

# *Research on the Relationship between Diversity and Unity of Aesthetic Education*

**Kang Zhanqiang**

*School of Humanities and Arts, Xi'an International University, Xi'an, 710077, China*

**Keywords:** Aesthetic Education, Diversity, Uniformity, Educational Thought, Aesthetic Quality

**Abstract:** Aesthetic education is an education that uses beautiful things to educate and promote human development. Aesthetic education is closely related to the overall development of human beings. The main purpose of aesthetic education is to develop the educational thought practice of human potential in an all-round way. It is composed of aesthetic education, art education, aesthetic education, personality education, emotional education, and aesthetic knowledge. Its appearance includes the recognition of natural beauty, social beauty, scientific beauty, and artistic beauty. At the same time, aesthetic education is an important part of human cultural education. It organically connects various knowledge blocks in related fields to form a relatively independent educational ideology with unique functions, characteristics, laws, properties and methods. Its purpose is to enhance people's ability to recognize, understand, appreciate and create beauty, and ultimately cultivate a sound human nature and noble personality.

## **1. Introduction**

Aesthetic education is to shape people's sound personality, cultivate their healthy aesthetic ability and cultivate their noble feelings in a subtle way. As an educational practice and cultural form, aesthetic education has different views on the cognition and category of aesthetic education in different civilizations and countries in its long history. In the course of the development of aesthetic education, Schiller, a German classical aesthetician, was the first to establish its independent disciplinary status. His Book of Aesthetic Education is the first book of aesthetic criticism of modernity. Schiller advocates that art should be transformed into a way of communication, making it clear that artistic communication will be realized in the future "aesthetic country", so as to build an aesthetic ideal home. Schiller mentioned in the Book of Aesthetic Education that "human nature has lost its dignity, but art has saved it and preserved it in the stone full of meaning; truth continues to exist in illusion, and prototype will be rebuilt from imitation. Just as noble art lives longer and older than noble nature, noble art also walks ahead of noble nature in inspiring spirit, creating and calling." [1]From this point of view, although Schiller's aesthetic education thought was a Utopian fantasy at that time, it stimulated the spiritual world of many scholars, thus opening the curtain of the development of modern aesthetic education thought.

## **2. Development of diversified fields of aesthetic education**

Aesthetic education is an interdisciplinary subject between aesthetics, psychology, pedagogy, etc. In view of this, it is necessary to recognize the characteristics of the intersection and diversity of the field of aesthetic education practice. In the practical cognitive category of aesthetic education discipline, it is mainly embodied in aesthetic education, aesthetic education history, aesthetic education psychology, aesthetic education practice, aesthetic education sociology, comparative aesthetic education and other fields.

### **2.1. Aesthetic education**

The so-called aesthetic education studies the basic theory of aesthetic education and clarifies the system and basic categories of aesthetic education. As a unique educational form, aesthetic education contains educational content covering all the scope and process of its aesthetic education activities. Aesthetic education has its own relatively stable discussion and research objects, and practical problems and universal theories, such as the function, method, nature, approach and task of aesthetic education, as well as the aesthetic accomplishment of the audience, which is the foothold of aesthetic education.

### **2.2. History of aesthetic education**

The history of aesthetic education is a summary of the history and laws of the development of aesthetics in various countries throughout the world. Facing the development history of aesthetic education for thousands of years, the common division is: Greek and Roman aesthetics, medieval and Renaissance aesthetics, 17th to 18th century aesthetics, German classical aesthetics, 19th and early 20th century aesthetics (modern aesthetics), and 20th century and today's aesthetics (modern aesthetics). [2]To sort out the history of aesthetic education, clarify the most basic theoretical issues of aesthetic education, and explore the essence of the development of aesthetic education is the prerequisite for solving problems in other fields of aesthetic education.

### **2.3. Aesthetic education psychology**

Aesthetic education psychology is to explore and study aesthetic education from the perspective of psychological mechanism of aesthetic education. Aesthetic education guides and expresses people's psychology through elegant works of art and healthy aesthetic activities, thus becoming a healthy way to resolve negative psychological energy. Practice has proved that aesthetic education is to improve and affect people's mental health through beautiful things. In the lively aesthetic activities, aesthetic education is a good way to guide people to express their psychology, make people happy physically and mentally, intoxicated, so as to meet people's psychological needs and make people join the road of civilization.

### **2.4. Practice of aesthetic education**

Aesthetic education practice is to provide practical and theoretical guidance for the practical operation of aesthetic education. Through the use of modern educational means and communication methods, such as the use of big data to analyze the classification of aesthetic education audience groups, effective targeted aesthetic education is carried out for people of different ages, different customs, and different cultural backgrounds. It is the common ideal of human education to design and implement aesthetic education activities from the aesthetic point of view, improve the previous

single and rigid practice mode and method, reasonably use the fusion media for effective communication, and carry out all-round innovation and discussion on the implementation of aesthetic education, in order to make aesthetic education become an aesthetic practice that follows the principles of beauty and shapes people according to the laws of beauty. It is also the new direction of the reform and development of aesthetic education today.

## **2.5. Sociology of aesthetic education**

Sociology of aesthetic education aims to study the basic social attributes of aesthetic education and its relationship with economy, politics, culture and history. From the perspective of social development and people's all-round development, aesthetic education can cultivate people to look at the whole society with a beautiful mind and lofty pursuit, and aesthetic education with aesthetic appreciation as the core plays a catalytic role in supporting the process of social development. Therefore, a sound system of aesthetic education must play a role in the relationship between social factors, so that the function of aesthetic education can reach the degree of internal consistency in all aspects.

## **2.6. Comparative aesthetic education**

Comparative aesthetic education mainly studies the characteristics of aesthetic education in various countries and regions of the world, as well as the comparative methods and methods used. In the Eastern Zhou Dynasty of China, etiquette, music, archery, imperial, calligraphy, and numeracy appeared, which is the so-called "six arts", in which "music" and "calligraphy", to a certain extent, contain the elements of aesthetic education. At the same time, the "six arts" also include the moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, labor and aesthetic education factors proposed today. Poetics, a work by Aristotle, an ancient Greek philosopher, which established an aesthetic system, comprehensively discussed various art forms such as comedy, tragedy, epic, etc. Many aesthetic education thoughts involved in it have a classical and foundational position in the field of aesthetics and become one of the sources of later generations' research on aesthetic education theories.

## **3. The unified function of aesthetic education**

Aesthetics is the basic demand of people, through which people can enjoy beauty, which is of great significance to people. The unity goal of aesthetic education is to improve and promote the improvement of people's aesthetic quality, promote the occurrence of aesthetic education effects and gain people's recognition. Its functions are divided into the following:

### **3.1. Cultivation of aesthetic ability and construction of aesthetic consciousness**

People's aesthetic ability and quality have a direct impact on their aesthetic life. People with high-quality aesthetic ability can experience beauty in all aspects. Aesthetic ability is also an activity directly related to aesthetic consciousness, which is an important way for people to realize their aesthetic needs. Improving people's aesthetic ability plays an important role in the comprehensive role of aesthetic education. The embodiment of aesthetic consciousness lies in the improvement and enhancement of people's aesthetic quality and aesthetic ability. While improving people's individual and overall social aesthetic consciousness, the way to build aesthetic consciousness cannot simply rely on preaching and indoctrination, but should focus on the cultivation of aesthetic interest, which is naturally carried out in the specific process of aesthetic appreciation and creation.

### **3.2. Enrichment of aesthetic needs and stimulation of aesthetic creation**

"Aesthetic needs are the potential aesthetic pursuit and desire of human beings, and the spiritual needs of human beings to show their vitality, develop themselves and obtain positive enjoyment from them. Every person is engaged in practical activities according to his specific needs and the possibility of meeting needs, and human needs are their nature." [3] It can be seen that enriching and cultivating people's ability in artistic activities is a direct way to improve and meet aesthetic needs. The main measure to stimulate aesthetic creation is to cultivate people's strong aesthetic creation motivation, and to cultivate people's ability to appreciate, create and express beauty through various beautiful things in a planned, purposeful and organized way, so that people's aesthetic creation can be stimulated and people's aesthetic needs can be fully met.

### **3.3. The guidance of aesthetic life**

Aesthetic life can positively affect people's will and emotion, and give people inspiration and imagination of life. There are many possibilities for beauty and aesthetics in many aspects of life. Aesthetic life covers most areas of life, mainly including the appreciation and discovery of natural beauty, the aesthetic enjoyment and creation of rich material products and material living conditions, the development and creation of harmonious relations between people, the appreciation and creation of people's own beauty, and the appreciation and creation of artistic beauty. The way of aesthetic life guidance is mainly reflected in establishing a good outlook on life, cultivating people's close attitude towards harmonious society and nature from childhood, and consciously creating an aesthetic atmosphere in daily life, especially in family life, so as to guide people to develop good aesthetic habits, which is a realistic way to consciously move towards aesthetic life. Leading aesthetic life embodies the positive social function of aesthetic education, and improves people's artistic living ability in its own unique way.

## **4. Comprehensive practice embodiment of aesthetic education**

### **4.1. Aesthetic education embodiment of humanities**

Aesthetic education belongs to the humanities. The history of the development of the humanities education in modern universities can see a main line of humanities, aesthetic education and "human" education, which has gone through the process of aesthetic education enlightenment, aesthetic education supplement and aesthetic education noumenon. Educator Cai Yuanpei explained the aesthetic education in his Opinions on New Education: "The aesthetic feeling, in terms of beauty and dignity, lies between the phenomenal world and the physical world, and is the focus of attention. This was created by Kant, and no later philosophers opposed it." [4] Therefore, Cai Yuanpei used Kant's theory of aesthetic communication between the phenomenal world and the thing in itself to shape people's complete personality through emotional communication. He also subdivided art, aesthetics and humanistic education into such courses as beauty and civilization, beauty and creation, beauty and accomplishments, beauty and taste, beauty and wealth, thus enriching the humanistic discipline system.

### **4.2. Aesthetic education embodiment of aesthetics**

Aesthetic education is a branch of aesthetic discipline, and aesthetics is an ancient discipline. Kant's "beauty is a purposeless and purposeful form" and Hegel's "beauty is the perceptual manifestation of ideas" are both the highest achievements of human classical understanding of beauty

and the comprehensive achievements of human beings in the pure theoretical level of beauty. German aesthetician Heidegger put forward the important proposition that human beings should "inhabit this land poetically". The so-called "poetic living" can be understood as "aesthetic life", which closely links aesthetics with the improvement of human living conditions, and also pulls aesthetics back from pure theoretical speculation to real life. This makes aesthetic education go from an unimportant branch of aesthetics to the forefront of aesthetics, beyond the pure theoretical "beauty", "aesthetics", "art", etc., and become the most important topic. From the perspective of improving people's living conditions, in a sense, aesthetic education is also aesthetics, which is indeed a huge change in the aesthetics discipline in the new era. In contemporary times, we can understand that aesthetics, as life aesthetics, is aesthetic education in a broad sense. [5]

### 4.3. Aesthetic education embodiment of educational discipline

In the introduction of the National Standards for American Art Education, it is pointed out that art education is beneficial to students because it can cultivate complete people. In the process of art learning, students will gradually form rich cultural accomplishment. Therefore, education without art is incomplete. [6] This standard elevates aesthetic education to a level that concerns the integrity of education, which is the result of the summary of historical experience. This not only sums up the criticism caused by the single professional education system dominated by rationalism since the industrial revolution in the 18th century, but also sums up the negative consequences of the neglect of aesthetic education since the 20th century. At the International Education Seminar for the 21st Century held by UNESCO, "Learning to Care: Education for the 21st Century" was put forward, which will raise "care" as a non intellectual factor to the central topic of education in the future century. It can be seen that the contemporary development of aesthetic education is the inevitable result of universal attention to quality education in the 21st century.

In the long historical process of the development of aesthetic education, the knowledge category system and theoretical framework of aesthetic education have been constantly enriched and improved. As a discipline on aesthetic education, aesthetic education has the humanity and application of quality education and complete personality shaping. Through the realization of the diversity and unity of aesthetic education, we can promote civilization progress, improve social development, and enhance the effect of education and education in a subtle way, so as to fully verify the development effect of aesthetic education and ultimately promote the free and all-round development of human beings.

### Acknowledgement

Fund Project: One of the Phased Achievements of the Shaanxi Social Science Fund Project "Research on the Value of Red Culture in Promoting Shaanxi Contemporary Thematic Art Creation" (2019K017); One of the Phased Achievements of the Key Project of Shaanxi Arts and Sciences Planning Project, "Research on Yan'an Spiritual Thematic Art Creation" (Project Number: 2022HZ1660).

### References

- [1] [German]Xi L. *Aesthetic Education Booklet* [M]. Translated by Zhang Yuneng. Nanjing: Yilin Press 2012:25.
- [2] Ye L. *Principles of Aesthetics* [M]. Beijing: Peking University Press 2009:3.
- [3] Marx Engels. *The Complete Works of Marx and Engels Volume 3* [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House 1960:514.
- [4] *Selected Works of Cai Yuanpei* [M]. Nie Z. Note. Tianjin: Baihua Literature and Art Publishing House 2006:32.
- [5] Zeng F. *Fifteen lectures on aesthetic education* [M]. Beijing: Peking University Press 2012: 48.
- [6] Wang W. *Research on contemporary american art education* [M]. Zhengzhou: Henan People's Publishing House 2004: 4.