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## Personality and the Contemporary Musical Culture: Problems of Interaction

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### **Summary:**

*Research objective is to study a catharsis phenomenon associated with perception of the work of art by contemporary young people.*

*Research methods are questioning and the observation.*

*The research was conducted on the experimental basis by artists, designers, musicians and choreographers of Institute of Arts. One of the working methods was writing the essay.*

*The analysis of experimental material has shown that cathartic reactions of examinees did not proceed chaotically. Several levels of course of reactions were established: psychodynamic, emotional and conceptual. The first level is characterized by description of the actions predominantly by verbs. Colorful comparisons, adjectives and adverbs dominate in the description of the work of art at the second level. The third level connects with intertextual communications in the text.*

*This research has shown that a cathartic reaction is the tough hierarchial process which needs serious and profound studies.*

**Keywords:** *a catharsis phenomenon, a cathartic reactions, psychodynamic, emotional and conceptual levels.*

### **1. Introduction**

Considering interaction of the person and the contemporary musical culture, we focused on the laws of the contemporary musical culture. The latter is understood as a result of achievements of a world human thought in the field of the composition, performance and perception of the music promoting spiritual perfecting of each individual and social progress on the whole.

**2. The aim** of research is to study a catharsis phenomenon using an example of perception of works of art by the modern students.

Research is based on the methods of comparativistics, questioning, conversation, the included observation and the essay.

### **3. Discussion**

**Problem 1 – intuitivism of perception.** Television, video and radio programs with typical immediacy, mixture of subjects and the ideas, replication (creation of numerous copies) and "culture of disks" – all this became daily ways of fixing esthetic experience. The piece of music, losing the unique character, becomes even more interesting thanks to multiple interpretations. In order to understand them Not only rational, but also intuitive component of mentality does join in to comprehend them. Specifics of interaction of these components in the concrete act of listener's perception make it possible to subdivide listeners and spectators into objective (a dominance of intelligence in perception) or subjective (a dominance of an intuition) types. Hence it is clear that creation of typologies of listener's groups and studying psychological aspects of their functioning give the chance to find out interrelations and interdependence of the concepts "the person — the contemporary musical culture" [1; 5; 6; 4].

**Problem 2. Distinguishing types of listeners.** In the modern domestic scientific literature an example of a typology of listeners of symphony concerts is reviewed by B. Smirnov. He offers

seven types. The first is the anti-musical person who is not interested in the academic music. The second is the layman lacking culture. The third is the cultural layman. The fourth is the "good listener" deriving pleasure from a meeting with fine (as a rule, those are students of musical educational institutions and music lovers). The fifth is the well knowing listener (the musician - professional). The sixth is the listener-expert (according to T. Adorno). This group consists of professional musicians of middle and advanced age. The seventh type is "sectarian puritan" according to T. Adorno [1] – the professional musicians coming to concerts with the score in hands and sitting always in the same place in the auditorium during the concert [4, p. 86-89].

Contemporary western researchers R. Stebbins and T. Gates offered their own variant of a typology of "participation of the person in musical activity" [5; 6]. In this connection R. Stebbins sets the task "to shed light on the interesting and satisfying kinds of activity of people after work, on opportunities of developing the person and society, available at "serious leisure time"; and to show how people can transform their free time into the optimum mode of carrying out leisure [5, p. 64-72]. It is essential that many groups of people of serious leisure exert positive impact on welfare of community. T. Gates considered six groups of such participants: 1) professionals; 2) pupils; 3) fans; 4) hobbyists; 5) recreationists; and 6) laymen [6]. As is seen from this classification, the three first groups: professionals, pupils (students and future professionals), and fans form the social musical environment which defines a condition of musical trends of the modern western society. We believe that the example of distribution of similar groups (types) of participants of musical activity can be quite effective also for domestic musical culture and system of music education [3].

**Problem 3.** The discriminatory nature of music perception by the modern youth is caused by plurality, heterogeneity and poor quality of musical production. Listening of a huge flow of the sound information "eating" time resources is consciously avoided by the contemporary younger generation. At the choice of pieces of music they quite often are guided by the advice of the friends, recommendations obtained at musical forums and other Internet sources, as well as address for the advice to the senior generation and sometimes with interest master "aged values in a new way". This is reflected in creation of remakes. Such is, for example, use of polyphonic music of I.-S. Bach by the Procol Harum group and use of long quotes from classical music by the groups King Crimson and Genesis. The ideas leading authors of such remakes are seemingly democratic, and the purposes are high-minded, but the belief in self-evident at the same time expansion of art consciousness of the usual consumers is not always justified because remakes themselves have no sufficient art value. And we cannot speak in this case about increase in level of esthetic values of listeners.

**Problem 4. Global nature of the academic culture and its influence.** This problem is caused by globalization of information space. Twenty – twenty-five years ago, in the conditions of multimillion circulations of production of variety and rock music, it was almost impossible to find masterpieces of representatives of the academic musical tradition on counters of domestic musical shops: "Well-Tempered Clavier" by J.S. Bach performed by V. Landovskaya, the symphony G-minor by W. Mozart performed by orchestra under the baton of G. Karajan, L. Maazel; works performed by violinists V. Tretyakov, G. Kremer, L. Kogan, violist Yu. Bashmet; cellists I. Monigetti, N. Guttman, N. Shakhovskaya, the keyboard player A. Lyubimov, "drummer" M. Pekarsky; works by A. Schnittke and E. Denisov who were for decades unknown to general public. Today all these works became accessible to any listener. He does not have need to make any efforts, he must only make request in Internet. The high level of the academic culture involuntarily becomes means of "suppression" of other musical spheres which are not always holding on to the existing performing and content level.

Understanding all complexity of the contemporary musical culture, one of research problems was clarification of what impact the designated problems exert on process of perception of the contemporary students. Our research was conducted on the experimental basis with students of Institute of Arts of the Adyghe State University – artists, designers, musicians and choreographers.

One of working methods was writing the essay on the subject "Catharsis Produced by Works of the Modern Art" about unique, own experience of feeling works of art. However, names of authors living previously were listed among authors of the modern art: I. Ayvazovsky, J.S. Bach, D. Defoe, F. Dostoyevsky, W. Mozart, S. Rachmaninov, N. Rimsky-Korsakov, F. Chopin, P. Tchaikovsky and I. Shishkin. Among the 20-21st century representatives there was a creativity of the Beatles group, M. Bulgakov, S. King, I. Stravinsky, L. Clive, D. Cruz's works, etc.

Our work with students focused on a clarification of features of course of "catharsis" as special type of sincere clarification, shock and transformation experienced in the course of activity, associated with perception and creation of works of art. In this context we were guided by words of the modern composer S.V. Zhukov believing that the catharsis reminds an energy vibration flow "which can be positioned as a picturesque cloth, as theatrical action, as music, as a sculpture and as architecture. Its basis is energy-vibration" [2, p. 2].

Before carrying out experimental work we made an assumption that course of catharsis reaction represents the complicated graduated process which can be recorded at several levels. The first level is the elementary somatic reactions of the warm - cold or goosebumps type. The second is the possibilities of emotional experience and expression by examinees of their reactions by means of colorful descriptions. The third level is an exit to the level of ontological generalizations in a symbolical form. Experimental work with students included various forms and methods: perception of pieces of music of various styles and genres (musical classics, the jazz, rock music, folklore) in our performance, a conversation, discussions about music, repeated listening to pieces of music performed by masters, the questioning, an interview, testing, homework, included observation, etc.

The analysis of statements of participants of experimental work shows that their reactions proceeded not chaotically and some "constancy" is characteristic of them. There are grounds for believing that there is a certain "uniform" equivalent of expression of a catharsis reaction at recipients. It is possible to assume that they have a polyphonic course at several levels, as well as a high-quality transition from one level to another that was diagnosed by the following indexes: expression of emotions mainly in action verbs (level 1); in nouns in apposition and adverbs (level 2); in a symbolical form (the taking-off plane, the burning candle, masks – level 3). However it would be incorrect to believe that catharsis reactions pass only in the designated borders and it is possible to verify and "count these reactions" completely.

Thus, for example, in statements of the students who are conditionally referred by us to the first level of course of a catharsis reaction, the extreme variety of feelings is marked. They show no stereotype and each of participants of experimental work experiences feeling of a catharsis in own way, personally, individually. At one students it is associated first of all with "feeling of maintaining hope in life" (student S., Fine Arts Department), at others, with "goosebumps" from reading the book, hearing music or examining a landscape in a picture, writing pieces of poetry (student K., Department of Design, student A., Department of Music Education); at the third, with the complete dissolution in music and trembling of the body (student Z., Department of Choreographic Art), etc. Of undoubted interest is also the remark on impossibility of precise mathematic analysis of the catharsis reaction which does not yield to the logical analysis.

In statements of students referred to the second level of experience of the catharsis reactions, they speak first of all of their actually emotional feelings which arose under the influence of music, painting and literature. They all are united by open, nonanalytic, or unintentional relation to works of different types of art. They demonstrate a turn (rather an overturn in their souls) which happened under the influence of music (student L., Department of Design, student V., Fine Arts Department). Also, deep feelings of participants of experimental work are brightly marked under the influence of identification with characters of literary works (student V., Department of Choreography, student V., Fine Arts Department). In our opinion, also manifestation of effect of a catharsis as necessary component of self-expression of the personality of the creator (the artist or the musician) deserves attention (student Z., Department of Music Education). That is, anyway, all statements carried by us to the second level of reaction show a dynamism, aspiration to self-improvement, self-development

and a self-reflection. At the same time somatopsychic feelings of surprise, delight, flight and desire to create in the selected field of activity were not gone anywhere, were not lost, but became even brighter.

In statements of the participants of work who are conditionally referred by us to the third, highest level of manifestation of the catharsis reactions, they already show wish to learn the life of the artist and to comprehend the world around. "Art is something fine and at the same time even frightening. In art the person expresses his feeling and vision of the world through pictures, sculptures, literature and music. As for a catharsis, for me this is a feeling when you finished or reached that that you wanted in your work ... If I am not mistaken, a catharsis is one of those things which give meaning of life, doing it not prime existence" (student K., Fine Arts Department). "If I was asked what work made the greatest and indelible impression on me, to think and test the sea of the most various feelings and emotions, I would answer that it is Daniel Cruz's book "Flowers for Algernon". The narration goes from Charlie Gordon – the mentally retarded man, thirty two years dreaming to learn the world and to find many good friends. Getting to conditions of a medical experiment and having become ingenious, the hero loses all the friends and feels deep disappointment. This disappointment passes also to the reader and the improbable depth of experiences cannot leave anybody indifferent. This book teaches us to love the person, all people, regardless of the levels of development of their intelligence. It is unimportant what is IQ of the person, how many languages he knows, how well he is able to play musical instruments, nevertheless he is, first of all, the person!" (student I., Department of Design). "Of all writers of the last century M. Bulgakov is most attractive to me. In Bulgakov's novel, two main forces of good and the evil act, which, according to the author, have to be in balance on Earth. Having read the novel "Master and Margarita", I could understand that if we create good, then angry will forever leave our souls and the world will become better and kinder" (student E., Department of Music Education).

We provided in detail some statements of participants of experimental work referred to the third level of manifestation of a catharsis reaction because they clearly show honesty and openness of the psychoemotional response to artistic images of works of art, there is an identification to these heroes, attempts to comprehend ourselves, the inner world, the world around and their place in it. Besides, in such statements the active living position of students and their aspiration to improvement of an environmental reality by laws of Beauty, ideals of Good, Perfection, Harmony, and Validity are marked. Undoubtedly, authors are ready to defend their views of art in future profession, that, in itself, is important and testifies to practical effectiveness of the research of course of a catharsis reaction even for participants of an experiment themselves. As a result of carrying out experimental work it is possible to draw the following conclusions.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The research of a problem of interaction of the person and the contemporary art culture by means of experience of a catharsis show that the selection nature of perception and rest on already existing experience in selection of works is relevant for the contemporary youth. Besides, it is indicative that preferences are given to works of the academic culture that confirms the nature of its global influence. A problem of experience of a catharsis in art activity by representatives of different profiles – music, the fine arts and design – is urgent and needs a separate, in-depth study.

As a result of carrying out experimental work, the assumption that a catharsis reaction is a complicated, hierarchized process of experience by recipients of works of art is confirmed. It proceeds at several levels, closely interconnected with each other: from the elementary somatic reactions, "warm cold, goosebumps", psychophysical feelings (level 1); emotional experience under the influence of the work of art (level 2); to a possibility of experience, an emotional shock and expression by examinees of their reactions in a symbolical form, with an exit to the level of ontological generalizations, related to value orientations of belief and the vital principles of life (level 3). The reaction of "emotional clarification" begins at participants of the experimental work

"in purity" with the second catharsis level designated by us in the form of expressed in dynamics of aspiration to self-improvement, to self-development and to self-reflection.

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