

Title	The logic of imagination : dialectics of objectification and signification
Sub Title	
Author	大石, 昌史(Oishi, Masashi)
Publisher	Centre for Advanced Research on Logic and Sensibility The Global Centers of Excellence Program, Keio University
Publication year	2012
Jtitle	CARLS series of advanced study of logic and sensibility Vol.5, (2011. ) ,p.345- 360
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	I. Study of Logic and Sensibility  Part 5 : Logic and Informatics
Genre	Research Paper
URL	<a href="https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=KO12002001-20120224-0345">https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=KO12002001-20120224-0345</a>

慶應義塾大学学術情報リポジトリ(KOARA)に掲載されているコンテンツの著作権は、それぞれの著作者、学会または出版社/発行者に帰属し、その権利は著作権法によって保護されています。引用にあたっては、著作権法を遵守してご利用ください。

The copyrights of content available on the KeiO Associated Repository of Academic resources (KOARA) belong to the respective authors, academic societies, or publishers/issuers, and these rights are protected by the Japanese Copyright Act. When quoting the content, please follow the Japanese copyright act.

## 33

# The Logic of Imagination: Dialectics of Objectification and Signification

*Masashi Oishi*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Aesthetics, Keio University

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate that the imagination mediates between the sensibility (intuition) and the understanding (concept), and therefore it represents not only real or imaginative objects but also the transcendental relationships between subject and object, or the inner and the outer. This representing or presenting function of the imagination depends on the dialectic movement of correlation and self-reflection of consciousness. In the process of imagination (image-forming and -symbolizing), the consciousness moves correlatively between subject and object for image-objectification, and it moves self-reflectively between the inner and the outer for image-signification.

In the first part, “The logic<sup>1</sup> of self-forming form,” I introduce Kiyoshi Miki’s theory of the logic of imagination as that of *form*. Inspired by Kant’s transcendental theory of imagination, Miki synthesizes *logos* and *pathos* through *poiēsis* as *active intuition*. I think this wide-ranging grasp of imagination may be understood as follows. In the process of imagination, in contrast to the production of real things, images are, at the same time, produced and received. Therefore the image-forming activity is understood as

---

<sup>1</sup>. In this paper, the term ‘logic’ is used not for the way of thinking or reasoning, but for the transcendently structured and regulated movement of consciousness and the principles of object-forming and -signifying based on this movement.

*auto-poiēsis*, where *making* images and *seeing* them as such, or the objectification of images and the signification (interpretation) of them, are one and the same.

In the second part, “Two kinds of representation,” I analyze Kant’s theory of the transcendental structure of *schema* and *symbol*. Through the image-forming activity, which depends on the apperception of consciousness, images are determined as direct denotative appearances of concepts according to *schemata*. On the other hand, through the image-symbolizing activity, which depends on self-reflective understanding, images are found as figurative representatives of abstract concepts, and the images become *symbols* as connotative analogues to these concepts. Therefore the two kinds of representation through the schema and the symbol are understood as the denotative-formative representation and the connotative-figurative representation respectively.

In the third part, “Dialectics of objectification and signification,” based on the preceding study of the two kinds of representation, I argue about five modes of the dialectic function of imagination, which are classified into three larger categories: figurative objectification, imaginative world-making, and depersonalized configuration. The five modes of imagination are, in short: a) figurative self-reflection, b) empathic objectification, c) space-time extension, d) associative composition, and e) the interlacement of being and meaning. These are, at the same time, correspondent to five examples of basic relationships between subject and object, the inner and the outer, or things and ideas. To explain these five modes, I analyze five basic theories about the function of consciousness: *self-reflection*, *empathy*, *coexistence and succession*, *association*, and *constellation* [configuration].

Based on these analyses and considerations, in the “Conclusion” I will demonstrate that “the creative field of artistic imagination” is opened through the movement of correlative and self-reflective consciousness between the outer things and the inner ideas. In the real world, in contrast to the imaginative world, a fundamental gap exists between *making* and *seeing*, or *hand* and *eye* for a human being. In the process of art-making, this gap compels the artist to become conscious of the dialectic process of objectification and signification, and this gap opens the creative field of artistic imagination where the active consciousness moves correlatively and self-reflectively between *hand* and *eye*, object and subject, or the outer and

the inner. Through this creative process of art-making, a new relationship between these correlatives is found and perceived, and this newly found relationship is realized in an artwork as a newly formed symbol or signified object in the real world.

## I. The logic of self-forming form

### 1. Synthesis of *logos* and *pathos* through *poiēsis*

First I introduce Kiyoshi Miki's (Japanese philosopher, 1897–1945) theory of 'the logic of imagination' as 'the logic of form [*katachi*].' Inspired by Kant's transcendental theory of imagination, Miki synthesizes *logos* and *pathos* through *poiēsis* as *active intuition*, and applies the logic of imagination to the areas of *mythos*, *nomos*, *technē* and *experience*. He affirms the intermediate position of imagination between sensibility and understanding, based on Kant's theory of transcendental schema and aesthetic judgment.

Miki explains his theory of imagination in the preface of *The Logic of Imagination*, Vol.1 [Japanese] (1939)<sup>2</sup> as follows. "Since the publication of my last book, *Philosophy of History* [Japanese] (1932) I have been thinking about this question: how can the objective and the subjective, the rational and the irrational, or the intellectual and the emotive, be combined? At that time I formulated this problem as the unity of *logos* and *pathos*, and analyzed the logical elements and the pathetic elements in historical things" (*Complete Works*, Vol.8, p.4). Indeed "to think of the unity of *logos* and *pathos* as the dialectic unity of the opposites is not false, but it is all too formalistic" (p.5). Then Miki sought to answer the question: "where is the unity of the logical and the pathetic found concretely?" and he "remembered that Kant recognized the function of imagination as uniting the understanding and the sensibility" (ibid.). Then Miki arrived at "the theory of the logic of imagination" as "the philosophy of act" (p.5f.). He thinks that "every act contains the meaning of making or producing in a broad sense" (p.7), whereas "everything that is made, has a form" (ibid.). "Therefore to act is to transform

---

<sup>2</sup> Kiyoshi Miki, *Koso-ryoku no Ronri* [*The Logic of Imagination*], I/II, 1939/1946. In: *Miki Kiyoshi Zensyu* [Kiyoshi Miki, *Complete Works*], Vol. 8, Iwanami-shoten, 1967. English translation is my own.

things and to make a new form” (ibid.). “That the form, as something made through an act, changes itself historically,” is “not only the objective matter, but the unity of the objective and the subjective, that is, the unity of idea and reality, being and becoming, or time and space” (ibid.).

Miki’s book, *The Logic of Imagination* was left unfinished, and consequently his analysis of the logic of imagination, although wide-ranging, is not fully developed, and his account represents only the framework of an applied theory of imagination. The imagination is generally determined to be the faculty of representation, but Miki did not sufficiently examine the functions of the imagination as such. Therefore I will try to explain the transcendental structure in which the imagination performs intermediary functions between sensibility and understanding, or objectification and signification. In the following I will examine the intermediary placement of imagination by Kant, the productive receptivity of the creative imagination, and Kant’s determination of *schema* and *symbol*, and thereafter I will show my understanding of the logic of imagination as the logic of not only *form* but also *figure*, which transcendently mediates between intuition and concept, making and seeing, and objectification and signification.

## **2. Intermediacy of imagination: *intuition* and *concept***

Immanuel Kant explains the intermediacy of imagination from the view of transcendental philosophy. In *The Critique of Pure Reason* [*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*] (1781, 1787[2<sup>nd</sup> ed.]),<sup>3</sup> Kant places the imagination [Einbildungskraft] between the sensibility [Sinnlichkeit] and the understanding [Verstand], or the intuition [Anschauung] and the concept [Begriff]. Specifically, he affirms the synthesizing power of imagination in the cognitive process. According to Kant, “all union of representations [Vorstellungen] requires unity of consciousness in the synthesis of them” (p.50R/S.137),<sup>4</sup> and

<sup>3</sup>. Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 1781, 1787 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.]. English translation by J.M.D. Meiklejohn: Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, in: Great Books of the Western World, 39 *KANT*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago 1952, 1990 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.].

<sup>4</sup>. For the numbers in parentheses after the quotations, the former number (ex. p.50R [‘R’ means the right column of the page.]) designates the page of the English translation, the latter (ex. S.137 [‘S’ is the abbreviation of ‘Seite’ in German, which means ‘page.’]) designates the page of the original German text.

“the synthesis of representations rests upon the imagination; their synthetical unity (which is requisite to a judgment), upon the unity of apperception [Apperzeption]” (p.66L/S.194).

However, there remains some ambiguity about the status of imagination in Kant’s account. Thus Martin Heidegger, in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* [*Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*] (1929),<sup>5</sup> tries to show explicitly that the “transcendental power of imagination” is the common “root [Wurzel] of sensibility and understanding” (§27B p.98/S.140). According to Heidegger, the transcendental imagination can synthesize the sensibility and the understanding, because it not only works between them, but it is also their common root. Therefore the imagination includes, at the same time, the passive and receptive function of sensibility and the active and determinative function of understanding.

### 3. Productive receptivity: identity of *making* and *seeing*

It is well known that Aristotle divides the sciences into “the theoretical [*theorētikē*], which aim at knowledge for its own sake, the practical [*praktikē*], which aim at knowledge as a guide to conduct, and the productive [*poiētikē*], which aim at knowledge to be used in making something useful or beautiful” (Ross, p.62).<sup>6</sup> But in the process of imagination as *poiēsis* or *active intuition*, images are produced and received at the same time, that is, *making* some images is *seeing* them as such. In this process of self-productive or creative imagination, which appears typically but unregulatedly in dreaming, ‘what it makes’ and ‘what it sees’, or ‘what it objectifies’ and ‘what it signifies,’ are one and the same. If such an act of imagination is grasped as a kind of *poiēsis*, it should be understood as *auto-poiēsis*<sup>7</sup> (self-forming), where the formed image cannot be separated from the image-

<sup>5</sup>. Martin Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1929, 1991 [5<sup>th</sup> ed.]. English translation by Richard Taft: Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1997.

<sup>6</sup>. David Ross, *Aristotle*, Methuen & Co.Ltd., London 1923, 1949 [5<sup>th</sup> ed.], p.62. And see Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, 1025b19–28.

<sup>7</sup>. For the biological meaning of ‘auto-poiēsis,’ see H.R. Maturana and F.J. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition: the Realization of the Living*, D. Reidel, Dordrecht 1980.

forming activity, and the significance of the image cannot be separated from the image-signifying or -interpreting activity. In this way, the productivity of imagination is understood as productive receptivity or receptive productivity.

## II. Two kinds of representation: *schema* and *symbol*

### 1. Image-forming as schematic objectification

In *The Critique of Judgment* [*Kritik der Urteilkraft*] (1790),<sup>8</sup> Kant distinguishes the two kinds of *presentation* [Darstellung] or *representation* [Vorstellung]: *schematic* and *symbolic*. These are, at the same time, two functions of the imagination. According to Kant, “All *hypotyposis* (presentation, *subjectio sub adspectu*) as a rendering in terms of sense, is twofold. Either it is *schematic*, as where the intuition corresponding to a concept comprehended by the understanding is given *a priori*, or else it is *symbolic*, as where the concept is one which only reason can think, and to which no sensible intuition can be adequate. In the latter case the concept is supplied with an intuition such that the procedure of judgement in dealing with it is merely analogous to that which it observes in schematism” (p.547L/S.255).

About the *schema* which mediates between the concept and the intuition, Kant explains, in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, as follows. “It is clear that there must be some third thing, which on the one side is homogeneous with the category, and with the phenomenon on the other, and so makes the application of the former to the latter possible. This mediating representation must be pure (without any empirical content), and yet must on the one side be *intellectual*, on the other *sensuous*. Such a representation is the *transcendental schema*” (p.61R/S.177). “It is evident that although the schemata of sensibility are the sole agents in realizing the categories, they do, nevertheless, also restrict them, that is, they limit the categories by conditions which lie beyond the sphere of understanding – namely, in sensibility. Hence the

---

<sup>8</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilkraft*, 1790. English translation by James Creed Meredith: Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, in: Great Books of the Western World, 39 KANT, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago 1952, 1990 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.].

schema is properly only the phenomenon, or the sensuous conception of an object in harmony with the category” (p.63R/SS.185–186).

## **2. Image-symbolizing as figurative signification**

Through the schematic function of imagination, images are determined as sensory objectification of concepts, and on the other hand, through the symbolic function, images are found as analogical representatives of concepts, and they become symbols of these concepts. Kant explains, in *The Critique of Judgment*, “Schemata contain direct, symbols indirect, presentations of the concept. Schemata effect this presentation demonstratively, symbols by the aid of an analogy (for which recourse is had even to empirical intuitions), in which analogy judgement performs a double function: first in applying the concept to the object of a sensible intuition, and then, secondly, in applying the mere rule of its reflection upon that intuition to quite another object, of which the former is but the symbol” (p.547L/S.256).

From the viewpoint of the relationship between the meaning (concept) and the image (intuition), the schematic and the symbolic representation is understood as follows. i) The schematic representation is the intuitive and substantive representation, which depends on the synchronic and correlative relationship between the meaning and the image. ii) The symbolic representation is the conceptual and relational representation, which depends on the diachronic and reverse or alternate relationship between the meaning and the image. In the process of symbolization, the image, which has already been formed as such through the schematic objectification, is changed in the meaning from the original concept to a similar one. It is neither transformed nor changed in its objectified form. If images were transformed through symbolization, they would become different images. Therefore the process of image-symbolizing is understood as that of the figurative or metaphorical signification of the image. In contrast, the process of image-forming is understood as that of the plain or literal objectification of the image.

## **3. The denotative-formative and the connotative-figurative representation**

The relationship between the plain or literal objectification and the figurative or metaphorical signification of the image corresponds to the relationship between the *denotation* and the *connotation*.<sup>9</sup> The reproductive image-forming activity, as the representation of an already existent object, depends



on the preceding sense perception of that object and the memory and recollection of this sense perception. In this way, in the ordinary process of image-signifying (-interpreting), the denotative meaning, which designates an object as the *extension* of a concept, precedes the connotative meaning, which implies properties of an object as the *intension* of a concept. In contrast, the self-productive image-forming activity, which lacks an already existent object for the representation, is performed according to the connotative or intensional meaning of the concept. It may sound paradoxical, but in the case of self-productive imagination, the connotation precedes the denotation, as the will for image-forming precedes the formed image as its product.

However, even if the will precedes the product, our restricted imagination cannot create from nothing, *ex nihilo*. We can only produce or change a phenomenal *figure*, not an essential *form*. Therefore the self-productive imagination should be understood as the figurative imagination that transfigures a form of an object into a figure for its own productive representation. The form itself has been already represented through the act of reproductive imagination. Here, to transfigure is to change the form (what it is) into the figure (what it looks like or what it means), that is, to transfer the meaning of the image from the denotation (form) to the connotation (figure), or to turn the image of an existing object (form) into the metaphor of a non-existing object (figure). Thus the process of imagination, including the image-forming and the image-symbolizing activity, consists of two stages, either of which may precede the other: the denotative-formative representation and the connotative-figurative representation.

### III. Dialectics of objectification and signification

Here I argue about five modes (a-e) of the dialectic function of imagination, which are classified into three larger categories: 1) figurative objectification (the un-differentiation of being and meaning), 2) imaginative world-making (the differentiation), and 3) depersonalized configuration (the unity). The

---

<sup>9</sup> For 'denotation' and 'connotation,' see Roland Barthes, *Le Degré Zéro de L'Écriture: suivi de Éléments de Sémiologie*, Gonthier, Paris 1964.

five modes of imagination are explained in relation to the following five basic theories: a) *self-reflection*, b) *empathy*, c) *coexistence* and *succession*, d) *association*, and e) *constellation* [configuration], which, at the same time, correspond to five examples of basic relationships between subject and object, the inner and the outer, or things and ideas.

### **1. Figurative objectification: the reverse relationship between subject and object**

#### **a) Figurative self-reflection: the self-image represented in a mirror of mind**

In the dialectic process of objectification and signification, the consciousness reflects itself and represents the figurative self-image ‘narcissistically’ in a mirror of mind. As an example of the primary *self-reflection*, here I take up a famous Greek myth which is the source of *narcissism*. Publius Ovidius Naso, in *Metamorphoses* (A.D.1-8),<sup>10</sup> tells the story of Narcissus as follows. A beautiful boy loved his reflection on the surface of a spring, he suffered from the impossibility of touching it, and he declined gradually and died. In connection with this story, Sigmund Freud, in *An Introduction to Psychoanalysis* [*Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse*] (1917),<sup>11</sup> Lect.26, calls the unity of the desire of self and the sexual libido the *primary narcissism*. However, the story of Narcissus by Ovidius shows that the narcissistic desire of himself (the self) is, at the same time, the fetishistic desire for his reflected figure (object). Therefore narcissism and fetishism are in a dialectic reverse relationship of subject and object, through the mirror-reflection.

Jacques Lacan, in *Écrits* (1966),<sup>12</sup> speaks of the mirror-reflection of the self in his description of the *stage of the mirror* [*stade du miroir*], in which a growing infant has learned to identify his reflection in a mirror with his own appearance. A more grown-up infant or a child will be able to understand that the reflected figure of himself in a mirror is the same as the image

<sup>10</sup> Publius Ovidius Naso, *Metamorphoses*, A.D.1-8. Japanese translation by Zenya Nakamura, *Henshin Monogatari*, I/II, Iwanami-bunko, 1981/1984.

<sup>11</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse*, 1917. (In: Sigmund Freud, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd.XI, Imago Publishing, London 1940.)

<sup>12</sup> Jacques Lacan, *Écrits*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris 1966.

of himself that appears to other people. In this mirror-conscious reverse relationship between subject and object, the outer reflected figure (image) is the appearance of the self. There ‘what it is’ is ‘what it appears,’ and the being of the image is not differentiated from the meaning of it. But as self-consciousness develops in the child, he becomes aware that ‘what it looks like’ can be different from ‘what it is,’ and the meaning of the reflected figure for himself is not the same as for the others. In this way, a mirror of mind makes a human being become conscious that the outer reflected figure appears as the self, but has different meanings from the inside (for himself) and the outside (for others).

### **b) Empathic objectification: the inner feeling represented in the outer object**

Here I introduce the theory of *empathy* as the basis of the figurative objectification which depends on the object-concentrated or ‘fetishistic’ reverse relationship between subject and object. Theodor Lipps, in *An Introduction to Psychology* [*Leifaden der Psychologie*] (1903, 1909[3<sup>rd</sup> ed.]),<sup>13</sup> defines “empathy [Einfühlung]” in a broad sense as “objectification of the self in a different object” (S.222), that is, “to experience that the inner act of the self belongs to the apperceived object, or consists in that object as its element” (S.223). The “general apperceptive empathy [allgemeine apperzeptive Einfühlung],” which underlies his theory of empathy, is defined as follows. “By bringing all objects, in their particularity and limitations, into the possession of the subject, the general apperceptive empathy is the penetration of the activity or life of the subject into the objects” (S.224). Johannes Volkelt, in *The Aesthetic Consciousness* [*Das ästhetische Bewusstsein*] (1920),<sup>14</sup> determines that the “objective feeling” found in the object through empathy is the “represented feeling [vorgestelltes Gefühl],” and empathy is “the objectification of the subjective feeling” in the object.

In such *empathy*, the subject correlates with the object, and the feeling, which is brought into the object through the apperception of consciousness by the subject, is felt in the object as its own. In this process, the conscious-

---

<sup>13</sup> Theodor Lipps, *Leifaden der Psychologie*, Wilhelm Engelmann, Leipzig 1903, 1909[3<sup>rd</sup> ed.]. English translation is my own.

<sup>14</sup> Johannes Volkelt, *Das ästhetische Bewusstsein*, C.H.Beck, München 1920.

ness reverses its self-reflective intention from itself (the inner) to the object (the outer). Through this reverse operation, the object becomes the representation of the inner feeling with some kind of objective concreteness. This represented or objectified feeling in the object is not a reference or denotation of the object as sign. But it has a kind of connotative meaning, because the feeling gives reality to the object, and such reality is significant for the subject; that is, it signifies some relationship between subject and object. In this way, through the emotionally correlative and reverse relationship between subject and object by empathy, the ‘objectified feeling’ becomes ‘the inner meaning of the outer object’.

## **2. Imaginative world-making: the inter-relationship of things and ideas**

### **c) Space-time extension: the coexistent and the successive relationships between things**

Here I introduce Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s comparative theory of so-called spatial and temporal art, which is based on the difference between *coexistence* and *succession* of things, as a fundamental conditioning theory of imaginative world-making. Lessing, in *Laokoon* (1766),<sup>15</sup> Chap.16, explains the difference between painting as spatial art and poetry as temporal art as follows. “If it is true that painting and poetry in their imitations make use of entirely different means or signs — the first, namely, of form and colour in space, the second of articulated sounds in time — if these signs indisputably require a suitable relation to the things signified, then it is clear that signs arranged in coexistence [nebeneinander] can only express objects of which the wholes or parts coexist; while successive signs can only express objects of which the wholes or parts are themselves successive [aufeinander]” (p.91/S.114). “Objects whose wholes or parts coexist are called bodies. Consequently, bodies with their visible properties are the peculiar objects of painting” (ibid.). Meanwhile, “Objects whose wholes and parts are succes-

---

<sup>15</sup> Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laokoon, oder Über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie*, 1766. (Reclam Universal-Bibliothek Nr.271, Philipp Reclam Jun. Stuttgart 1964.) *Selected Prose Works of G.E. Lessing*, edited by Edward Bell, G.Bell & Sons, Ltd., London 1913. English translation is based on that by E.C. Beasley in the Edward Bell book, but some words are translated differently in accordance with the context of this paper.

sive are called actions. Consequently, actions are the peculiar objects of poetry” (ibid.). In this way, through the use of different signs, painting and poetry are created as different kinds of art, with the former representing the coexistent, spatial imaginative world, and the latter representing the successive, temporal one.

But, as Lessing points out, “all bodies do not exist in space only, but also in time” (p.91/S.114). Further, “actions cannot exist by themselves, they must depend on certain beings” (p.91/SS.114–115). Therefore space and time correlate with each other, and then the world of objective things appears as four-dimensional. But the world, both the real and the imaginative, has more than these four dimensions in space and time. In the world, a sign is not only used literally, but also metaphorically, and the meaning of the sign has not only a denotation, but also a connotation. Then, besides the objectification, the signification forms another, fifth or inner dimension of the world. The world, in which we live, is not only the physical world which is formed as an aggregation of objective things extended in space and time, but also the historical world which is interpreted as the story of significant events, in which things are interrelated with each other.

#### **d) Associative composition: the analogous and the contiguous relationships between ideas**

As the second example of the basic theory of imaginative world-making, I introduce the *association* of ideas and its developed form, which is applied to composition in linguistics and semiotics, and explains sentence-making as a *selection* and *combination* of words into a linear structure. David Hume propounded resemblance, contiguity, and causation as three principles of the association of ideas.<sup>16</sup> But in the process of his argumentation, the last as-

---

<sup>16</sup> See David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739/1740. Book I, ‘Of the Understanding,’ Part I, Section IV, etc.. (David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature: A Critical Edition*, edited by David Fate Norton, Mary J. Norton, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2007.) Hume’s association theory can be regarded as a kind of logic of imagination, but he uses the concept of ‘imagination’ so widely as ‘consciousness’ which includes understanding and passion. By ‘association’ Hume explains the relationship between ideas, impressions, or ideas and impressions, but his theory lacks an explanation of the image-forming process. Therefore, I think, Kant’s theory of imagination is a fundamental theory, with which I should begin my analysis of imagination in this paper.

sociative relationship, *causation*, is reduced to the former two relationships, *resemblance* and *contiguity*.<sup>17</sup> These two were then developed in association psychology and extended in linguistics by Roman Jakobson as widely applicable pairs of principles: *selection* and *combination*, *paradigm* and *syntagm*, and *metaphor* and *metonymy*.<sup>18</sup>

As images are selected and combined in the process of dreaming, in the process of sentence-making (composition), words are selected and combined according to the two kinds of association by the resemblance (analogy) and the contiguity (succession) of ideas. In this way, the sentence, as the representation of things and events, is composed through the cross-relationship of the selection and the combination of words corresponding to ideas. Through the paradigmatic selection of words, the referred things are externally determined, and through the syntagmatic combination of words, the relationships between things are internally determined in the sentence. In contrast to the direct image-forming in dreaming, in the process of indirect image-forming which depends on this sentence-making, through the selection of words, the referred things are represented to us as images, and through the combination of words, the relationships between things come to consciousness as the meanings of images. In this way, the selection and the combination of words correspond to the objectification and the signification of images. In the dialectic process of objectification and signification, a new combination of selected words generates a new relationship between things, and, in reverse, a newly found relationship between things requires an irregular or figurative use of words, which turns the denotative image into the connotative symbol. Therefore, in imaginative world-making, the sentence-making activity is the sense-making activity, and the composition of sentence is the signification (making-sense) of things.

### **3. Depersonalized configuration: synthesis of objectification and signification**

#### **e) Interlacement of being and meaning: the nexus of inner and outer events**

As the final example of the basic theory of the dialectic relationship between

---

<sup>17</sup> See David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book I, Part III, Section XV.

<sup>18</sup> See Roman Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances", in: *Fundamentals of Language: Roman Jakobson, Selected Writings II*, The Hague 1971.

objectification and signification, I introduce the concept of *constellation* as depersonalized configuration. Hayao Kawai (Japanese psychologist, 1928–2007), in *The Psychology of Image* [Japanese] (1991),<sup>19</sup> explains Carl Gustav Jung's concept of *constellation*<sup>20</sup> as follows. Jung called a “constellation” a correspondence in which “the inner psychological situation is correlated to the outer environmental situation,” or “the inner and the outer things form an integrated image together” (p.94). “There are some ‘archetypes’ behind the constellation, and through them we can grasp the meaning of phenomena” (p.79). “A constellation is not a cause or an effect of phenomena, but it is formed as such by itself. It is synchronically disposed, so it cannot be explained diachronically as a causal successive relationship” (p.94).

The *constellation* is explained in the psycho-analytical context as such, but here, in the context of *figure* and *figuration*, I use *configuration* as a technical term for explaining the depersonalized function of imagination. The relationship, *configuration* as constellating figuration, connects things (figures) which lack a causal relationship with each other, and contains in itself various things which cannot be reduced to the principle of identity. This configurative relationship lacks unity in the schematic denotative objectification, and cannot be represented as a logically constant form. Consequently it appears as a depersonalized inter-relationship without a subject objectifying it. Generally the objectified relationship differs in appearance according to the position or the perspective of the one (subject) who perceives it. But this configurative relationship lacks an observer who perceives the causal relationship of the successive events from outside. Therefore, in the configuration, the outer and the inner events are interlaced with each

---

<sup>19</sup> Hayao Kawai, *Image no Shinri-gaku* [Psychology of Image], Seido-sya, 1991. English translation is my own. See also Carl Gustav Jung, *Synchronizität als ein Prinzip akausaler Zusammenhänge*, 1952. (English translation: *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle*, in: Carl G. Jung, *Collected Works*, vol.8, edited by H. Read et al., translated by R.F.C. Full, Pantheon Books, New York 1960.)

<sup>20</sup> Walter Benjamin also uses the concept of ‘constellation’ to explain the relationship between the idea and its phenomenon. See Walter Benjamin, *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, 1928. (Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd.I-1. Herausgegeben von R.Tiedemann und H.Schweppenhäuser, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1974.)

other, not causally but mutually or reversibly. And then the configurative relationship appears as a self-identified figure of the inter-related things and ideas, which is based on the fundamental interlacement of being and meaning in the comprehensive event that includes subject and object, the inner and the outer, things and ideas together.<sup>21</sup>

## Conclusion: the creative field of artistic imagination

The imagination, which includes the two processes of image-forming (objectifying) and image-symbolizing (signifying), is based on the two kinds of representation: the denotative-formative representation through the schema, and the connotative-figurative representation through the symbol. In such processes of imagination, the objectification and the signification of image are dialectically related to each other, and I have argued about five modes of dialectics of objectification and signification. Through these analyses and considerations, I think, it is demonstrated that the correlative and the self-reflective relationship between subject and object, or the inner and the outer, is actualized by the imagination as a dialectic process of objectification and signification.

However, real artwork is not produced in the imaginative world, but in the real world. Artwork is not made through the mere representation of imagination, but through the art as real practical activity. According to Judaism and Christianity, God creates the world from nothing, *creatio ex nihilo*; therefore the making and the seeing are one and the same for God. But, for a human being, only in the self-productive imagination are the making and the seeing the same. Therefore, there is a kind of gap between the imagination which forms and signifies images, and the art which makes artworks in practice. In the real practical world, a fundamental gap exists between *making* and *seeing*, *hand* and *eye*, or production and judgment, for a human

---

<sup>21</sup> See Masashi Oishi, "The Interlacement of Being and Meaning in Aesthetic Experience: the Genesis of the Self-signifying Image through an Associative and Empathic Understanding of Artwork," in *Corners of the Mind: Classical Traditions, East and West*, edited by N. B. McLynn, S. Nakagawa, T. Nishimura, Keio University Press, 2007.



being. But this gap evokes the artistic imagination in the artist, and originates the artistic creation which is beyond the limit of representation. If the artistic imagination, as *active intuition* in a broad sense, correlates not only with the inner represented images, but also with the real images produced by the practical art of making, and thus bridges the fundamental gap between making and seeing in the real world, then the artwork can be created like the work (creature) of God.<sup>22</sup>

In the process of art-making, the fundamental gap compels the artist become conscious of the movement of correlation and self-reflection of consciousness and the dialectic process of objectification and signification of imagination, as the process of trial and error of making something new. Then the artistic imagination, or the artistically self-productive consciousness, moves correlatively and self-reflectively between *hand* and *eye*, object and subject, or the outer and the inner, and moves across the consciousness and the unconsciousness, or the known ideas and the unknown reality. And this crossover movement opens the field of artistic creation between the *hand* for making outer things and the *eye* for seeing inner ideas. This creative field of the artistic imagination spreads across the real and the imaginative worlds. In this field, the being and the meaning of image are interlaced with each other, and a new relationship between subject and object, the inner and the outer, or things and ideas is found and perceived by the artist. Then, through the practical artistic production, this newly found relationship is realized in the artwork as a newly formed symbol or signified object for other people to perceive in the real and also the imaginative world.

---

<sup>22</sup> See Masashi Oishi, "Gedanken über die Wirklichkeit des Kunstwerks im Spiel," in *Selected Papers of the 15th International Congress of Aesthetics (Japan 2001)*, Tokyo 2003.

\* This paper is an expanded and revised version of that which was read at the XVIII International Congress of Aesthetics in China (Beijing) on 9th August 2010.