

The aim of my doctoral dissertation is to show the impact that visual arts can exert on literature. My analysis is based on the selected literary works of British fiction. I discuss the issue in the context of the Horatian tradition of *ut pictura poesis*. The subject of my analysis are the two modernist writers: Virginia Woolf and David Herbert Lawrence and one post-modernist writer: Deborah Moggach. My major concerns are the issues connected with the correspondence of arts, particularly the convergence of literature with the selected works of plastic arts, mostly paintings, but in the case of Lawrence also sculptures and architecture. In my analysis I am primarily concerned with close reading of selected novels and relating them to critical and literary essays and epistolary sources. In my dissertation Woolf's and Lawrence's literary output is represented by a number of selected novels, whereas Moggach's by one novel.

Virginia Woolf (1882 – 1941), an outstanding representative of the English modernist prose, was a pivotal figure in the Bloomsbury group. Her novels and essays are characterised by a deep insight into the psychology of the characters. In her experimental prose she also referred to the realms of the sister arts, such as music and painting. D.H. Lawrence (1885 – 1930), a leading English modernist novelist, short-story writer, poet, essayist and a painter, showed deep concern with visual arts, which is shown in his literary output. Deborah Moggach (b. 1948) is a living contemporary English novelist and filmscript writer. Of her nineteen novels two were made into films, among them *Tulip Fever* which is the subject of my analysis in the dissertation.

The choice of the writers resulted from the fact that in their novels they extensively apply ekphrasis in the form of a description of real life objects, a description of an imagined painting and a painterly representation in literary discourse of landscapes, cityscapes, seascapes and character portrayals.

Virginia Woolf and her interest in the sisterhood of arts, with special emphasis on her prose, is analysed in the dissertation on the basis of such novels as *Night and Day* (1919), *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and *The Waves* (1931). The main subject of my analysis of D.H. Lawrence's experiments with the application of visual arts into the realm of literature are his first four novels: *The White Peacock* (1911), *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920). The most recent voice in the

*ut pictura poesis* discourse is represented in the dissertation by Deboragh Moggach and her novel *Tulip Fever* (1999).

Following the postulate that visual and verbal arts are two branches growing out of the same stem, I adopt Elizabeth Jennings's reasoning that "the arts converge" (Jennings 1989: 97) and in doing so, they enter a dialogue through which they enrich each other. Although Jennings in her poem "Moving Together" refers the phrase to the intermedial connections between literature, painting and also music (Jennings 1989: 97), I am inclined to apply her pronouncement exclusively in the analysis of interrelations between literary and visual arts.

The idea underlying my approach derives from the perennial discussion concerning the sisterhood of arts which, initiated in antiquity, over the centuries has become the subject of literary and aesthetic debates, involving not only critics, but artists themselves as well as recipients of art. The concept that all arts have certain properties and in doing so resemble each other resulted in *ekphrasis* being treated not only as a rhetorical device, but as an autonomous literary genre.

The major objective of my dissertation is to show how the correspondence of arts can be applied in analysing the intermedial connections between two realms: literature and painting, and how the selected novels are immersed in and inspired by visual arts, especially painting. I am also concerned with the problem how the fictional discourse is permeated with painterly imagination of the authors and how it is shaped by strategies and techniques applied to the art of painting. In my dissertation I analyse how the history and tradition of Western European painting is reflected in the examined novels and essays, how the creative proximity of the writer and the painter reverberate in the respective works of fiction and in what way the world of the visual arts is reflected in fiction and incorporated into the structure of the novel.

Considering the dominant trends in the epochs when the discussed novels were written and published, they are formally related to modernism and post-modernism in literature and culture. Although the works of Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence have been the subject of various analyses, Moggach's novel has not been extensively researched so far. I conduct my analysis of their literary works in the context of their interrelation with visual arts on two levels: the level of the text and the level of the paratext.

At the level of the text I focus on ekphrastic descriptions, referring to ekphrasis in the broad sense of the word. I show how painterly techniques and strategies are applied to both the narrative discourse and descriptions in the novels. My analysis is based on close parallels

between a novelist on the one hand, and a painter or a sculptor on the other hand. The idea behind this strategy is to find justification for calling visual and literary “sister arts”. I am also interested in how the implied author as the teller of the story and observer of its setting adopts a painterly perspective and how they bring into the narrative painters or sculptors as fictitious characters and – by way of reference – real historical figures as well as descriptions of paintings and sculptures, either fictitious or real. In my analysis I am aware of the fact that the coalescence of visual and literary arts, by blurring the boundary lines between them, gives rise to a new aesthetic quality in fiction and that the novels under examination provide a fitting space for the ongoing dialogue between what the Greeks called *poesis* and *pictura*.

At the level of the paratext I am concerned with the novelist’s ideas referring to aesthetic issues, and the relations between literature and visual arts, especially painting. I analyse the influence of painting, particular painters, schools and trends in painting on the relevant literary output. I also underscore that the visual arts serve as an inspiration for the literary activity by referring to the texts documented in paratextual sources such as letters, diaries, autobiographical records and essays. I also present the artistic *milieu* of the novelists.

In my methodological approach I primarily focus on close reading of the texts, and intertextual and ekphrastic analysis of the novels and paintings regarded as two distinct texts which are involved in an intertextual dialogue. My approach is based on the historical analysis of the evolution of the awareness of the close affinity of the visual and verbal arts as well as the potential of the interrelatedness of the word with the picture. Thus in the examination the scope of the intertextual is broadened by the intermedial.