

a) Nina V. Braginskaya

Address: Krasnoarmeyskaya 8-3-23. Moscow, Russia, 125167

satissuperque@mail.ru

b) 1. Images, Nexts, Reality

c) Genesis and Structure of the Dialogue in Front of an Image and the "Eikones" of Philostratus the Elder

d) 20 min.

e) Outline of the context (301 word)

The task of this paper is twofold: to define the class to which "Images" belongs and to discover the aesthetic program of reading "Images" without seeing the works of art themselves. "Images" represents a conversation referring to a certain image with its description termed here as *dialogical ekphrasis (DE)*. The texts corresponding to this definition are included into dramatic genres (like *Ion*), dialogues (like *Pseudo-Cebes*), novels (like *Achilles Tatius*), epigrams (like *On Kairos by Lysipp*) etc. The comparison of about forty Greek DE shows that they possess a dozen more characteristics in common to be discussed in the paper. Being a literary device the dialogue in front of an image retains resemblance to the genre of revelations and its mysterious scenery. That is:

- the functions of speech and demonstration are separated;
- the narrator-director who does the speaking is opposed to the "chorus" or a series of mostly moving, dancing and demonstrating "masks";
- non-human personages, performance by a human is optional;
- images, statues objects function as protagonists;
- 'coming' and 'going', 'appearance' and 'disappearance' take turns;
- episodic composition prevails.

Assuming that DE (not "Images"! ) has its roots in mystery and performance, folk theater and ritual, we can explain its constantly recurring elements: sacral environment, question-answer form, hidden meaning of the image, visual and luminous images, traveling motif etc.

The rhetorician Philostratus uses DE ancient structure transforming the hereditary elements into a sum of artistic devices. An aesthetic attitude to both painting and wording in "Images" is opposite to that of DE. The paradox of Philostratus's aesthetics stems from the situation in which the genre originates from the recognition of the painting's value for our perception, yet retains its value for our inner vision and imagination, as if preparing the ground for the Christian "speculation in color".