

## Education of the Individual by Means of Art

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### ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes the role of art in the process of upbringing of the rising generation. Revealing the specific nature of mechanisms of artistic images influencing the personality of an individual perceiving a work of art has brought about the analysis of the nature of symbols creation, thus giving grounds for the use of semiotic approach to the artistic idiom. The methodology of the study involves the systemic approach that allows considering art as a hierarchic system. The ethic trend of art has resulted in using the axiological approach to art which helps understanding the specific character of the value component of human relationships and leads to realizing that personality is a top value. The distinction of the study lies in updating the existing methodology of pedagogical science, which fulfills the need of upgrading the technology of artistic and pedagogical analysis and promotes understanding the concealed author's meanings built in into the image system of the art work allowing one to view the dynamics of the nature of human relationships captured in art by symbolic means. It has been determined that perception of art implies empathy for the character of the art work, interiorizing the social experience contained in art, adjusting the personal meanings up to the author's idea. It is proven that understanding and accepting "another" person in art promotes transferring the universal experience of human relationships into the daily life of the rising generation.

### KEYWORDS

Artistic idiom, character education, action  
mechanism of art, artistic analysis, pedagogical  
analysis

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## Introduction

At the modern stage of development of education, one of the tasks is the students' mastering the universal human values including ones incorporated in the image system of art works. By its distinctive idiom, art renders the diversity

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of the value reference points world, among which the universal values (Truth, Kindness, Beauty) are of special importance. In other words, artistic idiom is an efficient means of cultivating and translating the universal human (universal) values. In the Russian axiology of art, special attention of researchers (Torshilova, 1989) is focused on understanding the role of upbringing function of art. In particular, according to E.M. Torshilova (1989), "respect for a human and the humanity" can be called the main principle of humanist art. In a genuine work of art, all the wealth of esthetic, moral, and social content is inbuilt, due to which such art teaches true humanism and belief in the strength of human mind, shapes the ability to love and respect a human as the highest spiritual value both in oneself and in others. The topicality of addressing the topic may be explained by the urge to overcome the technocratic approach in the society and education and it is called by the need of balancing the spheres of scientific and artistic thinking in the development of the rising generation. For it is the artistic idiom with its diversity of expressive devices (shapes, colors, lines, intonations, words) that allows understanding and "appropriating" the universal human values by the rising generation. The standpoint of humanism oriented education is also reflected in the foreign research. So, A.H. Maslow (1987) believes that learning via art is extremely important as it allows going beyond the straightforward "true – false". Such learning is more focused on the subjective. Working out the methodology that allows forming the worldview attitudes of the rising generation, applying the system of general theoretical methods in the practice of upbringing the youth by means of the artistic idiom presents a special interest for the modern Russian esthetics, pedagogics of art, and psychology of creativity.

### Literature Review

The problem of character education by means of art has attracted the interest of researchers since the antiquity up to our times. For instance, the ancient Greek philosophers discussed the nature of influence of the music ethos on the rising generation; notably, Plutarch (Reprint 1960-2004) mentioned that Greeks believed that gods had given music to the people not for pleasing their hearing but for keeping the proportion and harmony in their deeds. Modern psychologists, L.S. Vygotsky (1968) in particular, turn to the question of search for the psychological laws of the effect of art on humans. L.S. Vygotsky (1968) understood art as a way of balancing the human with the world and stressed its upbringing importance. M.M. Bakhtin (2000) while considering the process of perception of art as co-creativity of the perceiving individual, author and the character of the art work reveals the mechanism of influence of art on the individual via his grasping the main meaning of the work. In its turn, the upbringing effect of art consists in the fact that the super-meaning of the art work leads the reader, spectator, listener beyond the limits of the certain art work towards broader problems and phenomena of life. Despite this range of questions being worked on, the problems of upbringing by means of art, finding the methods and technologies for upbringing by means of various kinds of art, psychological mechanisms of action of art on the human remain relevant. M.M. Danina et al. (2015) studied the mechanism of the impact of art (such as movies) on the person in order to increase the effectiveness of its communication. N.E. Smakovskaya (2015) emphasizes the role of art in the integration of perceptual, intellectual, creative and reproductive processes of the subject. A.A. Melik-

Pashaev (1995) and N.G. Tagiltseva (2002) maintain that via the empathy mechanism art allows understanding not only the character of the art work but oneself too as well as it helps understand people in real life. In the foreign psychology of creativity, the researchers (Oehrle, 1996; Cain, 2015) point out the importance of cross-cultural education by means of art, music in particular, and form a thesis – to bring up the culture of tolerance. Notably, M. Cain (2015) writes about the opportunities of learning "Another" person and another culture through getting acquainted with the musical culture of various countries. At the same time, he mentions the gap between theory, debate and practice in the area of cultural diversity of musical education in Australia. On balance, the author makes out a special role of art in expanding the sphere of human relations. T. DeNora (2003) addresses the upbringing and developing capacities of art, citing the facts of music having properties that promote activation of human social skills and expanding the sphere of his image-related and emotional cognition. E. Oehler (1999) emphasizes the role of art space in the development of children`s communication with each other on the basis of the integrated process of education in children's education institutions in Germany.

Thus, it should be noted that first of all a wide range of esthetic and ethic problems are discussed in the research of Russian and foreign scholars, including studying the art as one of the most efficient means for upbringing the youth; second, in spite of the above scholars being interested in the problem of character education by means of art, the problem still appears unresolved, which conditioned the authors of this paper turning to studying the methods of upbringing of the rising generation by means of art based on revealing the mechanisms of action of art on the human.

### Research Methods

The paper is centered around studying the worldview influence of an art work on the rising generation. Turning to revealing the specific character of action of art on the human mind is conditioned by the necessity of understanding the role of art in the human life activity and in life of the society. Moreover, the introduction of art phenomena into the educational process is necessary for expanding the experience of relationships of the rising generation with the world surrounding it and with itself in order to harmonize the spheres of scientific and artistic thinking of students during learning the world and spiritual experience of the humanity.

The main mechanism of appropriation of art values by personality is interiorizing the values by experiencing and living them, by giving birth to a new personal meaning during communication and interaction with a work of art.

The mechanism of action of art can conventionally be marked by the pattern: the perception of an art work – empathy for the characters of the art work – interiorization, or appropriation of the social experience by means of artistic and pedagogical analysis – adjustment of one's own views.

The concept of the study is determined by the idea to teach the rising generation to understand and accept "Another" person in art (an author, a character), which will allow them to learn to understand and accept the person in daily life, i.e. to expand one's experience of human relationships.

The methodology of the research is based on using the artistic and pedagogical analysis of works of various kinds of arts from the viewpoint of



finding the main idea of the work, values, revealing the particularities of human relationships relying on the artistic expression means and symbolism. Unlike the art review, the artistic and pedagogical analysis is accessible to the rising generation in the educational process within the "Art" subject area.

## Results

The research is dedicated to studying the mechanisms of moral and esthetic action of art on the personality of a child. During the research, it has been determined that mastering of humanistic values of art takes place during the esthetic activity of a human performed in its two forms: perception of art and creation of artistic product. In this paper, the perception in art is viewed as the basic form of human esthetic activity on the basis of which the activity of creating an artistic product is performed. The concept of the research is determined by understanding the perception of art works as a distinctive process of "spiritualization", "humanization", i.e. finding certain properties and qualities of oneself and other people in the perceived artistic creativity object (Hegel, 1826). According to the above viewpoint, art reflects the world not as such but in its "humanized" kind. It can be claimed that during perception of artistic works conditions are created for unfolding the creative potential of a child, the moral ideal to which he should tend, i.e. his superior "I" (Melik-Pashaev, 2000). By mastering the people's experience of attitudes towards the world through other people, a child learns himself; thus a person finds his own "I" while perceiving the works of art.

The perception of art works is only possible in the case when it is compared to and "layered" on the experience of feelings and includes empathy for the character of the artistic work (Nemensky, 1981; Medushevsky, 1976; Lazutina & Lazutin, 2015). A kind of "experience of feelings" participates in experiencing the individual being forming not only the personal experience of living through joys and sorrows but also allows realizing the in-depth meaning of social being, because in the artistic idiom, an immense experience of human feelings of previous generations is concentrated and generalized. Thus, it can be concluded that it is only via art that a human can not only study but also live by feelings another person's experience.

A full-fledged perception of the content of an art work implies not only the sensuous response but also comprehension and evaluation of everything which was perceived by feelings – which means, it includes not only the ability to experience but also the ability to understand another person and feel empathy for him. One perceiving an artistic meaning begins to understand oneself and other people in real life through understanding another person in art. It is this meaning of the notion "perception of art" that is revealed in the modern Russian pedagogical thought (Melik-Pashaev, 2000; Torshilova, 1989; Tagiltseva, 2002; Ovsyannikova, 2015).

Art is not a copy of real events but it acts as their reflection. In order to reach interaction with an art work at the level of life activity, an individual has to possess a capacity for transferring the information from the illusive aspect to the real one. Perception of art turns out to be a kind of "co-creativity", a dialogue of the sender (author) and the perceiver. Co-creativity makes the perception active, dynamic, and this creates an opportunity for transferring the knowledge obtained by the individual onto a broader area than art – into reality. Studying

the perception in art has shown that actualization and intensification of the points of life experience, thoughts, feelings, memories that are in tune with the content of the work are observed in a person actively engaged in a conditioned dialogic process with the author of an art work (Malyukov, 1999) . In other words, when perceiving the art work, an individual is as if involved into the "another one's" life activity and starts "living", "thinking" and "feeling" like another person – the character or the author of the work. Perception of art implies not only the external reception of information but also experiencing, comprehending of the information obtained, i.e. a child gets socialized and acquires certain skills of life in a human society by experiencing the life conditions described in the work as his own experience. Moreover, the information based on the spiritual experience of another person – the author – obtained when perceiving a work of art develops the child. On top of that, in the child's consciousness, comparison of the life reconstructed in the art work with his own experience takes place and then there emerges evaluation and comprehension of his feelings.

Thus, when comparing oneself to the author, the author's standpoint is already considered not as one's own but as that of "Another person", with the feeling or condition inbuilt in the art work being not only experienced but also analyzed. Comparing one's own standpoint to the author's one, a child comprehends the meaning of the art work. At the initial stage of perception of art, an individual becomes "Another person", further on – he "comes back" to "himself" enriched (if humanistic specimens of art works are perceived). That is, the content of the art work is present in him and to a smaller or larger extent alters all levels of his life activity influencing his actions and attitudes (Bakhtin, 2000). Studying and analyzing the works of modern authors in the spheres of esthetics, psychology, pedagogics of art allow outlining the mechanism of action of art on the personality of the rising generation: "another one's experience in art" that is experienced emotionally and mastered with the help of art becomes a personal possession of the rising generation and expands the sphere of its life relations. So happens socialization of a listener, reader, spectator, as well as interiorization, appropriation of social experience which is external to him, and adjustment of one's own views and reference points.

P.F. Lesgaft (1990) stresses that the action of art works on each type of children takes place to a larger or smaller extent, from optimizing or compensating kind of action up to trying to directly imitating the character of the work. However, despite all the human diversity and individuality, the super-meaning of the work of art inbuilt by the author is understood by each human in a relevant manner to the conceived by the author. It is here that the task of the upbringing action of the art works consists in – the comprehensive and diverse transfiguration of man's internal, spiritual sphere.

## Discussion

Art is a product of human reflection activity. An artist always expresses his attitude to the depicted via the picture; he expresses his feelings and thoughts about the depicted and reflects in the art a particularity of human relations in the given epoch as well as the attitude of the epoch towards man. Each artist is individual in choosing the means for expressing his feelings and attitudes. However, the artistic idiom is universal, this is why it can be understood by people of various nationalities, both adults and children. It can be stated that on



the one hand the artistic idiom is individual as it is formed by the subject of artistic learning in line with his attitudes and preferences (for example, there is an author's style) and on the other hand it is universal.

A special kind of art based on the emotional and meaningful intonation is music. It can produce a direct and strong emotional influence on people because in it the human emotions, feelings, and moods i.e. what makes up the foundation of the human spiritual world are objectified (Medushevsky, 1976). Music is emotional in its essence, in its direct content. Owing to this, it becomes "emotional cognition" and gives unsurpassable opportunities for developing the human emotional sphere.

Speaking about the harmonious development of personality, L.S. Vygotsky (1968) named the unity of emotional and intellectual spheres of a child's mind as the most important condition of that. Music is a unique means of forming this unity, as it produces an immense effect both on the emotional and cognitive development of children.

Music does directly affect a human and his spiritual world, yet its direct upbringing effect is not to be spoken about. L.S. Vygotsky (1968) made a very good point about the delayed action of music: music cannot directly "transport" the morals into the human soul, it can only directly evoke the moral strengths sleeping in him, exciting the human emotions. The idea about the direct action generates the appropriate technique which ignores the "mechanism of perception" of music but confines itself to revealing the overall musical content in one cases and unilateral studying the expression means in other cases. The upbringing action of music is integrated in the very experience of music as a inherently valued phenomenon. The thing is that the events inbuilt in music can only be perceived by the listener only on condition of experiencing them emotionally and esthetically.

The system of musical intonations underlies the musical idiom influencing the human emotional sphere. Musical intonations are analogs of human emotional conditions. Perception of music is associated with the ability to hear the intonation of the character of the work, to sense his feelings empathizing with him. A musical piece evokes in one a complicated world of feelings and emotions that are extended, intensified and compared to the life and musical experience the subject has already got.

V.V. Medushevsky (1976) stresses that the musical intonations open up "Another" person in art. Owing to the emotional meaning of intonations, a listener feels and empathizes with the person. One who knows how to decode the inner meaning of music learns to understand and accept other people through its content.

The next step is to consider the upbringing potential of works of various kinds of art from the standpoint of artistic and pedagogical analysis as one of the ways of upbringing the rising generation by means of art. Although the artistic and pedagogical analysis includes the elements of comparative historical and formal analysis, its essence consists in determining the main (principal) idea of the art work. In order to achieve this goal, the following tasks have to be solved: to identify values inbuilt in the artistic work; to determine the characteristics of conditions of a human on the basis of "deciphering" the artistic idiom, its images and symbols. The mechanism of performing the artistic and pedagogical analysis at the courses of the "Art" subject area is actualized through the chain of direct

and leading questions (asked both by the teacher and by the learners). The questions may be as follows: what condition of a human is depicted in this musical piece, in your opinion? What nature of human relations does this architectural structure reflect? What do you think what ideas and concealed meaning does the sculpture perceived symbolize? Compare the characters of people portrayed in the picture: what value reference points does each of them have, in your opinion? How do pictures of nature reflect feelings and characters of literary heroes etc.? Certainly, to answer the questions learners will have to turn to comparison of artistic means of expression in the works of art: to the nature of musical intonations, artistic lines and architectural shapes, to the way characters move, to their mimics, facial expressions; to decoding the symbolic meaning of colors, pictures of nature that reflect the condition of literary and musical characters etc. The most important thing is the opportunity to understand "Another" person in art, to empathize, to have a dialogue with the person and to accept the person. Understanding and acceptance of "Another" person in art will enable the rising generation to learn to understand and accept the person in daily life, i.e. to expand one's experience of human relationships (Ovsyannikova, 2008). Now, the upbringing function of art will be considered, with turning to examples of various kinds of art (painting, music etc.) within the context of artistic and pedagogical analysis.

In instrumental music, the genre of "musical landscape" is interested that is associated with intonations of "personified" nature and was developed in works of both Russian (M.I. Glinka, P.I. Tchaikovsky, N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov) and foreign composers (C. Debussy, G. Bizet etc.). For instance, the works creating the image of the waves are considered: the introduction to the opera "Sadko" by N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov "The Blue Ocean-Sea" and "The Sea" by C. Debussy. In the first work, the image of the sea is depicted by means of the idiom of music (melody, harmony, rhythm etc.) through the prism of expressing the spiritual world of an excited alarmed person (to express such a human condition, the composer uses the intonations of "flow or rolling of the sea waves"). The second work shows the image of calmness and peace. So, C. Debussy uses the device of sound imagery imitating the movement of water (not gradual high and low tides of the sea waves but smaller rolling of waves, a kind of their careless play) to render the image symbolizing the peace of mind and unity with the nature.

According to B.M. Nemensky (1981), the nature of human relations is reflected in architecture that is often called a chronicle of human relations, a chronicle of understanding the world. Architecture shapes the environment for a certain way of human life and sets the nature of relationships between people. Thus it performs not only the esthetic but also ideological function. For example, Muslim architecture is based on mosques the external walls of which bear the compulsory quotes from Koran reminding the Muslims about the moral path of man (Abdel, 1970). On top of that, the idiom of architecture is symbolic (the dome of the mosque is of a smooth rounded shape without steep and sharp structures, with the rounded shapes of mosques symbolizing the cordial, peaceful and benevolent attitudes of people to each other). As for the minarets towering above them, these show the aspiration for perfection, majesty and beauty of man and human relations. Buddhist art also has got ideas of non-doing of evil and violence. It is known that the traditional sculptural image of one thousand hands Buddha has existed since the earliest times: Buddha is seated on a lotus flower with the numerous hands flung up around his head and



shoulders and one thousand eyes painted in the open palms. The meaning of this religious image is as follows: Buddha has got one thousand eyes for seeing all injustice committed in the world and one thousand hands to give a helping hand to all the suffering ones and to keep off grief and miseries from them (Buber, 1966). Buddhism has always tended to social and moral instruction which it tried to embody in quite definite artistic images, in sculpture as the case is.

The value-related nature of human attitudes to the world manifests itself in the fine art. For example, in Titian's painting "Christ Carrying the Cross" (1506-1507), the images symbolizing the good and the evil human qualities are inbuilt. So, the robber is depicted as putting a rope on Christ's neck, his eyes squinted, lips tight, eyebrows frowned, and the nose has a crooked shape. All facial features of the robber suggest his evil intentions. By contrast, Christ is depicted as a kind and open person: his look is full of kindness, with eyes wide open, but there is no place for fear in them, just the fair calmness.

Raphael Sanzio's paintings "St Michael Slaying The Devil" and "St George Fighting the Dragon" narrate about the victory of the good over the evil. They kill the serpent - St Michael with a sword, St George with a lance – who is the symbol of the evil in the picture. The dialectics of the good and the evil is rendered via the color semantics (the serpent is painted dark, and St George is seated on a white mount, St Michael holds a white shield in his hand).

The topics of harmony and unity of all the living are brought into life in the Chinese painting where the main means of expressing the most significant human conditions, feelings and esthetic ideals is nature. The dialectics of the eternal and instantaneous, unchanging and volant is actualized in the Chinese art through the system of decorative convention and symbolism. In tradition Chinese painting, there is the style "xieyi" (expression of an idea). The art of "xieyi" is filled with philosophical meaning and makes one think about the important and the secondary in this life, about the good and the evil.

The works of the Chinese painters Ren Yi (Ren Bonian) (1840-1895), Wu Changshuo (1844-1927), and Chen Shizeng (1876-1924) are based on creating the images of beauty and humanism. Pictures by Wu Changshuo that depict bunches of ripe fruit, flowers in blossom and the like are saturated with love for all the living. In works of another Chinese painter, Qi Baishi, each small picture was a ground for large and important generalization. The painting of this artist is deeply humane, notwithstanding the fact that it is almost exclusively dedicated to nature and there are hardly any picture of man. Qi Baishi always highlights the concealed meaning of the phenomenon, e.g. by showing not so much a roughly made rustic jug rather than the caring tenderness of peasant's hands that have put there a bright bunch of flowers. In his picture "Crabs and carps", a harmonious co-existence of different river inhabitants in one environment is shown. Such co-existence can be compared with the unity of people of various nations on the planet Earth.

The Chinese landscape painting is also full of originality and it reflects human feelings as well. A.I. Burov (1956) calls landscape the truth of human feelings in the suggested circumstances of the nature. The value of the Chinese landscape painting consists in the concealed subtext built in by the artist during creation of the paintings. The nature symbolically reflects the human spiritual world, his feelings, to which N.A. Vinogradova (1972) points rightfully: "... The symbols of the Chinese landscape had resulted from the continuous turning to



images of nature for rendering the human feelings... Human qualities have also been measured against the nature since the old times. For instance, a peony is a symbol of renown and wealth while bamboo is associated with wisdom of a scientist. The lush lotus... was a sign of a pure person..." (Vinogradova, 1972).

Literary art can also perform the upbringing function. The works of A.S. Pushkin, both prosaic and poetic ones, are the "emotional code" (Burov, 1956) of a normal sane person and his relationships with the external world. In each work by Pushkin, the human characters are depicted in a truthful and versatile manner. The feelings and characters of literary characters are also vividly portrayed in the pictures of nature (so-called literary landscapes). For example, the pictures of nature in Pushkin's "Eugene Onegin" (chapter one) allow feeling deeper the condition of the character's love and inaccessibility of the subject of his adoration. "I remember the sea before a storm: How envious was I of the waves. Rushing in sequence without form. To lie at her feet in loving embrace." The versatility of images of Pushkin's characters enables the reader to analyze the greatest fight of human feelings and characters, to compare it against his own life experience and find the moral ideal to be guided by in his subsequent life.

Thus, the artistic and pedagogical analysis allows developing an important quality of a spectator, listener – an ability to watch the development of artistic idea of the author of this or that art work in a concentrated and attentive manner, which allows the person perceiving art not only to understand the artistic meanings and concept of the author of the work but also to enrich the meanings by his own life and artistic experience, i.e. to be actively involved in the process of symbolization.

## Conclusion

Art disposes of an immense upbringing and educational potential. Unfortunately, it can be stated that in the recent years the technocratic approach to character education has prevailed in the education system. The object of art (regardless of its kinds and genres) are relationships in the "human-to-world" system. In connection to this studying art as a special social and cultural reality will enable the rising generation to perceive and realize the versatile experience of human relationships captured in various works of art (Ovsyannikova, 2016).

The upbringing role of art consists in demonstrating and cultivating the value of humanism in its best specimens. The main thesis of an art work is respect for a human and the humanity.

The mechanism of action of meaningful images of art on the mind of a human perceiving them includes the following stages: essentially, the perception of an art work, empathy for the characters of the art work, interiorization by artistic and pedagogical analysis, and adjustment of one's own views. In its turn, empathy for the characters of an art work implies a dialogue, co-creativity with the author and the art work character. The artistic and pedagogical analysis involves the analysis and evaluation of the perceived (artistic composition) from the standpoint of correlation of the main idea of the work with the world of universal human values, including the particularities of human relations on the basis of decoding the artistic idiom and determining its concealed meanings.



The artistic idiom contains a system of expressive (depictive) media (Lazutina & Lazutin, 2015). The existence of a "depictive formula" of art can be deduced which allows rendering the particularities of the nature of behavioral response of people, vividly depicting the appearance and actions of animals, fairy tale characters, as well as that of an "expressive formula" demonstrating the dynamics of the human emotional conditions, human attitude to the world of social realm.

The expressive (depictive) capacities of art are unlimited and are fulfilled by means of a distinctive language of symbols (color, shapes etc.). It should be pointed out that art is symbolic. Its arsenal is made up by a complex of sign formations, signals, signs and families of signs, and symbols. To the typical "depictive" and "expressive formulas" in art, basic ideas can be referred (and here the archetype nature of the artistic idiom manifests itself) that the individual perceiving the art work (a spectator, listener, reader etc.) during the symbolization process grasps by intuition and deciphers the concealed meaning built in by the author in images of the art work. The artistic and pedagogical analysis helps not only evaluate but also realize the author's idea and to word one's attitude to it.

The technology of artistic and pedagogical analysis is based on wording a number of direct and leading questions by the teacher and students that help reveal the author's idea, the kind of author's (or character's) attitude to other people and events, which allows realizing one's own attitude to the author's meaning and understanding "another" person by means of the image system of art.

Thus, the upbringing effect of art is determined by understanding "another" person in art in the diversity of his relations and by transferring this experience into the daily practice of the rising generation.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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