1*, София, 2015 (двуезична публикация).
30. Боян Манчев, **Въображение и дезорганизация. За една философска фантастика**, В: *Пирон*, Академично електронно списание за изкуства и култура, бр. *Бъдеще и въображение*, водещ броя Асен Канев, 01/2014.

31. Боян Манчев, **Новата Арахна. Метаморфоза и био-техника**, В: *Литературен вестник*, бр. 9/2014, София.

32. Боян Манчев, **Катастрофа и Метаморфоза**, автор, съст. и прев. от френски на блок текстове в *Литературен вестник*, бр. 37/2014, София.

Academic Contributions of the Thesis

1. The thesis introduces an original methodological framework, defined as the epistemology of foundations.
2. The work is based on the hypothesis of a constitutive relation between art and philosophy, unfolded through the study of immanent structural-genetic processes that led to the progressive differentiation of art and philosophy as categories in classical antiquity.
3. The category of *poiesis* is examined as a driving force of the autonomization of the idea of art in the Renaissance. It is argued that the assertion of an autonomous idea of art is directly related to the idea of poietic power (*potentia*) developed in the philosophy of humanism on the basis of a radicalization of the Aristotelian and Neoplatonic heritage.
4. The thesis fosters a perspective for developing the field of the philosophy of image.
5. Based on an original reading of Aristotle's notion of *αἴσθησις* through the prism of Georges Bataille's early texts, the thesis of the transformative genesis of artistic practice is advanced.
6. A model of *philosophical figurology* with the dual function of an epistemological tool and a method of reading and interpreting images is proposed. The model of philosophical figurology complements the hypothesis of the constitutive role of philosophy in the formation of an autonomous idea of art in modernity with the assumption of an artistic or poietic modality of the formation of philosophical ideas and concepts, as well as its role in the self-legitimation of philosophical practice.