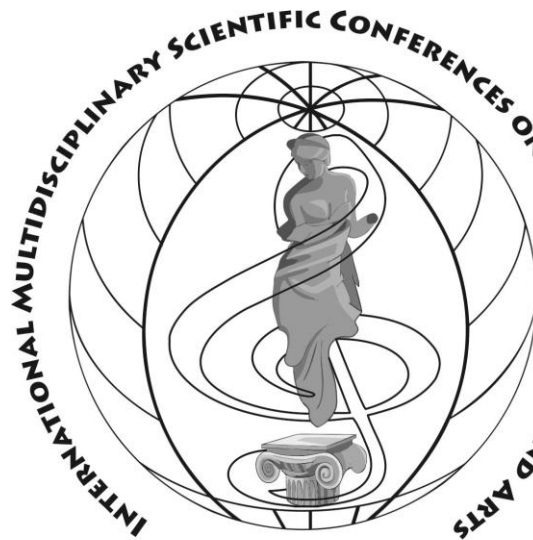


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ELEMENTS OF THE ART OF MEMORY IN THE IMAGINES OF THE ELDER PHILOSTRATUS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research consisted in finding elements of the Art of Memory in the work of the prominent author of the Second Sophistic. To achieve this purpose we subjected to the textual analysis one of the most popular works relating to the Second Sophistic: The Imagines of the Elder Philostratus. Since the Renaissance the book was subject of scientific analysis and, at the same time, source of inspiration for many artists. We concentrated only on searching of elements of the Art of Memory in The Imagines. Except the textual analysis in the research also comparative analysis was applied: we compared the text of The Imagines with the text of The Phaedrus by Plato. At last, comparative-historical and comparative and typological analysis was used for comparison of structure of The Imagines to structure of late antique handbooks on rhetoric, progymnasmata, and with rules of creation of a museum exposition.

The fragment I.30 Pelops contains the symbolical image of four rules of eloquence stated by Plato in The Phaedrus. In a fragment I.12-13 Bosphoros the symbolical image of "material" of memory is given: places of memory (loci), images of memory (imaginibus).

The order of the pictures in Philostratus' book also is not casual; it corresponds to the rules of the organization of places of memory and the rules of creation of a museum exposition. This last observation allowed us to see the genetic linkage existing between the Art of Memory and modern Museum.

Detection of all elements of the Art of Memory in The Imagines will make possible the solution of a question of the place of this book in the system of medieval education. Moreover, in case of confirmation of a hypothesis that The Imagines are a manual on the Art of Memory we shall have an opportunity to expand our knowledge of philosophical and rhetorical researches of the Second Sophistic.

Keywords: the Art of Memory, The Imagines of the Elder Philostratus, the Second Sophistic, Plato, Education in the Antiquity and in the Byzantine Empire.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Imagines of the Elder Philostratus are the well-known and well studied work of a border of the 2nd and 3rd centuries. It is enough to tell that we have 74 manuscripts of The Imagines [2. P. 5], it speaks about extreme popularity of the book in the Middle Ages. Since the Renaissance, the book was subject of the scientific analysis and, at the same time, an inspiration source for many artists. Later even Goethe wrote about The

Imagines [7]: we may suppose as far as the authority of the great German poet promoted popularity of the book among researchers and artists. We may distinguish two from the main directions of interpretations of The Imagines. Firstly, the book is considered as a reliable source on history of the Antique painting [9]; secondly, the book is considered as one of the first works of fiction [2].

It is difficult not to agree with opinion of N. V. Braginskaya who considers that mostly interest in The Imagines (up to the middle of the XX century) is "utilitarian" one and it comes down to discussion of a question of real existence of originals of the pictures which descriptions we find in Philostratus's book. The researcher with scepticism treats a possibility of real existence of the gallery described by Philostratus. Braginskaya in her works cardinaly changes approach to The Imagines. First of all, she investigates the structure of the text and in this direction of the researches she reaches significant results. In general, in the recent decades focus of interpretations of The Imagines was displaced from a question of existence of originals of the pictures to a question of the place of the text of The Imagines in the history of an ekphrasis and fiction. However, except both kind of interpretation – art criticism and philology - The Imagines contains a rich material for philosophical analysis of sophists' statements [14], for researches of history of Antique and Medieval rhetoric [8]. It is very interesting also to research the impact of this book on practice of the Byzantine education.

So this book is very important for cultural history: it is one of the sources of modern fiction, it is reliable document on the history of art, and finally, this book is the source of artistic inspiration. Is it possible to find another sense in The Imagines?

2. PURPOSE AND METHODS

Firstly, we aspire to finding elements of the Art of Memory in the work of the famous representative of the Second Sophistic. Secondly, if it will become clear that The Imagines contain these elements, then it will be necessary to estimate also a possibility that this book carried out a role of a manual on rhetoric. This book perhaps is similar to textbooks on eloquence, *progymnasmata*. But unlike them (for example, unlike Aphthonius's book) Philostratus's book can be considered as devoted to training only in two sections of rhetorical art: the Ekphrasis and the Art of Memory.

For achievement of the goals we shall analyze fragments of the first book of The Imagines. Except the textual analysis we apply also comparative analysis: good results are yielded by comparison of The Imagines to some statements of Phaedrus by Plato. The comparative and typological analysis will be used for comparison of the structure of The Imagines with the rules of creation of a museum exposition.

3. RESULTS

As a result of the research an interesting fact becomes obvious – the Elder Philostratus used elements of the Art of Memory in The Imagines to facilitate remembering of the separate statements of the Plato's philosophy relating to rhetoric (I.30 Pelops) [12. P. 118-123]. Moreover, the book contains also the fragment which is symbolically representing work of memory (I.12-13 Bosphoros) [12. P. 48-59]. Between Philostratus's descriptions and the modern museum there is also a typological proximity.

It can be an indirect demonstration of connection of The Imagines with the Art of Memory in case we accept the definition of museum as an institute of memory, or a place of memory. At last, we receive some bases to confirm a hypothesis that The Imagines could be used as the textbook on the Art of Memory in the Late Antiquity and in the Middle Ages.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. The Art of memory in The Imagines

How can be confirmed the assumption that elements of the Art of Memory are actually exist in The Imagines? If the Art of Memory is an art to place images in the places of memory [1], then it should be noted that all examples of Philostratus's ekphrasis completely meet those requirements which the teachers of Rhetoric imposed on places and images of memory. All images of Philostratus have vividness, they are very well remembered. However, "vividness" in itself, vivacity of the images created by Philostratus is not the proof that The Imagines are book on the Art of Memory, as any image created by means of words has to rise as a picture before the listener's eyes.

4.1.1. Pelops

We may suppose that there are some indications of significant for rhetorical education statements at the text of Philostratus. These indications (or hints) have to serve as some kind of keys; using them one may facilitate and improve training. We managed to find the following hint in the text of The Imagines: the description I.30 Pelops contains the symbolical image of the rules of eloquence from the Phaedrus by Plato. The key to this hint is an accordance of the four white horses at the Philostratus's book to the four parts of the divine kind of madness at the Plato's book.

In this description Poseidon gives to Pelops a golden chariot with four horses. From the description I.17 it is known that Pelops's horses are white and obedient, the Oenomaüs's quadriga, on the contrary, consists of angry and black horses. For our purpose the following fragment of the Philostratus's speech is key: "It requires no small effort, in my opinion, to compose four horses together and not to confuse their several legs one with another, to impart to them high spirits controlled by the bridle, and to hold them still, one at the very moment when he does not want to stand still, another when he wants to paw the ground, third when he [wants to lift up his head], while the fourth takes delight in the beauty of Pelops and his nostrils are distended as though he were neighing." (I.30) (Source of the English translation: [12, P. 119-121.]).

Several moments force us to see here a hint at the description of the rules of eloquence from the Phaedrus by Plato.

A) First of all, the author several times uses number four, as if preparing the reader for disclosure of importance of this number for eloquence art. This number, in sense significant for us, is mentioned at the Book I in the following cases: Introduction; I.13; I.17; I.28 and so on.

B) The white horses of Pelops who have to win against black horses of Oenomaüs can personify white and black horses from the Plato's likening of soul to "an organic whole made up of a charioteer and his team of horses" (Phaedrus, 246 a) (Source of the English translation: [13]): "only one of his horses is thoroughly noble and good, while

the other is thoroughly the opposite" (Phaedrus, 246 b).

C) The description of horses from Pelops's team (I.30) may be compared to the Plato's description of the four types of "the divine kind of madness" (Phaedrus, 265b): 1) the horse who "does not want to stand still" (Philostratus) - "prophetic inspiration" (Plato); 2) the horse who "wants to paw the ground" - "mystical inspiration"; 3) horse who "wants to lift up his head" - "poetic inspiration"; 4) horse who "takes delight in the beauty of Pelops" - "madness of love". This likening is confirmed also by another one: Plato's kinds of low fury (the kinds of madness, which caused by human illnesses, but not by divinity) may be connected with the black and angry horses of Oenomaüs from Philostratus's book.

If to accept likening of four horses of Pelops to the four parts of the divine kind of madness from Phaedrus, then it is possible to put Plato's understanding of a role of the divine madness in eloquence to disclosure of an educational and rhetorical plan of Philostratus. According to Plato a man "uses memory to remain always as close as possible to those things proximity to which gives a god his divine qualities" (Phaedrus, 249s). The divine kind of madness finding during this act is a necessary condition for any fruitful human effort.

Moreover, it is possible to assume that it concerns also the rules of dialectics and eloquence which are formulated by the Plato in Phaedrus several times and come down to four: 1) "someone has to know the truth of every matter he's speaking or writing about" (Phaedrus, 277b-c); 2) someone has to be able "to divide things class by class" (Phaedrus, 273e; 265e); 3) someone has to be able to "take every individual thing, one by one, and see how it falls within a single category" (Phaedrus, 273e; 265d); 4) someone has to know "the characters of the members of his audience" (Phaedrus, 273d-a). It is easy to remember these rules and also the divine kind of madness if we are imagining (or looking at) the four horses of Pelops:

1. The horse who "does not want to stand still" - "prophetic inspiration" - "someone has to know the truth of every matter he's speaking or writing about".
2. The horse who "wants to paw the ground" - "mystical inspiration" - "to divide things class by class".
3. The horse who "wants to lift up his head" - "poetic inspiration" - to "take every individual thing, one by one, and see how it falls within a single category".
4. The horse who "takes delight in the beauty of Pelops" - "madness of love" - someone has to know "the characters of the members of his audience".

We believe that in this sequence Philostratus suggested the pupils to remember separate statements of the Plato's philosophy. He united aesthetic perfection of material of his own descriptions with knowledge of principal propositions of Plato's philosophy which were, of course, available for young men [6]. We can assume that popularity of this Philostratus's book in the Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages is explained not only by art perfection of The Imagines, but also by educational orientation of the book.

4.1.2. Bosphoros

If after all we shall try to find the fragment which is key for the Art of Memory it will be, certainly, Bosphoros (I.12-13). N. V. Braginskaya considers this fragment as the semantic center of the Book I. We may assume that in the first part of this fragment

(I.12), where "painting gives the very image of things that are, of things that are taking place, and in some cases of the manner of their taking place" [12, P. 53], the symbolical model of "material" for memory is given: the Place of memory (background, *locus*) (Bosphoros) and the Images of memory (*imaginibus*) ("things that are and that are taking place"). In the second part (I.13) the way of "connections" of places and images is presented. It is application of the Art of Memory: capturing tunny-fish by a deep-laid net (The most important figure here - "a man quick at counting and keen of vision" [12. P. 57]). The last fragment of the first part (I.12.5) describes the transformation of what exists or does not exist in the nature in the images of memory. The beacon light at the entrance of the temple was hung up for the ships that sail out from the Euxine Sea. But actually it attracts, according to the logic of the narration, the tunas to Bosphoros. We can see here the transformation of the possible or real ship in the tunas, "swimming like a phalanx of soldiers" [12. P. 55] and are capturing by fishermen. "And at a loss what to do with so many they even open the net and let some of the fish swim away and escape: so proud are they of their catch" [12. P. 57-59]. This transformation, possibly, characterizes also the action of memory: to destroy distinction between possibility and reality, to be generous in oblivion, without depriving thereby of what is forgotten its place in the existence, but only letting out it from networks of memory.

4.1.3. The Imagines and museum

Except given examples of the presence of elements of the Art of Memory in The Imagines, we should like to add one more, indirect, argument. The object described in the Philostratus's book is typologically close to the modern museum. The museum is an institute of memory, or the Memory space today [11]. The proximity of Philostratus's gallery and the modern museum is not the proof that Philostratus's book is devoted to the Art of Memory, however this proximity forces us to look for additional arguments for confirmation of this thought.

Firstly, Philostratus in Introduction says that his conversations with young men took place in a certain art gallery near Naples. Whether there was this gallery actually or it was the result of literary fiction? Both points of view are convincingly argues in science: the first – by Karl Lehmann-Hartleben [9], the second – by Nina V. Braginskaya [2]. But for us now it does not matter. It is important that an object of The Imagines is looks like Uffizi Gallery or any other museum. Especially as similar perception of the book, perhaps, existed always, in any case, both the Renaissance and the Romanticism quite so read Philostratus's work. And, certainly, such perception of The Imagines was a part of a plan of Philostratus.

Secondly, this unsolvability of scientific dispute on real existence of originals of the pictures described by Philostratus transfers his "gallery" to that status in which there are rhetorical "places of memory" (or backgrounds, *loci*): it is not important for the last whether there are they actually or not [1].

Thirdly, in sense of chronology, the rebirth of the Art of Memory during the Renaissance synchronized with the rise of the first art galleries. For example, the Memory Theatre was created by Giulio Camillo [15. P. 129-172] shortly before opening of Uffizi Gallery. And, for example, the idea of the Memory Theatre in turn exerted influence on the concept of an exposition of Samuel Quicchelberg [5].

Fourthly, rules of creation of a museum exposition [10] extremely precisely repeat those requirements which rhetoricians imposed to rhetorical places of memory [1].

At last, fifthly, it is necessary to pay attention to that fact that the theory of "Memory spaces" (*les Lieux de Mémoire*) by Pierre Nora [11], – considering now in the context of preservation of cultural heritage, – repeats internal logic of appropriate section of the ancient Art of Memory.

We can assume that now the essence of the rhetorical Art of Memory finds the real expression in functioning of the modern museums. It is paradoxical: perhaps, the gallery described by Philostratus never existed, but the Art of Memory fixed in *The Imagines* found the material existence in the museum!

4.2. The *Imagines* as the textbook on the Art of Memory

The book was written by Philostratus in a genre of an ekphrasis. The dialogues before pictures happened between a rhetorician, the ten-year-old boy and a group of young men were written down there. It does probable the assumption that the text of *The Imagines* has a pedagogical focus, the book could be used as a manual on eloquence. Indirectly it is confirmed also by the fact that a large number of manuscripts of *The Imagines* remained: manuscripts of *The Imagines* remained almost as much as manuscripts of the *Odyssey* by Homer (74 and 75) [2. P. 5]. Certainly, in such quality the book could be used at numerous rhetorical schools during the Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages. However, there is a question: could the *Imagines* be used as the manual on another rhetorical discipline (besides an ekphrasis)?

There were five parts of rhetoric in the Hellenistic period: "invention" (Lat. *inventio*), "arrangement" (Lat. *dispositio*), "style" (Lat. *elocutio*), "memory" (Lat. *memoria*), "delivery" (Lat. *actio*). The *Imagines*, with its perfection of composition, clarity and beauty of style, certainly are the highest model of rhetorical art. This book could be the manual on all five parts of rhetorical education. Nevertheless, we shall stop only on the subject which is especially interesting for us – the Art of Memory.

Certainly, not simply good but the excellent memory is necessary for the good rhetorician. In the textbook on rhetoric – *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, – written by Cicero's contemporary, contains rather detailed description of the Art of Memory, or, more precisely, the "artificial memory" which is supplementing the natural memory.

"The artificial memory includes backgrounds and images [*Constat igitur artificiosa memoria ex locis et imaginibus*]. By backgrounds I mean such scenes as are naturally or artificially set off on a small scale, complete and conspicuous, so that we can grasp and embrace them easily by the natural memory for - example, house, an intercolumnar space, recess, an arch, or the like. An image is, as it were, figure, mark, or portrait of the object we wish to remember; for example, if we wish to recall a horse, lion, or an eagle, we must place its image in a definite background" [1. P. 208-209.], - wrote the teacher of rhetoric. So, the essence of the Art of Memory is an ability to orientate oneself quickly and precisely in the places of memory (these places may be invented or they may have a real existence – it is not important!). It is necessary to put images in these places and then extract them from there. Cicero has important data on the Art of Memory also: "... we must fancy many plain, distinct places at moderate distances, and such symbols as are impressive, striking, and well marked, so that they may present themselves to the mind, and act upon it with the greatest quickness" [4. P. 188].

Let's notice, how Philostratus's pictures (= *imaginibus*) are quickly depicted in mind! The structure of *The Imagines* which is so in detail studied by N. V. Braginska [3] is

capable to form the necessary set of places (=loci). And if the whole complex of the "instruments" of the Art of Memory is present in the Imagines, so we may suppose that this book, perhaps, was the manual on the Art of Memory.

5. CONCLUSION

As a result of this research we come to conclusion that The Imagines of the Elder Philostratus contain some elements of the Art of Memory. Moreover, the typological proximity of the book of Philostratus and the modern museum says that these elements are not a casual find or mere coincidence. The text of The Imagines, certainly, demands further studying in the direction of search of elements of the Art of Memory in it. Studying of The Imagines is resulted also by the assumption that Philostratus's book could be used as a peculiar pattern or a model for the organization of places (*loci*) and images (*imaginibus*) of memory. In this quality the book could be the ideal manual on one of sections of rhetoric: the Art of Memory. Detection of all elements of the Art of Memory in The Imagines will make possible the solution of a question of the place of this book in system of medieval education. Moreover, in case of confirmation of a hypothesis that The Imagines are manual on the Art of Memory we shall have an opportunity to expand our knowledge of philosophical and rhetorical researches of the Second Sophistic.

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