

Symmetry of STRUCTURE

an interdisciplinary Symposium

Abstracts

I.



Edited by Gy. Darvas and D. Nagy

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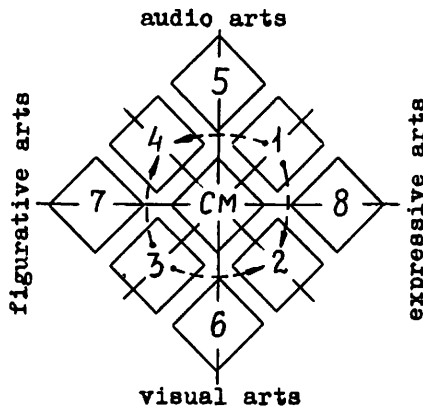
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"FUNCTIONAL ASYMMETRY"
 IN THE SYSTEM OF ARTS

B.M.Galeyev, Kazan, USSR

Aesthetics has been striking for a long time to find out if some sort of order exists in the family of Muses. The author has also made his own contribution suggesting a kind of a "periodic system" of arts, not so strict as that of D.I.Mendelejev in chemistry, but possessing sufficient motivation and richness of content (1). We should like to specially point out that schematic execution of the suggested classification of arts has a symmetrical structure and along both axes at that (Fig.1).

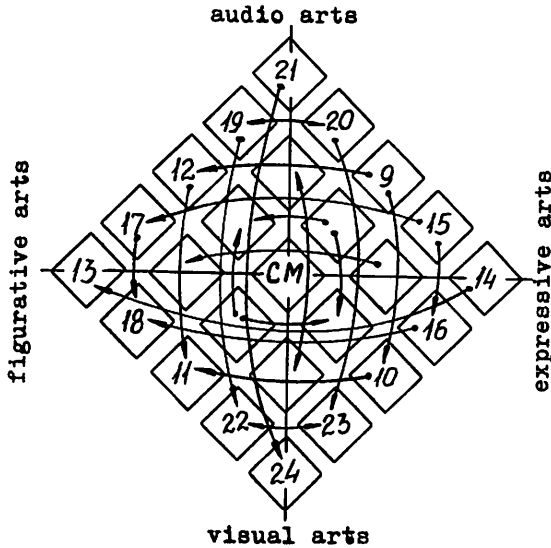


What is this graphic-structural method of analysis that we have developed based on? Here we employ the method of spatial "splitting" of the essential powers of the integral man - conditionally he is placed in the centre as "the measure of all things" (in this scheme it is a "creative man"). "Bifurcation of the unity and the cognition of its contradictory parts" form, according to V.I.Lenin, "the essence of dialectics" (2,p.316). In keeping with this principle, this scheme enables to successively discover "the coordinate pair" of our interest of the related binary oppositions which characterizes a definite planar section of the multidimensional field of man's essential powers ("subjective abilities", according to K.Marx). This specifically provides for the differentiation of arts into "figurative" - "expressive (non-figurative)" and "audio" - "visual". Thus, such representation of oppositions is justified if only it offers a vivid illustration of the interdependence of opposites characterizing the system as an integral whole.

So the initial result of the artistic activities of "creative man" (CM) if we consider the genesis of art, is known, to be syncretic art (it is projected in the centre of the scheme). In the process of the division of labour and the specialization of the artistic creation objectivation takes place of certain essential powers of man assuming the form of independent arts: music (1); architecture, ornament (2); painting, sculpture (3); art of word (4). Although basically progressive acquisition of the kinds independence is fraught with deep-laid contradictions. It proves to be dialectically linked with the constant aspiration to preserve that complexity of reality reflection which was characteristic of syncretic art when perception was just as integral as it is in the case of the direct contact with the world and aesthetical apprehension of nature. This aspiration facilitated the preservation of the bisensory character in the dramatic (7) and choreographic (8) art forms, and the "reflection-expression" unity - in the song-folclore (5) and the applied (6) arts. Moreover, at the proper level of social and material development the autonomous arts which have assumed independent status may be intentionally involved in various synthetic combinations as well (3 and 4 - book illustrations; 2 and 3 - monumental art; 1 and 4 - vocal music etc.). Besides, along with this obvious system-type relationship as the "synthesis" there exist between the system components some sort of interactions "at a distance", characterizing the process of mutual influence, mutual imitation among arts - it is denominated "synaesthesia of arts" if it occurs between visual and aural arts (there exist similar associative interactions between figurative and expressive arts). The most vivid examples are "pictorial" music by the expressionist composers, "musical" painting by V.V.Kandinsky, M.K.Ciurlionis etc. Hence, the processes of differentiation and interaction of arts not only supplement each other but are interconditional as well. The analysis makes it possible to speak of the presence in the system of arts, besides centrifugal forces, of some sort of centripetal forces whose dialectical unity determines the possibility of the integrity preservation of the expanding system of arts which is consistently and substantially mastering new aspects of its developing subject (reality, the world).

These conclusions are made on the basis of the analysis of traditional arts. But the technical stores of arts are being constantly renewed. This become particularly evident in the last

century. The possibilities offered by the new technology have been immediately put to use to satisfy growing artistic requirements. And so with traditional arts have been preserved, "by side" with them (as shown by the system scheme of arts) new art forms begin to emerge not copying the old kinds but proceeding with the development of their possibilities owing to the potential of a new means of audio-visual communication. Taken as a whole they form the new outer layer of the system of arts (Fig.2). If we apply to this outer layer the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the system of traditional arts there appears a possibility to find out their viable forms which emerge due to the above system-type relationship.



To set it forth very briefly: 9 - sound-recording, electronic music; 10 - kinetic art (luminodynamics, video art, abstract cinema); 11 - photography, cinematograph, holography; 12 - radio-theatre; 13 - television; 14 - concert music-kinetic art; 15, 16, 17, 18 - sound and light scenography of the musical and, respectively, the drama theatre (revealing in them such specific synthetic-entertainment forms as "space music" - 15, "labirinth" - 16, "Son et Lumière" performances - 17, "Láterna Mágica" - 18). Bifunctional applied forms are arranged, respectively, in cells 19, 20 - aesthetization of the sound medium, and 22, 23 - aesthetization of the light medium. It is primarily exhibition-and-decorative art, discoteques, light architecture, sound and light performances in the open air. In cells 21 and 24 the light and the sound design is located.

The analysis of the current practice shows that parallel with the process of alienation of the artificial means of audio-visual communication used in the outer cells, the scheme of art kinds un-

der investigation can preserve its unity only at the expense of the maximum increase in the tension of the field interkind interaction forces in it. Not being autonomous kinds of art, the majority of artistic activity's kind singled out in the outer cells become viable only when they enter in the synthetic formations characterized by the action of the intrasystem ties revealed above (marked by arrows). Let us note that these arrows in the scheme are not always two-directional, they point to the preference of links by their direction. This is where specific character of audio communication manifests itself in human intercourse: if audio arts (radio, electronic music etc.) may lay claim to autonomy, their visual analogues (the movies, video art etc.) have to involve the sound.

The above phenomenon of the "functional asymmetry" is even more pronounced in relation to the other, vertical axis i.e. when comparing the left (figurative) and the right (expressive) half of the scheme. The difference in the rate and intensity of their development is evident at first sight with the left half outstripping the right in which even the names of new kinds are still uncertain. How can one account for this paradoxical fact? Maybe such is their eternal destiny? It is enough to recall, for example, much suffering lightmusic which claimed its rights as early as the 18-th century but has up to the present preserved the status of an experimental kind. The point is that if the equipment and technology of cinema and television are subject to unification and serial production (that, by the way, provides for their profitableness), any light instrument is, as a matter of fact, unique and cannot be wholly reproduced (provided we do not intend to repeat the work itself). The initial functions of photo-tele-film-technique are to store, reproduce and convey some given information. The functions of the light instrument are different being purely productive: to produce in the screen something, exists only in the mind of the artist. And if in photo-tele-film-technique the functions of the engineer and the artist are separated, in music-kinetic art they are inseparably linked so that creating a light instrument is in the point of fact the primary artistic act. Is the general public ready to cultivate on a grand scale this unwonted situation (uniqueness of the instrument, the work of art and the artist)? To all appearances not until social conditions have been created for the upbringing of the all-round development of individual, until all bureaucratic, interdepartmental barriers have been destroyed...

In conclusion I'd like to point out that the graphic-structural method used here may be employed in other research situation as well. Thus it has proved its worth in our analysis of audio-visual communication means, in studying of synaesthesia (the system of perceptable reflection). When discussing our method at various symposia there were even suggestions about the possibility of systematizing philosophical categories in accord with this scheme (placing "being" or "consciousness" in the centre of the scheme). This is highly problematic of course but in any situation when the human being in some function could be placed in the centre of the scheme (the system) this structural scheme is to all appearances valid. A consistent combination of these systems into a multidimensional metasystem of all essential powers of the integral man will be able, in our opinion, to facilitate in a way the development of this single science of a man the possibility of which was predicted already by K.Marx. And, of course, in every cross-section of this metasystem - owing to the fact that the structural multiplicity of human qualities is heterogeneous - the "functional asymmetry" will manifest itself, and in each case specifically, depending on the content of these heterogeneous qualities.

List of references:

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- 2) В.И.Ленин. Полное собрание сочинений, 5-е издание. - М.: Политиздат, т.29.