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THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AS AN INDICATOR  
OF THE RATIONAL SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTS IN THE BAROQUE ERA

ЯКІСТЬ ОСВІТИ ЯК ПОКАЗНИК  
РАЦІОНАЛЬНОГО СИНТЕЗУ МИСТЕЦТВ ДОБИ БАРОКО

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**Abstract.** The article provides a critical view of the quality of education in Ukraine today and its phenomenal success in the Baroque period. The interaction between culture and education and the obvious crisis in these closely connected fields promote the search for causes and solutions. This article formulates the main historical reasons for the failure of educational approaches of the industrial age. The author considers the quality of education in the Baroque era from the standpoint of the successful application of the principles of the *septem artes liberales* (seven liberal arts) system of education. The Petro Mohyla Academy in the XVII–XVIII centuries serves as a specific Ukrainian historical example. Using Ukrainian and foreign sources, the article points out the importance of the formation of worldview principles among the educated aristocracy and highlights the problems of both assessing the quality and the degree of compliance of education with various social requirements.

*Keywords:* Baroque era; education quality; *septem artes liberales*, history of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, synthesis of the arts.

**Introduction.** The education of the Baroque era, or rather its quality, and from the perspective of the industrial age, its efficiency and effectiveness, is a topic with strong practical potential. It is interesting not only and perhaps not so much from a historical point of view, when the goal of the researcher is to dissect the past in search of “blank spaces,” but also with the aim of finding in the successful experience of educators of the “Golden Age” recipes suitable for use today. To discuss this topic, the article relies on the views of such thinkers of the 20th century as José Ortega y Gasset, Jean Baudrillard (2000), Jean-François Lyotard, Alvin Toffler, who deeply analysed the crisis phenomena of their time. Their conclusions are generally valid for the 21st century, because the dynamics of the described processes over time only deepened the problems they studied, and thus made it more difficult to find a solution. The education problems and evaluation of its effectiveness cannot be considered and solved in isolation from the general social context.

A historical excursion into the Ukrainian education of the Baroque era and the analysis of its success is based in particular on the research of Viktor Askochensky (1856), Mikhail Bulgakov (1843), Yevfimy Bolkhovytinov (1825), Hryhorii Lohvyn, Yuri Mytsyk and Valeria Nychyk (2014).

The analysis of modern approaches in assessing the quality of education was carried out on the basis of articles and academic works of Ukrainian and foreign authors, including Nina Batechko, Viktor Andrushchenko, Andreas Schleicher and Inés Agerrondo, as well as the conclusions of the “International Educational Policy Research Foundation.”

#### Systemic Defects in Approaches to the Education Quality Assessment

Batechko (2017) in her article “The Phenomenon of the Quality of Education in Modern Scientific Discourse” notes: “The main task of educational institutions is not to increase their own quality and efficiency, but the success of formal reporting to state control bodies (Concept of Quality Assurance of Higher Education, 2014). The closed nature of the higher education system of Ukraine leads to the fact that the process of ensuring the education quality remains closed and does not meet the needs of society. The one-sidedness of the understanding of the category of education quality — whether in the pedagogical point of view, managerial or administrative aspects, is unlikely to enable the resolution of the contradiction between the modern needs of society, in particular the economy of society, and the results of the activity of educational systems, which do not always and not fully meet such needs” (p. 11). The above quotation illustrates the awareness of Ukrainian educators of certain systemic defects and problems in the assessment of the quality of education, noting the closed nature of the system and the one-sidedness of the administrative and economic approach in measuring the relevant indicators. The obvious inconsistency of the results of the educational system’s activities with public demands prompts the search for ways to harmonize them.

In the official documents of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine, the quality of education is interpreted as a set of characteristics of the educational process that determine the consistent and practically effective formation of competence and professional awareness. This is a certain level of knowledge and skills, mental, physical and moral development achieved by graduates of an educational institution in accordance with the planned goals of education and training.

The analytical report of the International Educational Policy Research Foundation (Finikov et al., 2012) states that it is the modern mass demand for higher education and a state-sanctioned degree that testifies to the importance of developing criteria for evaluating the quality of education, or in modern terminology, its evaluation, which is defined as support of the program/project from beginning to end with the aim of early detection of defects and their correction, that is, with the aim of increasing the efficiency of the program/project; the main mission of evaluation is development.

These processes include the academic environment of a higher education institution, management and strategic planning, self-assessment and improvement, teaching and learning methods, teacher workload management, cooperation with employers, teacher and student mobility, student involvement in scientific research, innovative activity, openness and communication.

The results of educational activities are measured thanks to the analysis of the ratings of higher education institutions, the number of received grants, academic publications or inventions, the level of students’ residual knowledge, graduates’ employment. In the European educational space, everything that is meant by the term “evaluation,” firstly, relates to the analysis of the motivation to work on the part of the employees of a higher education institution, and of the students’ motivation to study.

Andrushchenko (2012), analysing the problems of modern education, mentions the conclusions of Oswald Spengler in his work *The Decline of the West* and agrees with the fact that the massification of social life, the crisis of family values and the appearance of the proletariat on the historical arena led to a number of crisis phenomena, the totality of which Spengler called decline.

The fact that the problem is not purely local or unique to Ukraine is also confirmed by the conclusions of the Argentine scholar, expert in the field of education Inés Agerrondo, who notes significant inadequacy of education to the challenges of the times. Even empirical research points to “problems of bureaucratization of management, routinization of school practice, moral obsolescence of educational content, low final results.” Agerrondo, thinking about the historical causes of this phenomenon, draws attention to the quantitative expansion of education in the 20th century. Ortega y Gasset in his work *The Revolt of the Masses* points to the 19th century as a time of unprecedented massification of education, including in its orbit a disproportionately larger number of people than a hundred years before. According to Ortega y Gasset (1994, p. 8), the fundamental reduction of quality under the new conditions was inevitable. The futurist thinker Alvin Toffler directly calls the school of the industrial age a “factory model school,” a kind of factory of general education. A “factory,” which provided two different curricula: an overt and a covert one. The overt curriculum included the basics of writing, arithmetic, history, etc., and the covert one, which, according to Toffler (2000, pp. 34–36), was much more important, “consisted — and still does in most industrial nations — of three courses: one in punctuality, one in obedience, and one in rote, repetitive work. Factory labor demanded workers who showed up on time, especially assembly-line hands. It demanded workers who would take orders from a management hierarchy without questioning. And it demanded men and women prepared to slave away at machines or in offices, performing brutally repetitious operations.”

**The Fallacy and Harmfulness of the Economic Use and Administrative Methods in the Education Quality Assessment.** Analysing the problem of evaluating the education quality, Agerrondo, in turn, notes the harmful dominance in the education system of precisely economic methods and approaches in evaluating results, the principles of which were “directly imported from management theory based on the model of economic efficiency.”

The researcher points to the three fundamental axes of the system and writes: “When there is congruence or coherence between these fundamental axes (ideological, political, pedagogical, etc.) and the organization (or phenomenal appearance) of the education system, then no inconsistency is perceived and, therefore, the ‘quality’ of the student is not questioned” (Agerrondo, 1993).

In fact, there is either a coherence or an inconsistency between a valid general political project in society and an educational project operating within the political framework. This is what determines the quality of education.

This insightful conclusion of Agerrondo is taken as a stepping stone for further consideration of the education of the Baroque era.

**The European Model of the Septem Artes Liberales Education in Ukraine During the Baroque Era.** In my opinion, the most valuable example and experience for Ukraine is the education philosophy of the Kyiv Academy.

The Petro Mohyla Academy was a model of just such congruence of the above-mentioned ideological, political and pedagogical axes. The “students’ quality” of the academy was indeed beyond doubt. And the list of graduates is full of names of prominent figures of our history. St. Petro Mohyla, following the Kyiv friars and Halshka Hulevychivna, when creating the collegium, relied on the leading educational experience of Europe, namely the Jesuit educational system built on the basis of the septem artes liberales system. The statutes, actually curricula and textbooks, were borrowed from the Jesuits, who at that time had created an extensive network of collegia in Europe and New Spain. The difficulty and at the same time creative approach during the implementation of this amazing project was that the Catholic experience had to be transferred, almost like a franchise, to the Orthodox cultural and religious soil, thereby providing an ideological and political axis in a form acceptable to Ukraine. The pedagogical axis had to be brought in line with Orthodox theology practically “on the fly” — professionally and extremely carefully.

Complaints and dangers of physical persecution, allegedly for the Latinization of the Orthodox, coming from the laity, incited by the enemies of Petro Mohyla, prompted the latter, on the one hand, to the above-mentioned subtle caution, and on the other hand, to the speedy introduction of training that would effectively demonstrate its usefulness and refute all slander and doubt. The results were so convincing that the academy later became a kind of center in the powerful educational and cultural colonization of Ukraine and the Russian Empire in the first half of the 18th century.

For researchers, the question regarding the education of Petro Mohyla himself remains open. Among others, there is also a version about the Sorbonne, here it is worth mentioning that Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order, studied at this university in 1528–1535. Be that as it may, given his origin, connections and family background, Petro Mohyla had the opportunity to receive the best European education.

The main principles of the *septem artes liberales* system enabled the educators to create in the student's mind a comprehensive picture of the world and to provide knowledge that was not today's collection of narrow hermetic expertise about the world, but knowledge of the world itself. Now it is difficult to imagine that at the beginning of the XVIII century this was an almost everyday phenomenon in education, namely the universality and comprehensiveness of the knowledge of an educated person of that time. For example, from 1783 to 1804, Ivan Falkovsky taught courses in a dozen disciplines at the academy, including poetics, astronomy, theology, surveying, and fortification. And Ivan Myhura, an outstanding graphic designer, was also a poet. The architects were graduates of the academy, and these were, in particular, Ivan Zarudny, the authorship of the Epiphany and St Nicholas Cathedrals of Kyiv is rightly attributed to him (Grabarj, 1954, pp. 50–61; Mozgovaya & Zarudny, 1981, pp. 33–40; Lohvyn, 1998, pp. 70–90), and later Ivan Hryhorovych-Barskyi, prove the presence of architectural education in Kyiv. But the main thing is that the graduate of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy Ivan Mazepa as a patron and Ivan Zarudny as an architect studied and grew up in the same cultural and aesthetic system. Therefore, despite the dissimilarity of their professional experience, they interacted extremely well both as successful builders. Ivan Mazepa was a builder by mission, and Ivan Zarudny was one by profession. Having obtained the same education; an education that allowed them to realize themselves as a pious theologian, a politician, and as an architect, they practically had no chance to disagree about architectural tastes, as, unfortunately, too often happens now, in the age of mutually isolated knowledge.

#### **The Degree of Compliance of the Education Quality with the Social Requirements.**

Ortega y Gasset (1994) wrote with concern about the unfortunate state of highly specialized science and its corresponding education: “The most dangerous consequence of this one-sided specialization is that now, when there are more ‘scientists’ than ever, there are far fewer ‘cultured’ people than, say, in 1750.” The “factory” education of Toffler has already been mentioned, indeed, the age of industrialization, together with the specialization of production, also demanded specialized sciences, and as the industrial specialization narrowed, the scientific and educational fields also narrowed accordingly. The splitting of knowledge into countless Lyotardian “micro-narratives” (Lyotard, 1995) led to the predicted lack of harmony in the interactions of educated masters of these “micro-narratives” and their specialized educational institutions.

Opinions about the inadequacy of the current education, which was formed precisely by the industrial age, to the requirements of the time, are also found in Schleicher (2018, p. 19).

The resolution of a certain contradiction between the mass demand for higher education and the quality of “massified” education lies both in the plane of convergence processes of Ukraine's integration into the world educational space, and in the plane of divergence, which consists in preserving the best national educational experience.

Undoubtedly, one of the most valuable examples and experiences for Ukraine is the education philosophy of the Baroque era.

Firstly, let's characterize the Baroque era in Ukraine in the socio-cultural sense. According to Hryhorii Lohvyn, "Ukrainian baroque absorbed all the rich experience of European art, capriciously combining it with its own aesthetic principles, understanding of beauty... The style of European baroque with its characteristic pathos of struggle and victory, plastic expression and richness of variations of picturesque compositions perfectly resonated with the rise of national self-awareness of the Ukrainian people" (Lohvyn, 1991, p. 20).

As for education, since the time of the princes, primary education (church schooling) had a mass character and covered the vast majority of children. In the diary of Paul of Aleppo (Khalebsky, 2009, p. 25), there is a claim that the majority of Ukrainians were literate already in 1654: "All over the land of the Rus, that is, the Cossacks, we noticed a wonderful feature that aroused our astonishment: all of them, except for a few, even most of their wives and daughters, can read and know the order of church services and church hymns; in addition, faithful residents do not leave orphans to fend for themselves, so that they are ignorantly wandering the streets, instead they are being taught to read and write." The ideas of the brotherhoods regarding the "higher" school for Orthodox Ukrainians were born precisely in such an environment, and that is why they found effective support from society. This is evidenced by Halshka Hulevychivna's, as she clearly indicates the mass format of the school with the words "to school, children are noble and local" (Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv), which is the most vivid example of such support.

The aesthetic harmony of the Baroque era is today perceived as a miracle, because the current disharmony, in particular in the Kyiv architecture of the 21st century, causes unfounded anxiety in the majority. At the same time, we cannot claim that faculties of architecture fail to produce talented and well-trained architects, but their dialogue with the customer is incomparably more complicated and much less productive than that of their equivalents three hundred years ago. Brought up in completely separate educational programs, having as a result excellent aesthetic worldview principles, they are very often doomed to the creation of architectural monsters.

Returning again to the evaluation of the quality of education, Agerrondo observes that "definitions arise from the demands and requests that the social organism puts forward for education. The most global demand is the responsibility to create and share/disseminate knowledge. Starting from this inquiry, it is said that the education system is not of high quality if it does not transmit/provide socially recognized knowledge. Secondly, there are other demands of society, which are not general demands, but specific, and which arise from the interrelationships of the education system with other subsystems... The cultural system requires from the educational system what is called, in a very global perspective, the reproduction of society, in which it functions" (Aguerrondo, 1993).

The given examples in the field of architecture fully confirm the compliance of the Mohyla educational system with the contemporary requirements of the cultural system. And at the same time, they confirm the mutual incompatibility of contemporary education with the requirements of culture today.

An important function of education at all times was the education of the elite or aristocracy. An active and creative layer, which, in V. Lypinsky's term, would become the "yeast of the nation."

Ortega y Gasset in his work *The Revolt of the Masses* (1994, p. 11) places special emphasis on this topic, focusing on the formation of a "selected person" through education as an active personality, as opposed to reactive (passive). It is an active noble person, formed by constant training-asceticism, that he attributes to the real aristocracy. At the same time, the representatives of the so-called current "elite" are actually far from being the "chosen people." And it is obvious that the absence of such "chosen people" (at least in the visible spectrum of the "elites") has long

been dictated by the social demand for the formation of educational and educational conditions for their appearance.

The experience and principles of *septem artes liberales* education in general and the Baroque period in particular regarding the tasks of forming the aristocracy can be adopted today, because a comprehensively educated person with a wide range of knowledge and competences formed on their basis and a solid foundation of Christian morality, to which very serious attention was paid in the Mohyla Academy, starting with Petro Mohyla himself, is exactly the type of manager that modern Ukraine needs.

**Conclusion.** In modern education, one can observe the actual replacement of the concept of the quality of education with satisfactory formal indicators within the system. Therefore, a fundamental revision of such approaches can be recognized as necessary.

First, the education quality assessment system is borrowed from the economic and administrative field and, therefore, completely unsuitable for use in education. Its dominance over a long period of time has distorted both the assessment itself, significantly narrowing its base, and the approaches to the formulation of the tasks set before the education system.

Secondly, the massification of education and the adaptation of education to the needs of the industrial age gave rise to two dangerous consequences: transforming education into “courses” for the people, the future elements of the system, the cogs of the Hobbesian Leviathan; and the narrow specialization of education, breaking down general knowledge into a large amount of “micro-knowledge.” These two consequences made it impossible to fulfil two vital tasks of education — first, to provide a holistic interpretation of the universe (as a necessary prerequisite for cultural progress); secondly, to create conditions for the training of the national aristocracy.

Taking into consideration the examples given, it can be argued that the quality of education does not meet the contemporary demands of culture. Therefore, further cultural progress of the nation is obviously problematic.

Ultimately, the success of the education of the Baroque era in general and the Kyiv Academy in particular, its rich cultural achievements, prompt us to establish the reasons for the success of the *septem artes liberales* system and to formulate on their basis the principles suitable for application in education in the XXI century.

**Prospects for Further Research.** Further research can be done to provide in-depth analysis of the *septem artes liberales* system and the search for ways of its practical implementation to solve the global problem of educating the national elite. As a graduate student in the Department of Theory, History of Architecture and Synthesis of Arts of the National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, the author focuses his attention precisely on the architectural and artistic component of education of the Baroque era, on the example of which this issue can be studied objectively.

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## ЯКІСТЬ ОСВІТИ ЯК ПОКАЗНИК РАЦІОНАЛЬНОГО СИНТЕЗУ МИСТЕЦТВ ДОБИ БАРОКО

**Анотація.** Стаття пропонує критичний погляд на якість сучасної освіти в Україні у співставленні з її феноменом української освіти в епоху бароко. Взаємодія між культурою і освітою та очевидна криза в цих тісно пов'язаних сферах спонукає до пошуку причин і шляхів її подолання. У цьому дослідженні сформульовано основні історичні причини провалу освітніх підходів індустріальної епохи. Автор розглядає якість освіти в епоху бароко з точки зору успішного застосування принципів *septem artes liberales* (сім вільних мистецтв). За конкретний український історичний приклад править Києво-Могилянська академія у XVII–XVIII століттях. На основі українських та зарубіжних джерел наголошено важливість формування у освіченого аристократа певних світоглядних принципів та висвітлено проблеми оцінки якості та ступеня відповідності освіти різним суспільним вимогам.

**Ключові слова:** епоха бароко, якість освіти, *septem artes liberales*, історія Києво-Могилянської академії, синтез мистецтв.