

TIME AND LIBERTARIAN CINEMA

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ABSTRACT

What is time and how is it to be thought? Is time the fullness of life or the red thread that runs through life? One of the most exciting approaches to this question is offered by the Prussian philosopher Immanuel Kant. Kant's views on time do not form a theory of time, yet they offer us very useful guidance, namely, to think both time and the subject. However, Kant's concept of time is not nearly as valuable as judgment. In this respect, one would have to speak of a degradation of time in Kant. But, that time is not an abstract (just as little as space) but significantly constitutes the subject, Kant has taught postmodernism and the present.

Time expresses itself differently, because life is manifold. Thus, filmmakers also each found their own expression for time in the image. A cinema that tries to save time from its hinges deserves more than ever the term of a libertarian cinema. Because it tries to think the time beyond the judgment.

Keywords: Time, Libertarian cinema, Video, Immanuel Kant, Gilles Deleuze, Ulus Baker.

INTRODUCTION

What is time? This question has its seat in the heart of philosophy, but it has also been answered differently by many artists. Is time linear or is it a labyrinth - as Proust depicts it in his works? Or perhaps it is a shell of existence or the principle of change? Immanuel Kant also gave some answers to this question, and quite useful ones at that. Kant did not define a theory of time, but the way he handled the concept of time in his "Critique of Pure Reason" (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 1781) shows under which inferences and values he perceives human beings and life. While the reason reigns nobly almost at the highest point of consciousness, time has been disqualified and is always the object of judgment. In "Critique of Pure Reason" Kant reflects on the value he attributes to time in terms of human life: The judgment of reason is superior to the life we interpret as time. On the other hand, for Kant, it is time that is not only a form of perception within us, but also in which we are, namely in which we live. Thus, time pervades us both internally and externally. It is also time that forms the content of our memory per se. Gilles Deleuze will note from Kant's analyses that it is time that subjectifies us. It is not logical forms of thought, such as judgment, that make us a subject - as Kant pretends, but it is time itself that divides us, connects us, changes us, or makes us find ourselves again.

Not only philosophy but also cinema points to the divisions within time itself. In this context, Ulus Baker in his studies on cinema has also tried to make visible the importance of problematic issues of time. Starting from Kant's Schematism chapter (in the "Critique of Pure Reason"), Baker thus tries to think video and cinema. Already Henri Bergson had tried to find

a cinematographic approach within the consciousness: It is the perception that is equal to a cinematographic apparatus in its function.

The article tries to give an insight into Kant's "theory of time" and the resulting problems in the conception of experience.

MAIN PART

We cannot speak of a theory of time in Immanuel Kant, since he does not offer us an objective concept of time, yet he does have a concept of time and it is to this that we will turn in the following. But first: Why is an illumination of Kant's concept of time important? After Kant, quite a few thinkers have referred to his theory of time, especially in postmodernism, above all through Gilles Deleuze's disputes, Kant's determinations about time received much attention again. Moreover, Kant has a very radical concept of time and thus was far ahead of his time. For Kant did not simply think of time in physical terms or try to give the physical concept of time a philosophical interpretation. His determinations on the concept of time were so groundbreaking that only the modernity with Gilles Deleuze could understand and judge his concept of time correctly, namely in the sense of appropriateness. Kant's concept of time is so radically new in its conception that it corresponds most closely to Rimbaud's radical concept of subject, namely *Je est un autre* - as Deleuze notes. In the following, we would like to take a closer look at this concept of time. Furthermore, we would like to take a closer look at other art forms such as film under the aspect of the concept of time.

In his Work "Critique of Pure Reason" Kant divides the apparatus of consciousness in two parts, a rational and pure one, the other empirical and confused. In the theory of consciousness, while the mind appears as the ability to judge, the concept of time is placed on the lowest ground with a hierarchical method, together with the emotions. While the first, that is reason, reigns nobly almost at the highest point of consciousness, time has been disqualified and is always the object of judgment. In his critique of pure reason, Kant reflects on the value he attributes to time in terms of human life: The judgment of reason is superior to the life we interpret as time.

In this sense, our judgment becomes the corset of life, our life and our emotions are stuck in the handcuffs of the mind. In the post-Kantian history of philosophy, the empirical world together with emotions, have lost value and have been overshadowed by taking a secondary role. Time has to bow before the judgment.

It was not until the turn of the century in the 20th century and then in postmodernism that empiricism and the level of feelings could regain importance. Many of these theories can be read as a response to Kant. In the German-speaking world the first of these philosophers to draw a line under Kant was Friedrich W. Nietzsche. Later it was the political thinker Gustav Landauer. More and more voices have rebelled against Kant's determinations of the pure and empirical, including the very best known for his Kant critiques in postmodernism, Gilles Deleuze. Although some of these determinations are radical and new in Kant's concept of time, still others reflect conventional thinking inherited from Kant. Let us now look further at how Kant defines time in the "Critique of Pure Reason".

TWO DIFFERENT FACULTIES: THE SENSUAL AND THE LOGICAL

Looking at Kant's works we have to speak of a duality of the faculties in Kant. In the history of tradition of philosophy Kant is not considered an idealist, he is rather called a constructivist. In his works Kant prefers a dualistic method: the pure is separated from mixed faculties, thinking from experience, the sensual from the logical, the analytic judgment from the synthetic, the understanding from reason, etc. In his work Critique of Pure Reason the concept of time experiences a degradation in comparison to the concept of judgment. The judgment not only enjoys a high rank, it is as if the whole sense of consciousness is attached to the production of a judgment. Kant separates consciousness into two realms, one is the realm where we make our experiences, the other where we determine these experiences.

The former is the empirical consciousness, the other the pure consciousness. The one is chaotic and scattered, the other is characterized by logicity. In empirical consciousness the subject feels, while in pure consciousness it thinks. In this respect Kant speaks of an I feel (Ich empfinde) in empirical consciousness and of an I think (Ich denke) in logical consciousness. In general, the mind is a faculty to judge, even thinking means to judge. The mind is the place of laws, regularities, necessities. It is the empirical ego that performs the determinable, but is not able to determine anything. Thus, the empirical ego provides the material for a determination of the self, namely as the object of a possible judgment. This judgment is to be thought of as an abstraction, thus the material of the sensitive world, in which the empirical I has its seat, becomes the object of self-consciousness. Moreover, Kant writes, the I think "must be able to accompany all my ideas." (Kant 1974) This means that each of my conceptions is in an identity with me, more precisely, I am the subject of these conceptions. Without this identity, the conceptions would not be mine. Thus, the I think also establishes a self-consciousness and constructs itself as a subject, because there is an "I am" to define. But let us take a closer look at how Kant defined this level of sensation.

THE TIME

The empirical I is always already in the world of the senses, that is on the level in which it lives. This is also the plane in which the subject moves and feels directly in time. We have already mentioned above that the subject is affected here. This affection of the appearances works only because the time makes this possible. Time experiences another significant determination in Kant, when he defines time as the mediation between being and thinking, namely as the "transcendental determination of time" (transzendente Zeitbestimmung). Kant also calls this transcendental determination of time the schematism of the mind.

It is as if we make all the experiences only so that they are formed into a possible judgment: Everything revolves around the I think, instead of I feel, I experience. The feeling I, is the subject of time, it is the experiencing, suffering subject. The thinking subject is the logical I. But why separate the two faculties? Why not bring them together? Why let them rival instead of seeing the strength in their connectedness? The reasons for this lie solely in Kant's determination of time. The level of experience, namely time, is far too chaotic and mixed for Kant. It needs the ordering of reason, the intervention and determining from above. In this respect we speak of a hierarchy of the faculties in Kant, in which the empirical I (also that level of time) does not enjoy a good rank. The experiences in the sensual will form a judgment: The empirical ego will be judged by the level of understanding. Logical thinking will, in the aftermath of experience, form a "I am so... or so..." judgment. There is no measure for this judgment, it is always the winning social values that give the judgment its ground.

Very often these values are simply decadent and hardly creative, indeed neither cheerful nor life-affirming. We can state that instead of an "I feel", the "I judge" (Rölli 2012) applies in Kant.

Deleuze agrees with Kant that time is the "form of all that changes and moves" (Deleuze 1990), however, for Deleuze, time is not only the internal form of the subject, but the subject is always already internal to time (Deleuze 2015). This insight, namely that the subject is always already within time, was already mentioned by Kant, although not in this form. But if the subject is internal to time, then the boundaries of a concept of subject become blurred. Because then it is the time, which subjectifies the individual (Deleuze 1992). It is Deleuze's merit to have seen in Kant's theory of time a radical subjectification, although it is his interpretation of Kant.

THE FILM AND THE VIDEO

The Schematism chapter has also fascinated the Turkish-Cypriot philosopher Ulus Baker. Starting from the "Critique of Pure Reason", Baker tries to gain categories for the video. For Baker, film works with images, while video reveals a capacity for schematizing (Baker 1993). Like Deleuze, Baker's determinations of seeing refer to Kant's difference between image and schema. While the image is the picture of something, the imagination does not produce finished images, but schemata. In Kant's Schematism chapter, schemata go to everything in space and time, especially as they are the mediation of thought and being. Baker focuses on video in this sense as a capacity to schematize spatiotemporal "things." According to Baker, we mostly look to the video, while we are watching the movie (Baker 1993). In this respect, the video makes us think, while the film thinks for us. Baker agrees with Kant that thinking contains a form of seeing, namely a way of thinking, which is expressed here in the schemata (Baker 1993). However, Baker does not think of the schemata as a closed concept, as they can multiply in different ways. From this it follows for him that the video will be a very futuristic medium.

Already Henri Bergson had tried to find a cinematographic approach in consciousness: It was the perception which was equal to a cinematographic apparatus in its function. Perception always selects and shows us only what we want to see in the image. This is roughly how a cinematographic recording of the camera functions. With Bergson, Deleuze demands to purify our perception from interest, that is, to cancel the selections of perception. However, this sounds like a learning process, because we are educated from childhood to certain social values and evaluations. To become aware of one's interest already in perception presupposes a counter-thinking against the prevailing values. Furthermore, with Deleuze, we are challenged to create images that reflect time in all its purity. For time is stronger than any conventional narration and actually bears no relation to the truth of a statement or thing. Time is beyond good and evil, it is - as mentioned above - the form of all that changes and moves. The director Andrei Tarkovsky in particular has been closest to this idea, especially in certain sequences of the film "Stalker". But also Ozu, Godard and Orson Welles, among others, have created films set beyond a classical narration. Time obeys no truth and no judgment - it stands in a beyond of social values and evaluations, as Nietzsche points out. Kant, however, tried to place the moral law over the time, where the experienced, the felt, all the states and the circumstances, degraded to objects of the reason. For time moves anarchistically, it writhes, bends, splits and flows in a direction we cannot predict. And to determine time in retrospect would be a post-rationalization that does not do justice to time. In a similar sense, the aforementioned directors have made films that have freed time from its joints. With

Tarkovsky, it is a matter of showing all the crystals of time; with Godard, of overturning the true models of the good; and with Orson Welles, of standing beyond good and evil, namely of liberating time from the discourse of the true and the good (Deleuze 1991). Ozu, in turn, creates images of time in *Banshun* or *Somo Yo No Tsuma* (Deleuze 1991), in which time itself spreads out in a preserving manner.

But this is precisely what constitutes a libertarian cinema: lifting time out of its joints, not basing the narration on the true or the good, separating time from "truth" and creating films questioning both values and evaluations, even suspecting its own interests. Beyond the representations, namely beyond what was or is socially valid, make other values visible. Following not the judgment but the I feel. The libertarian cinema is not a closed program but an open project (Kostelanetz 1996). An open project, in which time gets out of joint.

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