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### **ONTOLOGICAL STATUS OF HUMAN BEAUTY**

*SUMMARY. This article is devoted to ontological aspects of human beauty. Since in the epistemological approach to the nature and essence of beauty, prevailing in research practice, the role of human beauty in forming human essence remains unclarified, the author places emphasis on the ontological range of problems of human beauty. The investigation aims at studying mutual influence and interrelation of human beauty and human essence in anthropogenesis. It is asserted that human beauty, as a complicated phenomenon, developed by the tools of art at various historical stages, was the mode of human essence, harmonizing the physical and social human nature. The author attempted to discover the influence of human beauty on reduction of the gap between the individual and social beginning of human essence. Thus, the relevance of human beauty investigation is founded by contemporary problems of the human essence state and development. Consideration of the problem from the perspective of the esthetic and anthropological approach enables to reveal a more intricate relationship between human beauty and essence in cultural genesis.*

*KEY WORDS. Human beauty, human essence, esthetic anthropology, tools of art.*

Beauty is the most important category of culture. Beauty refers not only to contemplation as it has been illustrated in epistemological interpretation since the 18th century, but also to ontology and anthropology as first pointed out by I. Kant. Kant's concept comprises an ontological principle of beauty. His definition of beauty as of an "emotional value" leads to axiological, ontological and anthropological interpretations. The fundamental human nature reveals itself in the existence of supreme values. We shall consider the human beauty in the range of ultimate senses not just revealing the essence of a human being, but realizing human existence.

Why did "consciousness of a public person consistently develop in cognizing the reality in two forms — in its sensually concrete manifestation and in its generality [...] as logic and as an immediate perception, as a notion and as an image, as science and as art, as reality and as beauty" [1; 148]? Why does society originally create an aesthetic activity? Classical epistemology does not reveal all secrets of the beautiful. Aesthetic ways of self-cognition, which determine development of human essence, are studied by aesthetic anthropology, a branch of modern philosophy, successfully started in the early 2000s [2]. M.N. Shcherbinin, pronouncing aesthetic and anthropological ways of cognition and implementation of human existence, affirms that the aesthetic in the branches of art which kept leading positions in turns, "provided a

human being and the humankind not only with a possibility of self-recognition, self-detection and self-realization but also with development, expansion and exposure of its most profound ontological characteristics" [3; 6].

Philosophical conception of the modern times specifies a need, more and more clearly outlined, for overcoming the self-contradictory epistemological concept of the aesthetic, dominating from the 18th century; and for consideration of aesthetic processes in a broader context of culturological, sociological, psychological and other (anthropological) knowledge. For example, E. Lévinas wrote that "the art is not a serene journey of a human being who started creating beauty. The culture and artistic creation make part of the ontological order itself. They are ontological par excellence, as far as they make comprehension of existence possible. It is no coincidence that extolment of culture and cultures, and exaltation of the artistic aspect of culture guides the spiritual life of the modern age [4; 604-605]. Thus, substantiation of philosophical anthropology and aesthetics on the basis of modern social philosophy as "an active social role of aesthetic science in understanding specific universal mechanism of aesthetic control of people's movement" [5; 3] considerably expands the subject basis of aesthetics and philosophical anthropology.

Thus, A.P. Voevodin turns to the study of anthropological reasons of sensible and emotional culture, anthropological limits of the notion of "emotion" as of a social and intra-cultural event, implying, exactly in this aspect, the prospects of this new approach in philosophical and anthropological studies, i.e. aesthetical anthropology [5]. In the domain of philosophical and psychological anthropology the problems of beauty may be considered in a broader perspective of "understanding of the aesthetical as of the most important essential sphere of human existence" [5; 4].

If we try to define beauty in accordance with the traditions of classical aesthetics, from the viewpoint of epistemology, we shall note that beauty is the perception in its perfection. A. Baumgarten, being the father of the science of aesthetics, proposed a well-known definition of beauty as follows: aesthetics is the science of perfection of sense experience, and beauty is the most perfect kind of knowledge that sense experience can have. In the variety of research paradigms, the harmony, the internal dialectical contradictory unity, reasonability and homokinetic equilibrium of "human being" system act as a good reason of the sense of beauty, which makes every object, event or process beautiful in our perception.

O.N. Butkevich investigates the problem of good reason of subjective aesthetical evaluation often described as "the major issue of aesthetics". He notes that many objects of different quality give rise to our sense of beauty since they have, in the inward nature, a good reason for such senses. The reason should be consistent and arising the same sense of beauty in all viewers. This sense has a sophisticated structure, and it is connected with joy. We shall always distinguish this sense from similar ones which are not the sense of beauty. The investigator presents it in the following way: while facing "the unity in its dialectic and dynamic meaning", the internal contradictory unity" and "experiencing joyful feeling ... of the beauty", perception of only external correctness and consistency produces a feeling which is just "more or less pleasant" [1; 142-143].

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Thus in mutual development of human essence and human beauty, an individual tries, by means of own philosophy, to reveal good reasons of beauty. Inherent properties of a subject appear for an outer source of the feeling of beauty. They are detected in the external properties of the outer source as perception of a subject's beauty including harmony, equilibrium, reasonability, dialectical contradictory unity as a source of movement. At the same time the existence of beauty in the world as a phenomenon of subjective and spontaneous perception justified human subjectivity, "subjectivity, activeness of appraisal and immediacy of action". Beauty justifies and determines a human being as a subject of perception, thinking and action by participation in development of ontological characteristics of a human being.

With regard to the human culture, the variety of properly human forms of movement contains a consistent aesthetic source.

Over the course of human history since the Palaeolithic period we can trace historical "escape" from natural sources to a spiritual constituent, i.e. to the "proper human" source, created by means of human beauty. Human beauty was defined as "the way of producing social, but not biological essence" [5; 4].

The modern age which defines the anthropological principle of philosophy as a study of a human being in the unity of its ontological and existential, material and ideal, physical and spiritual, individual and social sources, finds this balanced start in the changing status of the human beauty as a universal, sophisticated and comprehensive phenomenon. Human beauty is a way to return to natural sources, to harmonization of biological and social sources, i.e. a way of dealienation of a human being from his/her own nature. Quotations of I. Efremov on natural reasonability of human beauty represent this tendency as a vivid example. The writer affirms that "every race ... had its own elegance, its own extent of the beautiful" [6; 125], as far as during the long process of blind evolutionary selection of higher human beings, "[...] reasonability of their adaptation to the outside conditions and requirements of life, the very reasonability which the beauty is" developed [6; 147].

In general we can admit that at different levels of the genesis of the sense the beauty of a human being was acting as a way of "escape" from the animal nature to the human one, from herd to society. Human beauty was a way to break free from historical traditions for reaching a new condition of the human essence by the effort of self "collecting".

Ceremonial and esoteric beauty of Palaeolithic tribes is supernatural and "transcendental": a human being makes a breakthrough outside its natural and corporeal form. Decorated and "truncated" body "develops into a ritual" (J. Baudrillard) and hides behind a mask exercising a relatively primitive "anthropological" solution or visualization of growing sociality.

Statuary art of the ancient world represents one of the secrets of human civilization. The beauty of a human body materialized in its perfection was a shift away only from its biological essence. By what means did the ancient civilization, presented in the form of a perfectly ideal nude human body as an aesthetic tool, implement its aspiration for harmony and growth of spiritual and social representation in the changing essence of a human being?

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A transition from the mythological worldview to philosophical perception of the world took place in the ancient times. The beauty of the body in ideal proportions, principal personification of the beauty as of the ultimate value in the hierarchy of values, and definition of the world order with the help of the categories of measure, proportion, harmony or “body intuition” (as defined by O. Spengler) was qualified as a dominant factor in transition of consciousness from a mythological method of generalization to philosophical abstractions [7; 51]. A.F. Losev, for example, assumes that “the study of ideas is the study of sculpture” [8; 94].

Remaining figurativeness as a feature of ancient thinking reinforced influence of the human beauty, statuary presented, on spiritual and social practice of ancient society. Thus, Platonic philosopher-ruler, inspired by the idea of social perfection and justice, should be contemplating this idea, peering into “what is just, beautiful and rational by nature” [9; 297], into a godlike figure peculiar of people. Archetypically the sculpture imprinted the prototype of social harmony, coherence and proportion of parts of social environment as of parts of a human body and their harmonious balance. Thus, human beauty acted as a means of creation of “a busy zone of consciousness”, as mentioned by M.K. Mamardashvili who determined the phenomenon of Ancient Greece as “a phenomenon of presence of all Greeks in some zone of intense (and associated) consciousness” [10; 197].

In the Middle Ages in Europe the human essence in its transcendent nature was explained by means of such a philosophic and theosophic category as Primary Substance. The nature of the human race here was usually expressed and represented by means of graphic arts and expressive means of icon painting, pictorial art and later by means of theatre in a particular Figure, archetype and image bearing “an impression”, “an assignment”, an idea or a sense of the Original.

In our opinion, human beauty unites all diversity of the socially typical and the generic; besides, beauty unites the social, the typical and the generic, which may be considered as a subsystem of the universal, of all diversity of the individual and of the subjective. This unity appeared, first of all, on picturesque portraits of the Renaissance representing stratum— and class-related essence of a human being through beauty.

Onto-epistemological paradigms of the 20th century in one way or another reveal the ability of a human being to directly perceive, manifest and visualize its generic or universal essence, as well as to perfect (harmonize) and ontologize its parameters and aspects. Most ontological studies of the 20th century unfolded through an anthropological approach in its various alternatives centered on human existence. With regard to the above-mentioned, aesthetic categories are applied in the ontological sense. L. Feuerbach proclaimed anthropological principles of philosophy and started considering the development of beauty in a human being starting from his/her natural origin to unlimited self-actualization in the social world. As a creation of nature, a human being becomes such in the social world: “Nature is the essence undistinguishable from existence, a human being is the essence distinguishing himself/herself from existence; thus, nature is the foundation of a human being” [11; 190]. The Anthropol-

logical manifesto of L. Feuerbach and his appeal to consider a human being through the unity of natural origin and spiritual way of self-actualization is recorded in aesthetic anthropology which investigates aesthetic parameters of sense genesis. Human beauty developed by means of art is presented as a way of “anthropomorphization of a human being”.

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