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On the aesthetic Understanding of Education

Minoru Murai

Among historically eminent educations and educational theorists, a thorough study reveals the existence of a common understanding regarding education, which may be characterized as "aesthetic".

On the basis of this understanding, Schiller wrote his essay "Letters on the aesthetic Education of Man", and Herbart wrote "On the aesthetic Expression of the World" as a commentary to Pestalozzi's educational principle.

Plato may be the first who understood education from the aesthetic point of view. One may say also that Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Schiller, Herbart, and Froebel were all among those who most impressingly expressed this aesthetic understanding of education.

But it seems quite strange that this understanding has never become an object of scientific analysis, and remained a common image among those great thinkers.

Therefore, I have tried in my last thesis to point out that this kind of understanding was and still is a traditional and most influential current of educational history.

In this thesis, I intend to analyze the logical structure of this aesthetic understanding in a concrete way; especially with reference to the methodological characteristics of Rousseau and Plato. By way of this analysis I wish to suggest a scientific way of educational judgement and toward an educational history.