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A development of creative skills and aesthetic taste as a means of education

One cannot represent life via simple formulae since it does not operate those multiple laws and norms invented by people. In order to fit in into the rhythm of life one should realize one's own existence, its peculiarities and mechanisms which define our activity, form a hierarchy of personal values, and direct world outlook guidelines. To have a clear picture of those is impossible without revealing a true essence of bringing-up, understanding of the core of educational process, tracking down a specific symbiosis of both upbringing and education. Hence the main idea of this article is a realization of the aforementioned problems to find effective responses upon life challenges.

Wise people say one should bring one's child up since the very birth. If we take into consideration some religious ideas and those related to extrasensory practice then the process of bringing-up should begin since the very conception. If we agree that people are able to live together in sort of unison of souls then it is right to think that from the moment of entering of a soul into a body of a child one should contact with a fetus like with a living soul which has perception, cognition and other qualities and peculiarities that make a person a human being.

So, it appears that a process of upbringing is a fragile and quite a delicate act even though it might seem a usual routine that does not base on a thorough preparation, specific knowledge and skills. In the long run, those who care and seek have noticed within their experience a certain axiom expressed by Patrick O'Rourke: „Everybody knows how to raise children, except the people who have them”.

Obviously, the reason of the latter situation about raising children lies in the fact that traditionally the concept of upbringing is viewed as a simplified scheme of granting conditions and circumstances under which a child could accomplish one's socialization and realize oneself not even as a personality, but rather as a competent creature. What we are dealing with is a mass stereotype about upbringing which, if not solely oriented to, yet definitely is based upon providing all the necessary household and social conditions for raising a child. That is why everyone who earns one's living is considered to have a certain didactic ability. Though those who deal with a formation of individuality firsthand witness a mesmerizing depth of inter-individual relations linked with upbringing itself.

They clearly see a real aspect of bringing-up which the majority tend to overlook, notwithstanding a difference in social characteristics and individual virtues, due to inability to accept such revelations as such. Hence, the process of bringing-up acquires an elemental, sporadic nature which is guided by habits and based on imitation of the others, transferring experience of the others into one's own educational practice. In other words, the majority of educators prefer those methods and means of upbringing which they themselves had once been through. Those methods are taken for granted and if modified then not according to one's individual abilities and pupil's traits, not in accordance with personal anticipation and conscience but due to the latest fashion and various advice which are often misleading.

As a result, what the educational process lacks is creativity that later leads to a complete blocking of a creative initiative upon pupil's behalf, which, though, is just a half of the problem. The consequences can be more destructive due to a particular attraction towards a social „taming” – a conscious attempt to develop or impose a system of the desired or alleged reactions upon certain conditions and models of behavior. Those „acts” of affection are quite seldom accompanied by delicacy and respect of individual uniqueness. That is why it is a commonplace thing that a process of upbringing reinforces a would-be development of self-sufficiency only formally. What we deal with in reality is an attempt to organize the educational process which hides a manipulative inclination or even violence disguised as care because as practice shows the „teacher : pupil” relations are linear, that is they have a submissive character, domination imposing on one behalf and subjugation on the other.

This situation, nevertheless, seems acceptable or the only possible to the majority that is busy with everyday problems. Only a few teachers blessed by a natural gift realize, or rather intuitively feel malignancy of social taming both to an individual and society. V.O. Sukhomlynsky, a Ukrainian humanistic educator in the former Soviet Union, accentuated upon this problem saying that one should be aware of a threat if all moral powers of a pupil were aimed at fulfilling teacher's will; it would be better if a pupil were rebellious and 'untamed' since those were greater qualities than complete obedience.

The consequences of such planned eradication of initiative and natural interest are evident due to the overwhelmed and spread all over practice of leveling of one's uniqueness because of deforming of the very concept of upbringing that leads to cultural and spiritual degradation. It may happen that such a deformation which is aimed at a current manufactured production of socially identical individuals with an implemented model of behavior brings closer a cultural and anthropologic collapse since those individuals have a secularized aesthetic taste and are consumption-oriented devoid of a creative element or subjective function. Sooner or later there will come time when certain societies, ethnicities or the whole mankind reach the point of no return leaving behind optimism and

Nietzschean 'will to live'. And that would be not the worst case scenario since if realized there would happen a complete exhaustion of vital resources heading either towards a total physical degeneration and destruction of mankind or towards its regeneration. It is impossible to predict the exact prospects of the future; hence a modern person is powerless to prevent the possible collapse though it is not a reason for despair. On the contrary, accepting the current matter-of-factness of a person and realizing the very nature of upbringing one should commence to make small steps towards bringing back home that life-asserting aspect into the process of upbringing, one step at a time, then and there, with responsibility and inspiration. And it is commonly true that both upbringing and education are never-ending from cradle to grave, live and learn, at the least.

Getting higher education in the modern world is one of the key components in the process of becoming individuality. Higher education or its analogy in the preceding epochs is a certain „portal” allowed for a transition from a private survival in aboriginal nature to a constructing of socio-economic milieu of Ecumene based on scientific and technical achievements because it is in the very space of higher knowledge where new concepts are being thought of and formerly acquired achievements are being stored in the form of ideas, formulae, technologies etc. Those have not only been elaborated and preserved but also acquired their functional value, because for the unaccustomed they remain unreached, dead in fact. Consequently, higher education provides consistency of scientific development and progress of human community. It also stimulates all-around disclosure of human rational aspirations within science boundaries; it influences formation of the world outlook, and defines lifetime priorities and guidelines. In the long run, being the final link of mastering of knowledge system higher education makes a great impact upon formation of both human self-identity peculiarities and overall atmosphere in the community, including interpreting and outlining the hierarchy of values.

Hence, a didactic approach based on instrumental and mechanical principles of transmitting the knowledge for preparation of professionals in the narrow fields as far as organization of upbringing and higher education concerns has in itself obvious threats both for an individual and a society. First of all it presupposes that pure rationalization of an educational process leads to misbalance of the inner world of a student due to his gradual transformation first into a medium of certain information and a system of skills, and then into a manufacturer of benefits or products. What is left neglected is the very accomplishment of one's own spiritual needs when a student or a specialist is left alone with a current somebody else's fashion, propaganda, etc. The less self-centered and self-balanced a person, the less protected one is from manipulation and dictatorship of certain ideas because one pays less attention to development of the aesthetic aspect which primary goal is to reveal one's own sense of existence, one's destiny by means of realization of the world beauty, world relations and virtues as a manifestation of their highest appropriateness according to Kantian philosophy.

More and more scholars tend to accept that unavoidable necessity of aesthetic education and regeneration of the very quality in men, bridging likewise the gaps between romanticists and pragmatists as between routine and essential life. According to E.G. Yakovleva the former, routine, leads to avoidance of the meaning of life, it is just existence, whereas the latter, essential life, is transcendence; and the former gives birth to a person, the latter – to a personality.

So, if we take into account the aforementioned context of the Russian thinker then an accent of higher school upon preparation of a specialist sooner or later will result into a loss of a personality, uniqueness which is carved into ontological roots of an individual one intentionally deprives oneself of, neglecting an aesthetic element that touches directly a soul passing by a mind. At the same time, after N.A. Berdyaev's statement¹ we now and again understand that the very educational process on every level must take into consideration the idea of a secret of human soul and our undeniable need in things related, everything that touches our soul, stimulates, makes enjoy and create; a sort of contemplation of beauty, admiration of beauty.

Of course life itself has taken care of us providing ever present possibility to admire beauty: nature in its multiple manifestations is a source and a reflection of beauty. That is why people do not know such a type of existence which is completely devoid of aesthetic origin. Hence, if we reflect upon nature of aesthetic element in human essence and a vital role of beauty overall, then we deal naturally with a specific grading of one's openness to perception of beautiful generally due to our aesthetic tastes and preferences. Respectively, aesthetic taste is a characteristic of every person and a difference between individuals lies in the nature of the tastes, their refinement or corruption, and further on, in the peculiarities of the world outlook, behavior, and hierarchy of values. The more refined the perception of the beauty, the more harmonious one is with the world and nature, the less conflicting one is with oneself and the entity, because perceiving beauty and reproducing inner harmony a person intuitively grasps the meaning of every existence, revealing every aspect, even that which seems absurd, senseless or horrible to a consumption-oriented individual.

Hence, no matter how strange it may seem at first sight, there is a direct correspondence between one's lifestyle and a level of refinement of aesthetic taste or an ability to discover the integrity of beauty and maintain that state of harmony in oneself with the world. The more harmonious a person, the less one is preoccupied with a need in satisfying of numerous desires. The latter disappear all the way smoother, the sooner one finds a personal touch with the world to reveal oneself organically integrated in it. It seems so simple yet extremely difficult – to understand, to realize, to achieve.

¹ One cannot realize the nature of reality, freedom, or personality rationally, because these ideas are absolutely transcendental to our rational consciousness, they make an irrational remainder.

Nevertheless, if a person identifies oneself within the surrounding, opposing oneself from it automatically, one constantly needs to accumulate or satisfy own thirst for consumption. Naturally, the further, the less one succeeds in that since likewise the gains grow in mathematical progression, the needs do so in geometrical one and a person distances oneself from the ontological origin to seclude inside, to dissolve in the face of the unknown, to pale under pressure of loneliness. As a result, one should constantly worry about petty things, make an impression of activity and business not to reveal one's vanity and pointlessness of existence. And it is the very perception of beauty that lures oneself out from a shell; it returns a feeling of co-relation with something greater, unknown and gives strength to deal with fears and despair born in permanent loneliness.

Though a person of the nowadays has distinguished oneself from nature following the achievements of science and technology and thus moved into an artificial world of Ecumene. Modern people have forgotten how to be natural, and as a consequence, a beauty of nature does not cure any longer leaving at its best short-termed sensations of certain pleasure from picnics, vacation tours, trips in the country etc.

Nevertheless, we are flesh and bones, and despite alienation from nature we cannot extract that aesthetic element from within. The latter has found a new sphere of application in art which is a shelter to a human soul in a rational world that designs the face of civilization. That is why among a very few means of maintaining integrity of human entity one mentions art the foremost. Our duty is to involve a person into art from perception to creativity depending on one's nature.

Hence, in order to restore harmony in a person and to establish comfort for both individual and mass existences one should definitely stimulate development of aesthetic taste interrelated with the realization of the creative perspective. That is why any educational institution should assist both in providing a profession by means of mastering of the necessary data, skills and habits, but also in facilitating of full development and formation of students. Otherwise higher education risks degrading into a mass production of the hi-tech bio-robots and facing a collapse of culture and civilization in the whole.

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Abstract

The article in question is a research of the peculiarities of modern upbringing and education. The main idea is based on implementing of the creative forms of art into an educational process to achieve personal integrity.

Key words: education, creative skills, aesthetic taste.

Rozwój umiejętności twórczych i smaku estetycznego jako środek edukacji

Streszczenie

W artykule jest mowa o badaniu specyfiki współczesnego wychowania i edukacji. Główna idea jest oparta na realizacji twórczych form sztuki włączonych do procesu edukacyjnego w celu osiągnięcia pełni rozwoju osobowości.

Słowa kluczowe: edukacja, kreatywność, smak estetyczny.