

Continuity and mutual addition of
cultural-historical and activity
approaches: methodological
potential

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Most important statements

- 1) the appearance of cultural-historical theory principles in Vygotsky's "Psychology of art"
- 2) the limitations of these principles
- 3) the emergence of an activity approach in Vygotsky's works;
- 4) Methodological opportunities of addition the cultural-historical and active approaches
- 5) the continuation of the cultural and activity ideas in modern human sciences.

Lev S. Vygotsky (photo about 1916)



L.S. Vygotsky

“Psychology of art” (1915 – 1925)

- Analysis of aesthetic reaction:
- Analysis of fable (Ivan Krylov’s fables);
- Analysis of story (Ivan Bunin, “Light breath”)
- Analysis of tragedy (William Shakespeare, “Hamlet, the prince of Denmark”)

L.S. Vygotsky

“Psychology of art” (1915 – 1925)

- The art as a "social technology of feelings.”
- In other words, art is a system of tools for mastering emotions, created in the human society.

Limericks as an example



There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, 'I'm afloat, I'm afloat!'
When they said, 'No! you ain't!'
He was ready to faint,
That unhappy Old Man in a boat.

(Edward Lear)

E. Lear's limerick as an example

There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, 'I'm afloat, I'm afloat!'

Exposition

When they said, 'No! you ain't!'

He was ready to faint,

"The shortcut of emotons"

That unhappy Old Man in a boat

Conclusion

Some unanswered problems

- 1) Is aesthetic reaction is only a reaction or action? What is the activity of a person as the subject of art perception?
- 2) What is the activity of the artist (including writer, poet, composer, movie director etc.)?

Logic of development of cultural-historical theory

- “Every function in the cultural development of the child appears on the scene twice, in two plans, first - social, then - psychological, first, between people, as a inter-psychic category, then inside the child as intra-psychic category” (L.S. Vygotsky, 1931)

Logic of development of cultural-historical theory

- “Any higher mental function in the child's development appears on stage twice, first as the collective, social activity, i.e. inter-psychic function, the second time as the activity of the individual, as the internal way of the child's thinking, as an intra-psychic function” (L.S. Vygotsky, 1933-1934)

The concept of leading activity

- “through gaming activity the child moves. Only in this sense, the game can be described as leading activity, i.e. defining the development of the child” (L.S. Vygotsky, 1933)

Alexey A. Leontiev

“Of course, we can to discuss was "the psychological theory of activity“ by A.N. Leontiev and his staff <...> a direct continuation and development of Vygotsky’s ideas or not (although the study of primary sources convinces us that **it was**): but no doubt that Vygotsky have repeatedly expressed such ideas”

Pavel Alexanrovich Florensky (1882 – 1937)



“Analysis of the space and time in artwork” (1922 – 1925)

- Non-classic concept of perception;
- Activity principle in classification of visual arts;
- Activity approach to creative process;
- Activity approach to understanding of the perception of artworks.

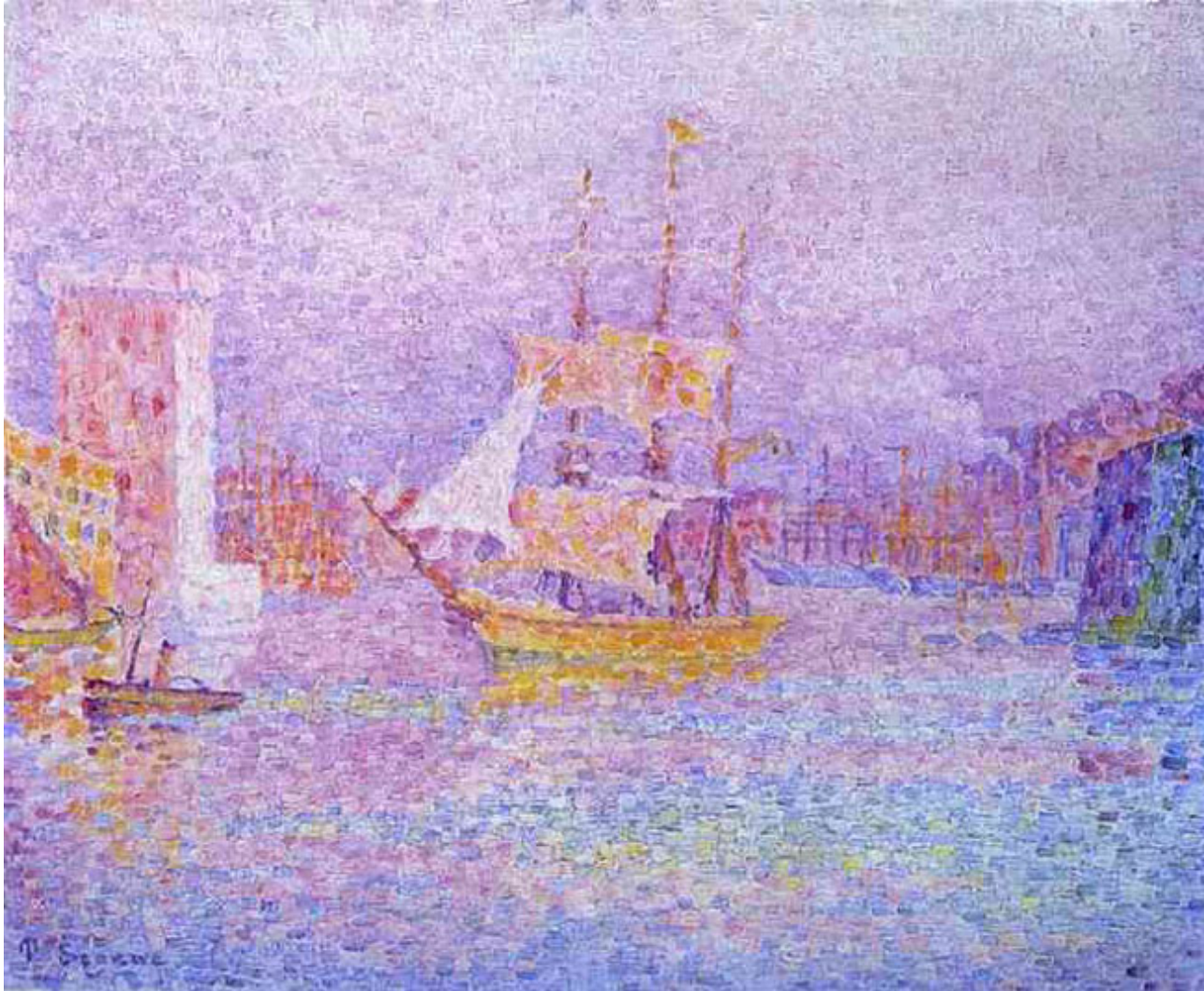
Activity principle in classification of visual arts

- Traditional classification is “industrial” (paints, pencil, ink etc.);
- Classification on the basis of ways of space representation in artwork (line as the record of motion in graphics, colour blots as result of touching in painting)

“Albrecht Durer is a typical graphic artist”



Colour blots as result of touching in painting (Paul Signac, “The port in Marseille”)



Activity of the artist as the structuring of space

- “...Culture worker puts boundary pillars, conducts borders and finally draws the shortest path in this space, along with systems of lines of equal efforts..... It requires that the organization of the space came to our consciousness. But this activity opens an existing, rather than relying human free-will” – the artist’s activity as the discovery of ideal forms and realisation in artworks;

Activity approach to art perception

- “... Elements building the space in the mind of the artist appear systematically; the artist must command sequencing of actions to the viewer, the same sequencing or some other; and for himself, the artist must consolidate in one way or another the planned sequence, without risk of misunderstanding himself” – i.e. the art perception as an activity of reading this sequencing of actions.

Activity approach to art perception in modern art history



Umberto Eco (born 1932)

Umberto Eco – the concept of exemplary reader

- «Exemplary Reader is not only interactive and cooperative in relation to the text; he is more – or less - he is born together with the text, being the driving force behind its interpretation strategies. Accordingly, the competence model of readers is determined by genetic imprinting, which tells them the text... Created with text - and sharpened in this text, they enjoy freedom strictly to the extent that the text gives him».

Interdisciplinary research perspectives

- In cultural studies;
- In art history;
- In art criticism;
- In education (aesthetic upbringing, museum pedagogics, art education etc.)