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## Modern Theory of Visual Art: Regional Project

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*The article defines the main notions of the modern visual art theory, studies the process of creating artistic appearance in the relation-dialogue between the recipient and the object-work, determines the role of an art critic as a bearer of conceptual knowledge of theory in the integrity of such professional aspects as expert, researcher, maieutic.*

*Keywords: art theory, work of art, expert art critic, researcher art critic, maieutic art critic, artificiality, trial, dialogue, artistic appearance, style.*

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During the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the science of art has been actively working on new research procedures, forms of scientific art study, engaging itself in the artistic process, analyzing tendencies and prospects of modern art development. It may be observed in works of Russian art theory luminaries and outstanding foreign scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (H. Wölfflin, H. Sedlmayr, E. Panofsky and others) (2, 10, 11).

By the beginning of the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century art theory has accumulated a great amount of empiric material in urgent need for systematization and scientific structuration. There is a large group of historical and artistic disciplines, that collect, describe and chronologically graduate numerous monuments of architecture, sculpture, and painting. These are outstanding and fundamental art histories of Asian, African, American and European

countries from the beginning of time until the beginning of the current century.

Theory of a certain reality sphere is systematic knowledge of the theory subject matter of the quality and significance, sufficient for describing, explaining and forecasting features and behavior of theoretical knowledge objects (phenomena, processes) (Agoshkova E.B., Novosiolov M.M. (2013). *Interval'nost' v structure nauchnykh teoriy* [Intervality in the Scientific Theory Structure] // *Voprosy filosofii*. (4). 44-58).

Creation of a sufficient and fundamental visual art theory is a task for generations of master scientists and specialists. However, even now it is already possible to outline a series of conceptual clauses, forming the fundament for theoretic knowledge on visual art in the integrity of works belonging to various types and genres. Integrative theory is the key to scientific history and methodology of visual art.

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Theory as a form of organization for developing knowledge does not appear out of the blue; it is created with the target to obtain a powerful cognitive instrument for developing this or that scientific field. Therefore, any theory, being a scientific instrument, is borne by a dedicated bearer, who perceives its informational, systemizing, explanatory and forecasting functions in the corresponding field as an epistemological norm and legislative dogma. Such theory bearer is the one who has a perfect command of logical and linguistic, modeling and representative, operational and assessing, problematic and heuristic subsystems of the theory, capable of applying the theory in practice in an efficient way.

As far as visual art theory is concerned, the episteme bearer is an art critic, the professional activity of whom is the integrity of three components: expert, researcher and maieutic (Zhukovskiy V.I. *Teoriia izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva* [Visual Art Theory]. Saint Petersburg, Aleteyia, 2011. 496 p.). Visual art theory, intended for productive use, is expected to maximally fulfill the requirements of all aspects of the theory bearer's profession. Therefore, visual art theory satisfies the demands of:

- *expert art critic*, an erudite able to feel the subtle differences between artistic styles, epochs and works of various art genres; a scientist capable of revealing and verbally crystallizing historical, religious, mythological, narrative and other determinants, coordinately identifying this or that piece of the visual art history as belonging to this or that period of its creator's life;
- *researcher art critic*, an analytic scientist, interested in deeper insight into the contemplated core of the sign model, a certain work of art as a sensuously appearing entity;

- *maieutic art critic*, a professional of art criticism, targeting on comprehensive and careful assistance in the creation and performance of an adequate dialogue between the viewer and the work of art.

And now let us speak of the theory of visual art. Seemingly, its object is expected to be “art” as such; however, “art” (Russian: *iskusstvo*, originated from Old Slavic *iskusiti, kusit'* “to probate”, “to tempt”) stands for skills and abilities in creating a product, which makes it evident that its corner stone should not be “art” as a master's actions for making something, but the “art work” itself as the mentioned “something”. “Art work” as an object of visual art theory enables an art critic to research both the process of production (who, where, when, how and why produces the art work), and the process of work preservation (who, where, when, how and why keeps the produced work), and the process of perceiving the art work by its recipients (who, where, when, how and why consumes the product).

The essential element of a theory is explaining reasons for existing of its subject matter. In visual art the reason of producing art is rooted in the underlying need of a person to unite the sphere of his self-affirmation with the sphere of incorporating his individuality in the universal, the need for “co-being”. Art work acts as a “meeting point”, a sensuously appearing entity, coition of a person as a finite creature with what may be referred to as “infinite”, “absolute”, “god”, “universal”, “substance”. The notion of an “art work” is the “meeting point” of the finite with the infinite, it is the key definition for visual art theory. Being initially compressed and ultimately abstract, plunging into this or that aspect of professional art criticism, this definition obtains an amazing capacity to expand or concretize itself in a number of notional instruments with their own unique technologies of mental functioning

(Zhukovskiy V.I. (2012) *Strukturnye osnovy teorii izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva* [Structural Basics of Visual Art Theory] // *Filosofia i kul'tura*, (3), 96-104.)

For an expert art critic, “art work” is the “meeting point” of the finite with the infinite, manifesting itself as an ideal relation between the person and absolute, where, in the representantive space, both parties eager for the meeting find themselves in their abstract form, provided that they both make a certain attempt to achieve it. The attempt to “get abstract” made by absolute is emanation of the infinite into the finite, which is understood as the “depictive” trend of art. The attempt to “get abstract” made by the person is immanation of the finite into the infinite, understood as the “expressive” trend of art.

The dialectics of the relations between “depiction” and “expression” in the “meeting point” divides all visual art works into three categories. The first one is the works where the infinite component dominates; crossing the border of the “meeting point”, it brings itself to the “finite”. These are works of mainly “depictive” kind, with the predominance of depicting the infinite in finite forms, sensuously appearing with the artistic tools of graphics, painting, sculpture, architecture. The second group is the works of art where the finite component dominates; entering the “meeting point”, it strives to “de-infinite” itself. Such creations belong to, mainly, the “expressive” side of art, where the predominance belongs to depiction of the finite in the de-infiniting forms, sensuously appearing, again, with the artistic means of graphics, painting, sculpture and architecture. The third group is the group of works bearing a rare equality of the opposition between the depictive and expressive trends of art. Such masterpieces are made to embody the moment of harmony between the finite and the infinite in the “meeting point”

by means of graphics, painting, sculpture and architecture.

Mixing the “depictive” and “expressive” tendencies into the visual art history, we get such stylistic “meeting points”, as “area-classicism” and “area-romanticism”.

“Area-classicism” is the style space containing artistic styles of the common visual art history related to classicism in their features. Such art works embody, predominantly, depictive trend of art. The formal features of “area-classicism” works are: planeness, linearity, completeness, clearness, multiplicity. “Area-romanticism” is the style space, containing artistic styles of the common visual art history related to romanticism in their features, thereby embodying, predominantly, expressive trend of art. The formal features of “area-romanticism” works are: depth, picturesqueness, openness, unclearness, integrality.

Opening up the style spaces of “area-classicism” and “area-romanticism”, it is possible to outline the styles, “closely related” to classicism (diverse “historical classicisms”, “Empire style”, “academism” and to romanticism (“historical romanticism” as such) “gothic”, “baroque”), and the styles “distantly related” to classicism (“romantica”, “impressionism”, “cubism” etc.) and to romanticism (“rococo”, “symbolism”, “modernism”, “expressionism” etc.).

It turns out that both “area-classic” and “area-romantic” art works may be “realistic”. Historical styles of “area-classicism” use realism as materiality for bringing the self, sensuously appearing in the finite forms of absolute, to a naturalistic stage. Historical styles of “area-romanticism” use the materiality of realism as a starting sensuously appearing point for de-infiniting the finite.

Moving further along the differential ladder of the “meeting point”, one may sooner or later arrive at the point determining the disposition of

a certain art work in space and time of visual art history, which is the professional objective of an art critic in his “expert” aspect.

For a researcher art critic, art work is the “meeting point” of the finite with the infinite which reveals itself as the “artificiality”, “craftsmanship”, “probation” of art (translator’s note: in Russian language, all three terms originate from the same root: *iskustvennost’*, *iskusstvo*, *iskus*). Art work is always a thing, different from its original nature (“artificiality”), demonstrating the handicraft of its production with the requirement of skilled treatment (“craftsmanship”), arousing the desire for dialogue (“probation”).

“Craftsmanship” of an art work reveals itself through the reference to Old Greek *techne*, as the Hellenes used the word for a skill, high craftsmanship, talent in a certain sphere. Obtaining “techne” as “craftsmanship” claims the penetration into the secrets of the divine skill of creation. Nature creates, releasing a thing from non-existence into the fullness of its actual being, and a person, modeling the divine principles, performs the act of creation, producing, or un-veiling a thing from discreteness into the openness. One may say that “craftsmanship” as “techne” is the reason for un-veiling a thing in its artistic form. In the “first” nature the process of un-veiling towards the material result, form or configuration is performed by force of a demiurge force (god, spirit, nature, absolute etc.). In the “second” nature the process of un-veiling leading to a material result occurs for the “craftsmanship” of the human will and mind, but under the aegis of divine laws and objectives.

It is possible to outline several levels of “craftsmanship”, significant both for producing art works as “meeting points” (relation of a master to the art material in the process of artistic revelation) and for their consumption (relation of the viewer with the material piece): “craftsmanship” as such is the minimal level

of skill, qualification, competence, training; “super-craftsmanship” as the level of virtuoso skill of creating and developing art works with a peculiar “crafty” production pattern; “meta-craftsmanship” as the level of post-virtuoso, overcoming the super-craftsmanship which loses its significance and inherent value.

The “meeting point” of an art work in the “craftsmanship” aspect, is, first of all, a thing of certain dimensions, authentic and existing in reality. An object-work as a whole consists of a number of parts, which include, for a painting: paints, canvas, canvas-stretcher, couch, glue, lacquer etc. The most important component is the “non-organic” mass of paints, the preservation and support of which is performed by other components of the object. In its turn, the “non-organic” paint surface of the object is inevitably made of its form and background, constructed of elementary parts. The forms and the background are tightly bound to each other, as the weaker the “non-organic” element structure of the painting surface is, the more tempted is the viewer to abstract from the “crafty artificiality” of this very work, and vice versa. We may confidently state that all burden of revealing the subsequent “organic”, “cordial” and “spiritual” layers of the “artificiality” of an art work lays on the “non-organic” layer of painting forms and the background of the material “meeting point” surface.

Infiltration into the matter, depicted and expressed by an art work, is the first task of the “artificiality” of the sign “meeting point” surface in its material aspect. However, remaining a bearer of tightly bound sign bodies, the “non-organic” layer of is able to vary the meanings of its signs in the process of ideal relations with the recipient, turning them, as needed, into index-signs, iconic signs or symbol-signs.

When the quality of connection between the observer and the object-work transforms into the

quality of connection between the viewer and the art work as a “meeting point”, the artistic creation and its “artificiality” turns into an organism of index-signs, leading to the formation of the “organic” layer of “artificiality”, which fills the relations between the viewer and the work with the sensation of reality, i.e. the integrality of the creating and the created, action and result, abstract and material, idea and thing, ideal and real. This is the sphere of reality where both members of the relation-dialogue (the viewer and the work of art) become real co-creators of the artistic appearance as an operating visual entity.

Opening of the depicted and the expressed with the “meeting point” is not complete at the level of index-signs in the “organic” layer of the art work’s “artificiality”. Having passed through the index stage, the relations between the viewer and the artistic creativity product transform the meanings of sign entities from indexes into icons, thereby involving the dialogue parties into the “cordial” layer of the appearance “artificiality”.

Formation of the “cordial” layer of a visual appearance is described with artistic authenticity (different from truthfulness), combined with the adequate reproduction of current world outlooks of people. The artistic authenticity content bears objective-subjective character: it is not just the attitude to artificial objects imitating the things as they are in reality on their own; it is the attitude to them as to entities expressing the previously or presently existing cordial values and ideals. The artistic authenticity is based on sensual authenticity, but not limited to it. The “non-organic”, “organic” and “cordial” layers of “artificiality” are qualitatively different from each other.

It is also worth emphasizing that a visual artistic appearance as a new emergent unites, on one hand, the “ostentatiousness” of the external art work itself (as a separate material being) with the products of the viewer’s speculation,

and on the other hand, the objectively-expressive artificiality of sign, with the subjective signifying capacity. As a result, we see, that artistic appearance as a visual entity is an emergent, always including two merged and equalized contents of creative attitude aspects. And as long as the emergent also contains the expressions of both human (viewer) and inhuman (e.g., clots of paint on the canvas surface), it would be wrong to restrict the quality of an artistic appearance, born in the dialogue-attitude, to the meaning of either human or inhuman components. The artistic appearance reveals itself as something beyond the attitude of one of the dialogue parties to another; it is relation between the human and inhuman understood not in the manner of a trivial projection theory, but in the understanding of Hegel’s reflection theory. The proportion and harmony between the viewer and the art work in their ideal equality, in which they perceive each other, thereby producing the quality of the artistic appearance, may be different, but it is a different matter. Depending on the trends that dominate in the viewer’s activity assumption, oriented at the perceiving the art core or his own self, there occurs the domination of either sensuously expressed gist of the art work, or, on the contrary, of ontological images of the viewer personality in the resulting artistic emergent appearance. However, it is important that in the process of such artistic relation, the recipient, cognizing the meanings and senses of the signs on the material surface of the piece, unconsciously perceives the depths of his own self besides the external, visible side of the dialogue.

Having gone through the “cordial” layer of “artificiality”, the process of artistic relation between the viewer and the art work is not frozen; it moves onto a new level oriented at both understanding the reasons of sensuous diversity of visual perception and the reasons why the viewer turned to the art work as such.

It leads to a new transformation of meanings of the signs on the material surface of the painting. This time the main role is played not as much by index or iconic meanings and senses of signs, as by symbol-signs, the meaning of which, according to their Ancient Greek definition, is to act as a separator of the whole and unifier of the ambiguous.

A new layer of “artificiality” of an art work, which may also be referred to as “spiritual”, is formed in a relative independence from the previous one. These two layers are qualitatively different and opposite, mutually denying each other. However, this denial is dialectic: denial as a moment of connection, moment of development holding the expression of knowledge received by dialogue parties at the previous stages of artistic appearance formation.

The “spiritual” level of the art work “artificiality” in its “meta-craftsmanship” is made to reveal the underlying meaning of the thing, expressed and depicted by the “meeting point” through the symbolism of the art work compositional formula. The compositional formula is the significant bearer of the common meaning and gist of the art work, which, diluted in the art work “non-organic” layer and showing through each of its elementary parts (simultaneously belonging and not belonging to it), geometrically and visually models the appearance of being. Reflection on the symbolism of the “meeting point” composition formula is a certain sort of communication between the viewer (as a finite creature) and absolute by means of universal and generally significant language of geometric shapes. Perception of the “secondary sensuality” of a composition formula implies that the single is manifested as an aspect of the universal, capable of uniting with the corresponding aspects into a harmonic whole. It feels as a long-expected part, completing the viewer’s world attitude to the full authenticity and wholeness, satisfying his

need for the integration of self-affirmation and compassion.

The “meta-craftsmanship artificiality” of an art piece, being a sign-entity, demonstrates its dialectic unity of the “non-organic”, “organic”, “cordial” and “spiritual” layers, which turns to be related to the four great layers of being. One may say that the “meeting point” of an art work in its “artificiality” is the representative model of being, acting as an auxiliary intermediary “quasi-object” in a certain correlation with such ultimately abstract and mysterious object as being, able to replace it to a limited extent and, provided that the viewer gets engaged into a relation with the “quasi-object”, also capable of presenting some information on the gist of the modeled entity.

The “probation” of art piece may be presented as the following logical chain: “temptation”, “luring”, “seduction”, “enchantment”, “contamination”, “testing”, “understanding”, “cognition”, “transformation”, “change”, “metamorphosis”. This chain of notions may also thicken, grouping itself into four blocks of notions: “seduction”, “contamination”, “testing”, “metamorphosis”, where each block acts as an aspect, side, function of the “probation” of an art work as a “meeting point” for the finite with the infinite.

“Seduction” understood as “enchantment” begins with the revelation of the spell, i.e. a materially existing base with non-organic elementary cells endowed with a special “seductive” power. Then, the spell “arouses”, i.e. provokes what is discreet, hidden inside the object, sleeping within before the relation-dialogue (depicted and expressed in the work of art). At the same time, the spell “arouses” emotional and rational resources in the viewer as well.

In the course of the artistic dialogue, the spell “contaminates”, bringing the “fatal” “disease” (artistic meaning).

The further effect of the spell may be defined with the expression “to carry away by attraction”: the spell distracts both partners of artistic relation from the state in which they were before the “contamination” at the very beginning of the “probation” process.

After the “contamination” stage, the probation of the art piece continues with the period of a “crucible”, a sort of “trial” which precedes the qualitative transformation of the dialogue parties seduced by the spell. Such period may be defined as the “disease” itself, the course of which is a complicated struggle between different sides of artistic attitude with the external influence, which turns internal in the “probation” process. During this period the power of “enchantment”, penetrating from the seducing to the seduced one, is perceived as something desired, longed for, and, being recognized, is finally perceived as the “other self”.

The final phase of the “probation” process is the “transformation” of the seduced parties, their “metamorphosis” which occurs as a result of obtaining and digesting the meaning conveyed by the spell. The “seduced” turns “experienced”.

It is worthwhile noting, that “metamorphosis” acts as the main function of “probation”, while “seduction”, “contamination”, “testing” are all auxiliary functions, assisting the achievement of the required “probation” effect.

Release of artistic relations into the “metamorphosis” phase is presented as falling out from “regularity” into the reality, into the openness of “co-being”, where co-being is not a current being of something and not a potential being of nothing, but a boundary as a synthesis of both. In the co-being the finite component of the person dies, bringing fear and desire together. This is the feeling of death with simultaneous preservation of life (absence in the presence and presence in the absence).

Comparison of the “crafty artificiality” layers of an art work (“non-organic”, “organic”, “cordial” and “spiritual” with the phases of the “crafty probation” process (“seduction”, “contamination”, “testing”, “metamorphosis”) brings us to the conclusion that “probation” as a desire of self-affirmation and compassion is the force which makes the viewer move from layer to layer together with the “meeting point” piece in the process of their artistic relation, thereby forming an artistic appearance (visual notion) as an intermediary between the finite and the infinite (Zhukovskiy V.I. (2013) *Tvorcheskiy protsess: khudozhnik i khudozhestvennyy material v ikh iskusstvi, iskustvennosti i iskuse* [Creative Process: Artist and Artistic Material in Their Craftsmanship, Artificiality and Probation] // *Filosofia i kul'tura*, (4), 510-515).

For a maieutic art critic the notion of an “art work” is the “meeting point” of the finite with the infinite; it opens into a bouquet of professional means, assisting the relations between the viewer and the art piece from the act of creating the artistic appearance phenomenon until the fact of its ultimate crystallization. Such “obstetrics” brings the desired effect only when the activity of the “maieutic art critic” is based on the fundament of the results, obtained in advance by the “expert art critic” and “researcher art critic”.

The relation composed between the viewer as the finite and the absolute as the infinite in the virtual space of an art piece as a “meeting point” are close to such form of interaction as a game. Comparison of “relation” with the term of “game” gives the following results. First of all, the epistemological status of game and relation is the non-material being. Secondly, both relation and game are sorts of influence of the “own” to the “other” and vice versa. Relation opens itself up as a “quality-shaped” action, a form of mutual participation of co-related opposites, mutual motion towards each other, striving

to escape beyond their own limits and reveal themselves one through another. But the game is also actualized through some mutual actions of partners: a game is the motion “back and forth”, “but and ben”. Fourthly, the parties of a relation and game partners do not perform their actions chaotically; they follow a certain code of rules. Fifthly, the rules of both relation and a game bear a competitive struggle character. Relation parties, inserting a part of their own meanings into one another, by all means strive to conquer each other without getting conquered in their turn. Stealing the initiative from each other, the parties mutually transform their “own” and “other” selves until they smother all significant differences between each other. Such struggle is special for its persistence and risks, as the transformations caused by such relation usually concern not only the quantity, but the quality of the related parties. The same can be said about a game. It is a widely known fact that in archaic cultures categories of struggle and game meant, practically, the same. Sixthly, the rules of operating the “own” and “other” selves both for relation and game bear a meaning only in a specifically assigned space where the two different components get into interaction with each other.

We may continue on and on describing common features between relation and game, but the listed ones are enough to realize that the “obstetric” mechanisms intended to bring the dialogue parties into a coition at the “meeting point”, are, in fact, nothing but methodological means used for organization and management of game processes.

It is also acceptable to outline several options of a “maieutic art critic” position within the “meeting point” game situation. The first option is disjunctive. The intermediary isolates the relation-game parties from each other, depriving them of the need and possibility of any direct contact. All motions “back and forth” are done through the

“maieutic”, though each time he acts in the name of the opposite party, abstracting himself from the game process. The second option is conjunctive. The intermediary creates background for direct efficient game contact between the artistic relation parties. The connection of the players with the intermediary does not replace, but complements the direct “back and forth” moves of the opponents to and from each other. The third option is disjunctive-conjunctive. From the very beginning the intermediary does not take up any restrictive or uniting functions, considering the role of a “third party” to be conventionally required in the artistic dialogue.

Notwithstanding with the options listed above, the fact of presence of a “third party” in the dialogue-game may make a deep impact on the process of interaction between the artistic relation parties. Inclusion of the “third party” leads, though temporarily, the dialogue away from the destructive path. Generally speaking, introduction of a “third one” into the dyadic system dramatically changes the structure of situations possible within its framework and interferes into their interaction. The effect of such interference may be both ultimately advantageous and problematic.

One should keep it in mind that interference of a “third party” is not a panacea in the process of creation and development of an artistic appearance within the “meeting point” space. Like a powerful medicine, the interference of the “maieutic art critic” into the dialogue between the viewer and the art piece may bring unwanted side effects; therefore, it should only be used when required (due to problematic dead-ends the relation-game may get stuck in) and with great care. In the best case, the “third party” interferes into the game only when it is extremely required (the relation is about to disappear) and adjusts normal relations between the game participants with such a success, that there is no more need



for further interference of the “third party” into the process.

A maieutic art critic, acting as a “third party” in a disjunctive, conjunctive or disjunctive-conjunctive option of the relation-game between the viewer and the art piece, is obliged to act as a “psychologist”, “mentor”, “manager”, “referee”, “friend”, leave aside the function of an “expert” in the diversity of art pieces and a “researcher”.

The “psychologist” function makes the “maieutic” measure the self-affirmation of the person who encounters the art work along with the pathologies of his individual as integrity of self-affirmation and compassion. The obligations of a “psychologist” force the “maieutic art critic” consider the gender, age, national, religious and other peculiarities of the potential viewer, which determine the selection of an art piece for him to encounter as a relation-game partner in order to create an artistic appearance.

The “mentor” function obliges the “maieutic” to assess the level of the potential viewer’s artistic competence and culture of his visual thinking for introducing some “expert” and “research” corrections if required. In the event of absence of any minimal culture of visual thinking, the relation-game of such a person at the “meeting point” will never happen (as the “observer” is incapable of getting beyond the “viewer” boundary).

The “manager” function makes it necessary for the “maieutic” to facilitate the artistic dialogue between the viewer and the art piece as a “meeting point” and forces him to solve the tasks of: a) planning; b) organization; c) motivation; g) control of the relation-game. Planning is the major obligation of an administrator forming the base for organization, motivation and control, targeted at fulfillment of further strategic and tactic plans.

The “referee” function enables the “maieutic” to control the specific game rules followed by the

dialogue members within the “meeting point” space, adjusted individually for each artistic relation, acting as a tertiary judge and facilitating peaceful resolution of disputes that may arise between the parties.

The “friend” function provides the “maieutic” with an opportunity to count on trust of the relation-game members. The requirements to the “maieutic friend” are: 1) establish friendly relations with the playing viewer; 2) take the artistic game players as they are; 3) preserve the atmosphere of intimacy in the “meeting point” space, so that the viewer feels at ease and free to express his feelings and thoughts; 4) recognize feelings and thoughts of the viewer and reflect them with verbal means in order to teach the viewer how to reflect over his own emotions and judgments; 5) respect the viewer’s opportunity to solve the relation-game tasks on his own and to do his own choice; 6) avoid pressure on the actions or utterances of the viewer, as he is supposed to be the leader, while the maieutic acts as the “leaded one”; 7) not to push the artistic relation process; 8) put minimal restrictions on the viewer’s activity in order to help him to correlate the artistic game with reality and stimulate the sense of responsibility.

Finally, we see that the “art piece” notion is the “meeting point” of the finite with the infinite; opening up in the “expert”, “research” and “maieutic” aspects is a means for revelation and contemplation over a number of notional spheres, structural bases of the visual art world (Zhukovskiy V.I. (2013) *Proizvedenie iskusstva v epitsentre khudozhestvennoy kul'tury* [Art Piece in the Art Culture Epicentre] // *Filosofia i kul'tura* (11), 1613-1620).

This is the super-objective for any adequate theory: to strive for such a unity of knowledge, at which the maximal number of facts from its subject matter is described and explained with the

minimal number of basic notions and principles of the theory.

For many years, scientists from the Chair for Culturology of Siberian Federal University have been working on their research in “Current Problems of Visual Art Theory”. The results of their scientific inquiries are published in the collection of articles *Khudozhestbennaia kul'tura: teoriia, istoriia, kritika, metodika*

*prepodavaniia, tvorcheskaia praktika* [Artistic Culture: Theory, History, Criticism, Teaching Methodology, Creative Practice] (2000-2007), journals *Vestnik Krasnoyarskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* [Krasnoyarsk State University Press] (2005-2007), *Zhurnal Sibirskogo federal'nogo universiteta* [Journal of Siberian Federal University] and many other Russian, foreign journal and monographs.

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## **Современная теория изобразительного искусства: региональный проект**

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*В статье определены основные понятия современной теории изобразительного искусства, рассмотрен процесс создания художественного образа в диалоге-отношении реципиента с произведением-вещью, обозначена роль искусствоведа, носителя концептуальных положений теории, в единстве таких профессиональных аспектов, как знаток, исследователь, майевтик.*

*Ключевые слова: теория искусства, произведение, искусствовед-знаток, искусствовед-исследователь, искусствовед-майевтик, искусственность, искус, диалог, художественный образ, стиль.*

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