

Aesthetic Energy as the Source of Creation: on the Problem of Person's Artistic and Aesthetic, Spiritual and Moral Development in the Contemporary System of Education

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Abstract. The article considers the problem of artistically aesthetic and spiritually moral formation of a person necessary for its harmonious life in the "Man-World" system. The author is sure that the aesthetic energy acquired during education is one of the conditions for harmony. This energy directs person's attention to a constant search for beauty, good and to creation in the space of culture. The possibilities of forming an aesthetic attitude to reality, accumulating aesthetic experience and forming the channels for creative-aesthetic communication are analyzed in the article. The author gives a special attention to creating an artistic educational environment in which the aesthetic energy accumulates promoting person's creative formation and development and directing it to creation.

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Introduction

According to modern science and radioactive dating, 4.5 million years ago man began to open our wonderful planet. He accumulated and hand down from generation to generation knowledge and skills. He explored the world and tried to comprehend his own place in it. On this way he displayed his unique creative gift, his ability to create a second nature, to make and preserve values which formed the depository of the world culture. Today it stores the greatest samples of philosophical thought, unexcelled pieces of art, scientific discoveries and technical achievements which quite recently were considered science fiction. From the early manifestations of his creative gift man amazes not only by how persistently he discovers the world around but also by his ability to see and recreate beauty, to search and find new viewpoints for cognition and self-actualization. Ancient rock paintings, the items of everyday life and adornments found by archeologists and the mythological images and subjects, where the good and evil fight, speak well for it. No matter how terrible and bloody this battle is, man always believes in the victory of good which he associates with beauty for ages [1]. This is how art enters man's life being a way to comprehend the world and his place in it. Man implements in art his need to express joy, suffering, the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat. Art forms the historical memory of nations, countries and the whole mankind. Aesthetic and ethical principles coexist in a common spiritual space directing its way and inspiring it to philosophical thinking about the essence of being: be it Spinoza's ethical postulates [2],

where man's perfection is connected with beauty, joy and happiness, famous theses of Pico della Mirandola [3], who lauds man's creative essence, the utopian ideas of Thomas More [4], who sought to create an ideal state system, the thoughts of N. Machiavelli "of cruelty and clemency, and whether it is better to be loved than feared" [5, 64], or the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau [6], who retired on the island of Saint-Pierre in the lake Bienne to see and understand how beautiful is the world around him. Today every man continues this eternal way of spiritual searching impelled by the quenchless thirst and shortage of cognition which can be satisfied by educational system. It should provide a "food" of high quality which meets the needs of contemporary man who wants to implement his creative potential the more effectively the better. Besides, he aspires to success in his profession, other people's recognition and self-respect. It is necessary that during education every young person understands: "it is never too late become what you might have been" [7, 1]. He should acquire not only a great volume of knowledge and skills, and become an expert but also faith in himself. He should understand that he is a creator who determines both his own fate and the fate of his relatives, friends, his country and the planet. All this is very important for every creative personality because this is the only way to reach harmony in the "Man-World" system. That is why educational system is constantly directed to improving the quality of professional training for future scientists, engineers and the workers of art and culture. In scientific community, they do not stop to discuss the problem of training truly educated people

who could be really called the creators of culture in the 21st century. They discuss a wide range of subjects to be proficient in, the ways to competitiveness on the present-day labour market, the readiness to overcome obstacles and to resolve conflicts. Besides, they ascertain innovative educational and information technologies [8] which reflect the main trends in world educational systems and promote their improvement. The goal of this article is to find “tools” to increase the quality of modern education and to improve educational systems.

Methods

It is quite true that the most important indicators of work of every educational institution are the number of graduates, the demand for the on the labour market, their professional success and, consequently, their self-identification as active participants in the life of modern society and the necessary, useful and respected members of society. Let us turn to the experience of The Russian State Social University which is the leader of social education in Russia. Its slogan consists of three points: Professionalism, Responsibility and Prestige. This slogan constantly reminds all the members of educational process that, besides purely professional goals, the system of education includes one very important function: to foster a person with high social responsibility, ethical principles (closely connected with the aesthetic ones) and aesthetic energy which directs person to the search for beauty and good, a person whose potential is directed to creation and dialogue, according to Karl-Otto Apel “communicative society” with ever-present “act of mutual recognition” [9, 39]. In real life, we see that this act is regularly infringed and people do not want to dialog. Today the improvement of education is directly connected with social responsibility formation, socio-cultural upbringing and the creation of artistic educational environment where future creator of culture gains not only his professional skills but also his morals, spirituality and such socially significant qualities as aspiration for truth, beauty and good, ability to empathize, help, support and dialog, i.e. the “humanity in human” [10] that can never be surplus. This article is based on the concept of improving modern educational system by creating an artistic educational environment which is considered a ground for aesthetic attitude to reality, aesthetic energy accumulation and the channels of spiritual communication. This makes for the necessity to apply philosophical-anthropological, socio-psychological, artistically aesthetic and universally dialogic approaches which form a methodological base for this article.

Main part

The cultural space of the 21st century is heterogeneous and diverse. Different conflicting trends constantly interweave and interact with each other. Each of these trends can cause clashes with very unforeseeable consequences. Bearing in mind today’s level of technical advance any of such clashes can develop into a bloody event taking human lives. Moreover, today’s level of globalization any of such local conflict can grow into a global one. The degree of danger is obvious. That is why one of the greatest contemporary culture experts M.S. Kagan continues to call to a dialogue. He states that today only a Universal Dialogue is the best way for relations and a bearer of the possibility to create a more perfect organization of people’s coexistence. At the same time, he constantly reminds us in his works that the aesthetic energy promotes the creation of such a method for life self-organization because it contains a possibility for the artistic self-comprehension of cultural processes. In his opinion, the aesthetic energy forms “in those who will decide mankind’s fate in the third millennium a right understanding of the role of high aesthetic potential and art which helps the coming harmony of being to sprout through the present chaos” [11, 535]. But in order that humanity escapes suicide, man’s life arisen 4.5 million years ago is not eliminated and various nations, classes and political forces can start such a dialogue, the system of education as an important sociocultural institution should take on the mission of creating conditions for “the coming harmony of being” to grow through and for the communicative society with high aesthetic energy to form. The system of education should understand how significant this mission is and that the best professional can cause a big damage if he does not have a sense of social responsibility because in his life he follows the principles that are far from the guidelines of the mutual recognition act. It should be admitted that the preservation of “humanity in human” in modern, often very aggressive, conditions is a very complex task. One often can gain professional competences much more easy than find the strength to withstand the pressure of destructive phenomena which attack contemporary man. Today, it is very important to remember that “no matter how high the success of scientific and technical civilization is, man is truly alive only in humanitarian knowledge as a space where a specific human matter and the human principle of being are reproduced and saved” [12, 5]. Culture expert Y.M. Shor not coincidentally characterizes humanitarian culture as a culture of emotional experience, a private culture which is filled with private meanings and values. Today, the scientific pedagogical community should clearly understand that, regardless of the field of training, it is

very important that a young man is ready to join in accumulating the aesthetic energy and forming a thick layer of humanitarian culture which will allow him to create his world where the ethical and aesthetic principles coexist in harmony. In other words, the idea of creation and self-creation should become the basis of his life rejecting anything which can contain the idea of destruction, conflict and confrontation. Every graduate in all countries of our planet should be aware of his personal responsibility for the fate of his own country and the whole mankind. What is to be done to make contemporary educational system reach the level when a man-creator appears in the culture of the third millennium? The formula is both simple and complex. It is simple because it is quite obvious: we should create as many channels for spiritual communication though the Universal Dialogue as possible. The Universal Dialogue is a tool which allows implementing “the moral and strategic principle of complementarity” which, in the opinion of Karl-Otto Apel, helps us to understand that “first of all, in all questions, we should speak about how to guarantee the survival of mankind as a truly communicative society; the second goal is to create an ideal communicative society in the real communicative society. The first goal is an indispensable condition of the second one; and the second goal gives the first one the sense...” [acc. 13, 58]. The complexity of creating the channels for spiritual communication necessary for the communicative society is that this is a laborious, persistent and purposeful process when one should comprehend the diversity, originality and uniqueness of cultures existing in the world and develop an interest and respect for them. One should know that these cultures have the right to be not like his own culture. The knowledge of one’s own culture is the ground for personal self-identification, steadiness, involvement and unity with one’s roots. Let us turn again to the notion of “aesthetic energy” and consider what sense contemporary researchers put in it. V.V. Bychkov gives the following definition of aesthetics: this is “a special state of being-consciousness; a certain specific spiritual field in which man acquires one of the highest forms of being and the experience of complete involvement in being” [14, 4]. This definition seems to be accurate and capacious. The complete involvement in being is just the highest level of social responsibility which becomes both ethical and aesthetic regulator for man’s life and activities.

Conclusion

Summarizing the research, we can say with certainty that the aesthetic energy is born in the moment when man begins to feel the need for comprehending and creating beauty. It increases when this need grows into the ability to carry out this

process. It leads man on the stairs of cognition and self-cognition directing him to the eternal values of being. The research showed that the whole history of mankind is full of man’s aesthetic energy. It amazes archeologists up to now when they find ancient arrows and bow, wonderful engraving on ancient tableware and even jewelry testifying to the constant need for beauty. Works covering archeological investigations and discoveries, often mention the special energy typical for the first rock paintings. Unique monuments of architecture, masterpieces of literature, poetry, painting, music and theatre stay imperishable and beautiful for centuries. They not only inspire delight and give pleasure, but also contain the concentrated aesthetic energy and pass it to a person who wants to comprehend it. They teach to distinguish Good from Evil and reveal the essence of being. Today, one of the most important goals for the educational system is to teach our contemporaries to take aesthetic energy from this inexhaustible source. However, the system of education, solving a number of important problems not always fulfills this goal in a degree necessary for the harmonious development of creative personality.

Findings

At the present-day stage of cultural development, the system of education is one of the most important social institutions which are to provide the further positive development of mankind, the preservation and augmentation of spiritual meanings and values accumulated during the centuries-old history. To resolve this task, it is necessary to foster person ready to create the channels for spiritual communication which make for the universal cross-cultural dialogue. Active artistic educational environment as a bearer of artistic, aesthetic, spiritual and moral values carefully kept in the depository of the world artistic culture is an effective tool for the upbringing of such person. These values contain the priceless aesthetic experience and are the inexhaustible source of aesthetic energy which determines the strategy of his life and activities as a process of creation and self-creation. Today, success achieved in this process is the guarantee for further cultural development, social renovation and improvement, the preservation and augmentation of the highest values of being which allow keeping humanity in human. This causes the necessity to provide an active artistic educational environment in every university (along with the fundamental professional training). In such environment, every young man begins to feel himself a real creator who builds a new socio-cultural space on the foundation of the highest humanistic values. This foundation is not afraid of any catastrophes as its durability is proved by the whole history of mankind.

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