

**EXPERIENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORMING YOUTH ECO-AESTHETIC
IDEALS WITHIN THE CONCEPT OF NATURE TOURISM**

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Annotation. The article explores the ontological, epistemological, methodological, and praxeological functions of aesthetics in the fundamental theoretical understanding of ecological existence. These functions manifest at various practical levels — in the form of ecological activities based on everyday customs and traditions, or within a complex technical and technological culture. From this perspective, a scientific and theoretical analysis was conducted.

Keywords: ecological culture, ecological thinking, environmental education, ecotourism, environmental situation, "pristine" nature, hedonistic and eudaimonistic, nature-society-human, ecological need, ecological existence.

Introduction: In the contemporary period, under conditions of rapid global scientific and technological progress, intensified urbanization processes, and increasing demographic pressure on nature, the world scientific community—having realized the inevitability that existing methods and means of anthropogenic interaction with nature may lead to ecological catastrophe—has advanced the theory of “returning from the computer to nature.” In particular, supporters of environmentalism, which emerged in Europe and America in the mid-20th century, are observed to consistently advocate this idea [1, pp. 67–70]. This is not accidental, since the “optimistic spirit” of various doctrines based in practice on narrow economic determinism, utilitarianism, and mercantilist psychology has become a worthy object of critical research by the broader public.

The spiritual phenomenon consisting in the aesthetic perception and artistic expression of ecological reality reveals the most general and objective laws of nature conservation (as a subjective factor). This law, in turn, does not exclude the subjective role of art’s influence on ecological being, nor the objectivity of its emergence or the integrity of its function, as it determines the character (ecological or anti-ecological) of the directions of relations within the “nature–society–human–art” system.

In addition, it is necessary to take into account the functional role of an individual’s ecological consciousness in organizing, managing, and controlling activities aimed at protecting nature and forming an aesthetic attitude toward it, namely: improving methods and means of reflecting ecological practice in idealized artistic images through an aesthetic attitude toward nature; generalizing the historical heritage created in the history of ecology and social-ecological experiences in artistic images; selecting ecological aesthetic values, preserving traditions, creatively developing them, and creating the “infrastructure” of transformational communication while perfecting its “technology.”

In implementing these tasks, the main problem, in our view, lies in realistically transforming the status and character of the human factor and intellectual potential that ensure the development of aesthetic modes and means of thinking within ecological consciousness and culture. This is because, in contemporary philosophy and specialized literature on eco-aesthetics, the process by which humans “transform” and assimilate nature through artistic images is not coincidentally recognized as a means of self-awareness as a person within a specific ecological space. For this purpose, the primary task is to search for and realize opportunities that harmonize the objective conditions and subjective factors of transferring ecological consciousness and culture into an “aesthetic being.”

In general, “in the process of the influence of an individual’s ecological consciousness and culture on the character and directions of the aesthetic attitude toward nature, the specific functional orientations and features of artistic information, genres, and types of art are formed.” The universal criterion determining their correspondence to ecological reality depends on the effectiveness of the methods and means of emotional expression and transmission of a person’s aesthetic attitude toward nature through artistic images and works of art. At the same time, the aesthetic attitude toward nature as a phenomenon of an individual’s ecological consciousness and culture is, on the one hand, individual in character, expressing its socio-ecological essence in artistic images and transforming it into spheres of spiritual life through specific methods and means. On the other hand, based on ecological consciousness, culture, and aesthetic experience, it demonstrates its functional significance by “artistically transforming” the ecological picture of the world and defines its main tasks.

Results: The purpose of an aesthetic approach to nature is not limited merely to appreciating natural beauty, but also involves integrating it into the overall process of sustainable development through interconnected principles and values within humanity’s social, economic, and political systems. In this process, ecological aesthetic values, religious and cultural traditions, as well as scientific knowledge are combined to form an integrated approach that helps address global environmental problems. At the same time, it creates opportunities for dialogue and cooperation among social systems, promotes the global dissemination of ecological aesthetic values, and fosters a responsible attitude toward the environment [2, p. 26].

In this context, the main problem, as noted above, lies in identifying effective methods and means for organizing and managing the integration of all spheres and directions, as well as determining mechanisms that ensure the consistency of this process. The necessity of addressing the integrity of global environmental problems that have emerged on a planetary scale presupposes a shared position in shaping an aesthetic attitude toward nature, based on the understanding that various spheres of culture and all social relations manifest themselves in cultural forms. This is because the responsibility for preserving the results of human civilization for future generations requires abandoning narrow national, religious, political, and ideological claims and reaching a common consensus. As a result, the global community is actively searching for constructive methods, means, and effective mechanisms of influence.

Historical experience in ecological activity confirms that in societies with unhealthy ecological environments, an aesthetic attitude toward nature is characterized by “impoverishment” and marginalization, as it is overshadowed by other needs. Moreover, if the methods and means that shape such an attitude are weak, it becomes impossible to speak meaningfully about the development of aesthetic relations to nature and their forms of expression. This is because if, in the process of transforming and assimilating nature, a person fails to ensure the theoretical and methodological foundations that link the methods and technologies used with those that form an aesthetic attitude toward nature, then such activity cannot be fully effective.

In social philosophy and aesthetics, the subjects of aesthetic attitudes toward nature, as well as their structure and functions, have been studied in considerable detail. However, in our view, the integrity of the methods, means, and mechanisms that ensure the effectiveness of these subjects’ activities has remained insufficiently explored. Observations show that a person’s “eco-aesthetic quality” is determined not only by the natural environment and the ecological harmony (beauty) of landscapes surrounding them, but also by the level of development of the methods and means of understanding and expressing attitudes toward nature. This, in turn, depends on the effectiveness of the mechanisms that improve these methods and means.

Most importantly, first, both the character of a person’s aesthetic attitude toward nature and the purpose of expressing it through artistic images correspond to the level of development of these

methods and means. Second, the moral and ethical criteria that determine the overall ecological attitude toward nature, particularly the eco-aesthetic worldview, consist of sacred concepts such as goodness and benevolence, nobility and compassion, honor and conscience, which form the essence of beauty. Third, the principle of adequacy between methods and means and the objectives of realizing the objective conditions and possibilities of an aesthetic attitude toward nature reveals their humanistic content. Fourth, a differential approach to the methods and means of forming an aesthetic attitude toward nature is a prerequisite for ensuring its effectiveness and intensity. Fifth, the mass character of eco-aesthetic values corresponds to the intellectual potential of the subjects applying the methods and means of their formation and transformation, as well as to the democratic and humanistic nature of economic, political, and ideological mechanisms.

No society can secure its future without creating its own spiritual and moral foundations for nature protection and without forming ecological, moral, legal, religious, and value-based consciousness among people. As history shows, in any historical period, “spiritual and moral renewal must include a person’s attitude toward the land and its resources” [3, pp. 13–14].

In summary, on the one hand, the axiological function of an aesthetic attitude toward nature acquires praxiological significance by coordinating the processes of organizing and managing human ecological activity. On the other hand, the praxiological significance of eco-aesthetic values depends on the development of methods, means, and technologies for their practical implementation.

Methods and Methodology: Another important aspect of organizing ecological activity on the basis of eco-aesthetic values is reflected in the knowledge, selection, and optimization of methods and means of forming an aesthetic attitude toward nature. In any practical activity, the application of rational and constructive methods ensures the effectiveness of results. From this perspective, when determining the significance of the methods, technologies, and mechanisms for shaping an aesthetic attitude toward nature, it is necessary to consider the unity of their praxiological and epistemological, rational and irrational dimensions. This requirement is explained by their historical-logical continuity and indicates their strong interconnection.

This also expresses the unity of the spiritual-practical and epistemological aspects of the eco-aesthetic worldview. Human activity in this regard consists of ecologizing and aestheticizing alternative theories, scientific projects, and practical action programs related to the development of methods and means of aesthetic relations with nature. In other words, worldview in general, and the eco-aesthetic worldview in particular, performs the function of organizing and managing the spiritual and practical directions of an aesthetic attitude toward nature.

The activity of this function as a subjective factor is manifested in the application of methods and means for instilling eco-aesthetic values into human consciousness and lifestyle through mythology, legends, religion, science, philosophy, and other forms of social consciousness. At the same time, eco-aesthetic values, the methods and means that transform them, as well as their genesis and historical necessity, constitute an objective phenomenon. That is, in the creation and transformation of eco-aesthetic values, the dialectic of the mutually conditioned relationship between objective conditions and subjective factors operates.

Another praxiological-epistemological significance of the eco-aesthetic worldview lies in its creation of constructive-rational methods and means. Without them, achieving the effectiveness of eco-aesthetic activity is difficult. On the one hand, they make it possible to regulate the process of forming an aesthetic attitude toward nature and to express historical-logical continuity through artistic images. On the other hand, the eco-aesthetic worldview serves to direct human practical activity toward its intended goals. Most importantly, it ensures the realization of eco-aesthetic ideals inherent in social values.

Thus, from a functional perspective, studying a person's aesthetic attitude toward nature by distinguishing between the eco-aesthetic worldview (theoretical-epistemological dimension) and the methods and means of its implementation (practical-praxiological dimension) has significant methodological importance. This is because, as objects of cognition, they possess specific developmental characteristics and perform clearly defined functions within the system of need – goal – task – method – means – technology – innovation [4].

In ancient periods, the reflection of ecological consciousness and culture was expressed primarily in works of ancient art and in historical and artistic sources. During this time, ecological thinking found expression in examples of oral folk creativity (myths, legends, fairy tales, proverbs, and others), as well as in images carved or painted on cave walls and rock surfaces. The universal ideas of the development of ecological consciousness and culture, formed throughout the historical evolution of society, played a significant role in shaping an aesthetic attitude toward nature. The mental characteristics of expressing these ideas became clearly defined, and by depicting anti-ecological activity—contrary to humanistic values—through elevated artistic images, people were called toward moral and ethical perfection, such as loving the beauty of nature and preserving and protecting it.

For this reason, there is no common ground between the adequate artistic depiction of harm done to nature in works of art and the promotion or propaganda of anti-ecological activity. An analysis of historical experience shows that an individual's aesthetic attitude toward ecological reality and its realistic artistic representation in works of art, like other forms of social consciousness, depends on the character of the dominant superstructural elements of society, as well as on objective conditions and subjective factors. In particular, under authoritarian regimes, ecological reality in art forms was expressed in accordance with the principles of class and party ideology. That is, the objective and impartial depiction of ecological reality was prohibited, and creators who dared to do so were subjected to repression.

The formation of an aesthetic attitude toward nature by the individual and society is the result of creative labor, and the artistic representation of nature in works of art can be regarded as a form of “rediscovery.” In other words, the activity of expressing a personal and individual aesthetic attitude toward the beauty of nature through artistic images should be understood as a way of practically “recreating” and “materializing” ecological consciousness and thinking. At the same time, through works of art, this serves as a means of transforming and conveying ideas of nature conservation to their intended objects (society as a whole, specific social groups, and types of individuals).

In the process of forming an aesthetic attitude toward nature and expressing it through artistic images, an individual's subjective emotional and sensory eco-aesthetic worldview and personal life experience become “objectified,” while both the essence and functions of practical activity are expressed in different ways (through genres and forms of art). Their commonality lies in the unity of goals and tasks, while their differences are found in methods of expression and means of transformation. However, the integration of various art genres in representing ecological reality (especially culture) through artistic images ensures the integrity and adequacy of the aesthetic attitude toward nature.

Analysis: “The influence of an individual's ecological consciousness and culture on the formation of an aesthetic attitude toward nature is a complex dialectical process, manifested in artistic images that generalize humanity's historical experience in protecting nature” [5, pp. 530–531]. In this context, the correspondence of artistic images to real ecological reality does not deny their relative autonomy; on the contrary, it demonstrates the functional harmony between object and subject. In other words, the aestheticization of ecological consciousness and culture also unites other forms of social consciousness around the goals and interests of nature

protection. In turn, the dominance of aesthetic perception of ecological reality acquires the status of a закономерность (regularity) and will not lose its significance in the future.

“In the process whereby ecological consciousness becomes both the subject and object of an individual’s aesthetic experience and takes the form of culture, the contradiction between conservative tradition and progressive innovation, between real reality and artistic truth, and between scientific theory and social practice remains constant” [6, pp. 9–14]. At the same time, transforming an individual’s ecological consciousness and culture for the masses through aesthetic methods and means, artistic literature genres, and forms of art requires a certain period of time to change deeply rooted psychological attitudes formed in consciousness.

The relative independence—and at times lag—of artistic representations of ecological relations from real reality is, on the one hand, the result of their inability to be completely free from the voluntaristic ideological influence of the existing socio-political system. On the other hand, in the process of globalization of ecological consciousness and culture, new contradictions arise related to overcoming tensions between integrating subjects and integrating objects within the synthesis of national and regional values. In general, managing the direct influence of the system of social contradictions on ecological consciousness and on the development of its aesthetic forms of expression depends on harmonizing interests in this sphere [7, p. 56].

The necessity of resolving these contradictions in society’s ecological existence is connected not only with forming an aesthetic attitude toward nature, but also with developing its other moral-ethical and socio-political foundations. In other words, “the integrative potential of ecological consciousness and culture with respect to other forms of social consciousness should be regarded precisely as its capacity for self-development.” As the aestheticization of ecological consciousness intensifies, new directions of the ecologization of other forms of social consciousness emerge, such as ecological-legal consciousness, ecological-economic consciousness, ecological-political consciousness, and other forms, along with their institutional systems. The needs and interests of society in an aesthetic attitude toward nature constitute the driving motive and the main driving mechanism of the development of ecological consciousness and culture. Accordingly, the capacity of an individual’s ecological consciousness and culture to define an aesthetic attitude toward nature serves, in any historical period, to fulfill specific tasks set by society. For this reason, its functions have been interpreted differently across different periods in accordance with the priority directions of ecological problems [8, No. 1, p. 21].

Conclusion: In conclusion, it can be stated that, as a socio-spiritual phenomenon, an aesthetic attitude toward ecological reality—by its essence and character—constitutes an important component of an individual’s ecological activity. In defining the map and character of the world’s ecological landscape, eco-aesthetic thinking serves as a fundamental criterion and indicator for the history and stages of the development of aesthetic attitudes toward nature. Moreover, the capacity of ecological consciousness and culture to shape an aesthetic attitude toward nature also encompasses the methods and means of its expression.

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