

## Aesthetic subject formation in high schools

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### Abstract

Philosophy of aesthetic education in gymnasiums permeates the whole syllabus structure. This subject integration in the high school syllabus as a philosophy of the aesthetic education of the youngsters does not constitute a separate module but multiple functions. This paper aims at providing a view of the enrichment of the inner spiritual world of the gymnasiums people through the learning and cultural activities. This paper offers an theoretical and illustrative explanation of how the school influences in development of new aesthetic competences, the capacity to experience, imagine, interpret and taste the aesthetic components that are created as a result of educational and cultural environment. In this study we arrive at the conclusion that in order to be a dignified and noble citizen the aesthetic feelings have to be consciously enriched and the aesthetic ideals have to be managed as a pleasure given by life and society, by transforming them into positive and fruitful energy.

**Keywords:** aesthetic subject, formation, High Schools.

### Introduction

Aesthetic education is a long-standing requirement of human society. Plato, when talking about the relationship between the individual and the recognition he faces in life, thinks that negative characters, criminal acts in literature indirectly, make an invitation to imitate. With the development of culture and art, the institution of censorship, exclusion and permission of literary works began to function according to certain moral, aesthetic, political or philosophical criteria. In postmodern societies, currently in the democratic system that constitutes a plurality of circulation and consumption of aesthetic values, we face new concepts related to aesthetic education in school.

The aesthetic education of the student is realized parallel on two planes; the first and most important one is the school where there is a high concentration of absorption of aesthetic ideals that shape the taste<sup>1</sup> and increase the degree of perception and aesthetic acquisition, and the second is the extracurricular factor, the very life that affects many sources of cultural information. In this article we will elaborate only on the problem of forming the aesthetic ideal through the curriculum and the cultural activities organized by the school.

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<sup>1</sup> F. Nietzsche says: “I have a taste but no basis, no norm and no imperative for this taste. (Alfred Uci, Aesthetics, Vol. I, pp.200, Tirana 1986.)

## Integration into the syllabys

Through the subject of literature, philosophy, art history, etc., pupils achieve complete theoretical formation, as they are acquainted with concepts which in the theory of aesthetics constitute a trinity: the truth, the good, and the beautiful.<sup>2</sup> Literary works in the aesthetic viewpoint are included in the idea-sense arts. In this context, when we say "a beautiful painting," it sounds more convincing than "a beautiful novel," we can say, "a great novel, a good novel, likeable novel." Usually the term "beautiful" is used as a synonym of aesthetic values. The concept "this poem, or story has aesthetic value" means explicitly that we like them or they give us pleasure when we read them. The aesthetic values remain relative; they are effective in relation to the social environment, the level of individual or collective taste, and as long as they provide aesthetic satisfaction.

The prominent German philosopher and aesthetics A.G.Baumgarten says that "the being itself is beautiful when it stands out, excels, shines, illuminates or is proportionate, harmonious, structured." In conformity with these criteria, we intuitively get surprised and feel the pleasure that the beautiful in art or industrial design and the architectural structure of the environment where we live gives us. Human society invests in creating works of aesthetic value as a precious asset of the spiritual life. Aesthetic experience of life in the most intensive way is the supreme goal of humans. Aesthetic values are not perfect; they remain values among other values of life. Aesthetic and moral values interact and create an interactional attitude, as an intertwined stance between two values. Therefore, teachers are aware of a complementary education of the student's personality. Specifically, teacher of the subject of literature in high schools consider the role played by literature as a subject to enrich the aesthetic imagination.

Due to the extraordinary effect that the literary material has to incite the imagination, let's illustrate it with a quote from Shell'essay: "Imagination is the great instrument of moral goodness and poetry plays this role by acting on the causes, thus it is usually said that through great literature we feel ourselves transfigured beyond the limits of our common life, in a world of deeper and more profound thoughts and feelings than the world in which we live. Through great literature we may experience events, thoughts and feelings of people who are far from us in time and space." In this case, we have a comprehensive match of the subject's goal and goal of the curricula in realising the new aesthetic ideal for the student who through the world's and Albanian literature masterpieces reveals the common human nature existing in all people behind the façade of doctrines who divide us, and by this way we can bring humankind together much better than the doctrines themselves.

Literature ennobles the students, by creating characters with an analytical capacity and expels them from brutal criminal instincts, rampant passions and acts that deform their moral, social, and aesthetic integrity. In the literary analysis of fiction works, the teacher has the chance to enrich and configure a variety of images, ideas, and stir the imagination and aesthetic imagery, by making the lesson very attractive

<sup>2</sup> According to Aristotle, main forms of the beautiful are the order, symmetry and accuracy, elements that math sciences pose in a special level" (Osvald Hanfling, "The philosophical aesthetics", Publishing House "Camaj-Pipa". pp. 13, Shkodër, Albania, 1999.)

and interesting, by creating a dialogue and debate with theses that are elaborated in details (explicitly) and indirectly (implicitly). The role of the teacher in this case is very important in explaining the meaning of the text and the interpretative moderation by making even the pupils themselves participatory.<sup>3</sup> In Flober's novel "Madame Bovari" we have an excellent example of deforming the individual because of the impact of a sentimental education school, where the romantic ideal moves away the beautiful girl from the real world and motivates her toward realistic, unrealizable spaces in life, that turn a human into hermit, away from the real world of happiness that derives from work and the constant effort of man to be perfected in life.

### **Ideals and esthetic ideas**

If we view the issue of education in the aesthetic aspect, without mentioning the moral education, which has a very broad definition, we must stick to the education of the motive as an aesthetic ideal and the education of feelings as a reflection of aesthetic acquisition deriving from aesthetic object or aesthetic action. In this framework, we will elaborate upon two variants: the education of the ideas, motives, interpretative skills of the students that constitute the aesthetic ideal and the positive feelings that cause the aesthetic phenomena, such as the category of beauty, which is found more emphasised in the subjects of literature, history art, artistic activities in the school, such as reciters' competitions, dance and song concerts, various dances, where the pupil becomes an object as well as an aesthetic subject. The more the high school student is an active participant in an artistic environment, the more effect he has on enriching his feelings. When experiencing the literary works of art, the pupils experience aesthetic pleasure. In the case when reciting one does not pay attention to intonation, artistic logic, verse cadence, tonic emphasis, internal rhythm, logical reasoning, insight on motifs and ideas, the performance action does not give aesthetic pleasure and we say we had a weak interpretation. In this case, the relationship between the aesthetic object and the aesthetic subject does not function, the reception is ineffective, the feeling-sensory emotional relationships and the rational elements do not realize a positive aesthetic component. The teacher interferes when the pupil reads poorly a poem just because this relations are not proportionate.

Literature as a subject needs an emotional experience. This is not accomplished artificially or because we put it as a task in a classroom, but it comes naturally intuitively (intuition as is known is the actual illumination of feelings and thought). In this regard, the teacher as a leader of the process of developing analysis and commentary promotes axiological (appreciative) catalysts of aesthetic acquisition by directing students to the social-aesthetic ideal. The idea that comes out during the comment naturally constitutes a meaning that prepares the social-aesthetic ideal. But what is the ideal idea in itself? The ideal is the ability of the human to project himself in the future, to include him/her in structures, relationships and possible phenomena, in accordance with his intentions, desires and aspirations that are conditioned by the reality that has it. In the theoretical view, the aesthetic ideal is the dominant one that

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<sup>3</sup> Everything Shakespeare says for the king, that boy who reads there in the corner, it seems he is saying for himself. Ralph Waldo Emerson: *Esse*. Plejad Publishing House, 2002, pp 14. Tirana 2002.

organizes the aesthetic conscience of each epoch in a given society, as an imagination of a possible reality. Ideas are elaborated, there is no eternal ideal, pan-human. The anti-entropic goal, the goal towards excellence, is the objective basis of the aesthetic ideal.

### **Esthetic vision in social subjects**

In other social subjects such as history, knowledge on society or sociology, during the lesson we come to such conclusions of such learning that implicate our motivation and our need and need of the whole of society, to move towards a higher form of social organization, towards the perfection of social harmony, and relationships between society and the individual (i.e the democratic ideal as the highest social order requiring constant perfection), we have succeeded in realizing within these ideas the aesthetic ideal that has stirred the aesthetic imagination, aesthetic imagery and inspires motivation to the pupil. In analyzing a drama through the clash of characters, while seeking to achieve the ethical ideal, as moral perfection, we realize the aesthetic ideal through structural modeling that helps cleanse and enrich the feelings. When attending a play in the theatre, we experience beautiful feelings, sad feelings, pain, joy, pride, and hatred caused by acts and protagonists, and the solution itself leads us to the modeling of the aesthetic ideal that is formed in our conscience.

### **Practical cultural activities**

When pupils are organised to go to a disco, we realize aesthetic education through beautiful feelings, experiencing a joyous emotional state that is accomplished by many components, while music is the first one together with other stage effects. Music in this case is not just an acoustic-physical vibration, but it is a spirit, an organized sound that is perceived by the ear, but it has an impact with this substance to the pupil's conscience, enriching the taste and creating aesthetic pleasure. In these activities, schools should pay attention not to expose them to elements not appropriate for their school age such as pop art and pornographic literature which seeks to use physiological elements to create aesthetic pleasure, because they affect the formation of the aesthetic ideal that is aimed by the school program.

Does the teacher serve a model for students?. We know that humans by nature are inclined to like imitation. In this case the teacher enjoys a special status, he should educate the pupil with his attitude, conduct, manners, appearance, relationships with external factors that may affect them. Plato says beauty emerges not only in the first things heard, but also in the good character and good behavior, as parameters of the aesthetic system, which derive from feelings of sympathy or hatred, satisfaction, or dissatisfaction. In order to make the school an environment that aesthetically pleases pupils, which means, the sense of beauty must satisfy the requirements of modern contemporary aesthetics, must awaken interest, spirituality, fulfilling the parameters of perfection and completeness, harmony between parts, structure, behavioral psychology, and judgment, order, discipline, excellence of form, premises, atmosphere, attire etc. which constitute the educational micro-environment.

It is important that the aesthetic idea in school is considered among the core principles of the school's directorate.<sup>4</sup> For example, the aesthetic ideal can be considered the affirmation and consolidation among pupils of the idea that attendance of high school implies attendance of higher education to qualify further in a specific field. Setting this personal objective for the pupil develops his imagination and fantasy and draws them toward an ideal projected as a beautiful dream that motivates them to success. This is related to the progress of the school, the personal performance, the pupil's daily preparation, but also to the motivation of the teachers, the behavior and the teaching-learning activity that the school develops. Based on the theory of aesthetic taste, humans have an inner sense of aesthetic acquisition. The use of computers, information from internet, media, encyclopedias, cultural programs, create an appropriate blend of uniformity with the variety and create the sense of today's modern beauty which is controlled by the inner sense of pupils, which according to British scholar Hatchetson was named "the sense of beauty."

Aesthetic education is an integral part of today's modern school philosophy. Theoretical and cultural formation of students in high schools should be achieved through clear goals and measurable objectives. An aesthetic deductive and transcendental judgment is also found in the teaching of subjects of natural sciences. When we are talking about something indefinite (celestial space, lines, infinity of matter, natural phenomena, etc.), then our imagination surrenders because we are not able to master the whole phenomenon, thus by becoming aware of the supremacy of the reason, we are aided by the imagination of the the magnificent as an aesthetic category. When we explain the causes of a catastrophe that goes beyond human ability to cope we reflect on reasoning and being aware of our dignity as moral beings. In this case we have to do with the aesthetic category of tragedy in life. The subject information in school directly affects the development and enrichment of the imagination of the students. The more developed the imagination of a pupil is, the more qualitative he/she is in the acquisition of knowledge. Imagination according to Colridge, is the joining capability that analyses the data, transforms them and the outcome is a new quality.

## Conclusions

Through the aesthetic education in school, we realize a powerful component in the overall formation of the pupil's personality as a worthy citizen of a cultured and democratized society, by distancing him/her from intuitive interpretations that typically lead to individuals with an inadequate level of education. Aesthetic education in school is not a doctrine,<sup>5</sup> it is the whole and the educational essence of the curriculum, in accordance with the tradition, the culture and the psycho-moral reality of our people. Freedom of judgment and aesthetic thought is related to the acceptance of cultural diversity, the coexistence of aesthetic concepts, the elaboration of unique and common tastes, the convergence and cultural divergence as the basis of the philosophy of our democratic system.

<sup>4</sup> During our life, we are accompanied everywhere by spiritual factors and one good intention is awaiting us. Emerson *Esse*. Ibid, pp. 58.

<sup>5</sup> We sympathise the most magnificent moments of history, great discoveries, great resistances, for the great progress of the man. Emerson "*Esse*", *ibid*, pp.14.

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