Kinga Anna Gajda

Assistant Professor at the Institute of European Studies of Jagiellonian University, with degrees in Theatre, Drama and European Studies. She also completed post-graduate Gender Studies. She is the author of the book *Edukacyjna rola muzeum* [The Educational Role of the Museum] and *Medea dzisiaj* [Medea Today] – a reflection on the category of the Other. A manager of many projects, including *Regional or trans-regional cultural education – a case study of a museum,* which resulted in a report entitled *Regional or trans-regional cultural education – a case study of a museum; also Museum education addressed to schools in the Małopolskie and Śląskie Voivodships over the years (2010–2015). Research report*. Her research covers cultural education, art therapy, creative pedagogy, and intercultural skills. She coordinates the work of the intercultural competence service at Jagiellonian University.

Cultural Education as an Element of Higher Education

As Eugeniusz Szymik and Ilina Copik aptly point out, "On the wave of cultural transformation processes in the contemporary world, it is necessary to change the reflection on education – its social role, organizational character, program content and forms of its transmission. The above issues cannot ignore the reflection on the role of the teacher, who, despite the social changes associated with the disruption of the hierarchy of knowledge and the change of the communication paradigm, still appears as the main subject of educational activities, responsible for the quality of education"[1]. Therefore, especially nowadays, a teacher – also a university teacher – should not only demonstrate how to think and use theories, but also how to look for connections between theory and practice, knowledge and life, including unforeseen and non-standard connections. He or she should be creative and teach creative thinking. The US scholar Richard Florida[2] proves that what is of prime importance in the creative era is not only knowledge, but also skills – including creativity – which allow one to tap into one's knowledge with a view to creating new value. Therefore, he deems it crucial that creativity is taught, and creative individuals are identified as a separate class. For this purpose, he proposed the creative class category, which includes academics. Besides, Florida assigns the creative role to the university itself. He maintains that higher education is the engine of innovation, a breeding ground of new ideas and a venue of

» 1 E. Szymik, I. Copik, *Wyobrażeniowy obraz nauczyciela akademickiego w opinii studentów*, "Problemy Profesjologii" 2015, No. 1, p. 92. See also: Ch. Day, *Nauczyciel z pasją. Jak zachować entuzjazm i zaangażowanie w pracy*, GWP Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne, Gdańsk 2008.

» 2 R. L. Florida, *Narodziny klasy kreatywnej: oraz jej wpływ na przeobrażenia w charakterze pracy, wypoczynku, społeczeństwa i życia codziennego*, transl. T. Krzyżanowski, M. Penkala, Narodowe Centrum Kultury, Warszawa 2010

increased productivity. Universities, says Florida, are far more important for thinking about creativity than we think. They are institutions which teach how to generate, attract, and mobilize talent and how to establish a tolerant and diverse social climate[3]. To his mind, teachers, representatives of academia, are members of the academic community, i.e. people who can think independently and find non-standard ways of problem resolution. They are representatives of the opinion-forming community, which is creative on a daily basis, produces new form and content, and is obliged to teach others what creativity is and how to benefit from it. Moreover, Florida believes that the creative class is not only competent but also guided by concrete values such as individualism (understood as the need for self-fulfilment), opposition to limitations (including cultural ones), diversity, and openness. The prime value represented by this class which should be passed on further is meritocracy, or the ability to combine education with intelligence (including innate intelligence, because Florida assumes that creativity is an innate, inherent feature of every human being) and competence. And although the concept of meritocracy itself refers to the system of creating various organisations ranging from the state to business, the concept of pragmatic creation can be successfully applied in relation to raising the competence and knowledge of students. Florida considers meritocracy to be the ability to strive for self-fulfilment, achieve goals, pursue ambitions, (self)motivate oneself to work, and to tap into and stimulate the deposits of creativity of students. However, as he stresses himself, educational systems and teaching methods very often hinder this innate creativity. It is worth noting that Florida is not the only one who points to the professional group of academic teachers as representatives of the creative class: Bjørn Asheim and Høgni Kalsø Hansen[4] also elaborate on the American scholar's typology and include academics in the creative professions. According to the categories they propose, scholars representing the humanities would be part of the group who pass on symbolic knowledge for use in the production of images, cultural projects or products, and cultural knowledge, which consists in learning what diversity, multiculturalism and cultural tolerance involves. In the latter case, creative products would include cultural symbols, images, and signs. Likewise, Szymik and Copik[5] claim on the basis of their studies that students expect their lecturers to be creative.

» 3 In fact, Florida spoke in this way about universities of economics, yet his idea seems to have universal application. See R. Florida, *The Flight of the Creative Class. The New Global Competition for Talent*, "Liberal Education", 2006, Summer, 2006, p. 22–29.

» 4 B. Asheim, H. K. Hansen, Knowledge Bases, *Talents, and Contexts: On the Usefulness of the Creative Class Approach in Sweden*, "Economic Geography 2009", vol. 85, Issue 4, p. 425–442.

» 5 E. Szymik, I. Copik, *Wyobrażeniowy obraz nauczyciela* …, p. 1.

Culture and art are the spaces where this creativity is used the most fully. As many theoreticians claim, e.g. Barbara Putz-Plecko from Die Universität für angewandte Kunst in Vienna, the combination of education with culture and the arts can be more effective than with any other discipline. It is a synergy that enables the transfer of knowledge and skills, opening both teachers and students to different realms of experience, thus supporting personal development and understanding of the world. Cultural education, also referred to as creative or aesthetic education, teaches effective collaboration with others, respect for others and their views, and emboldens one to cross borders and challenge established theories. According to Putz-Plecko, "cultural education is dialogical in nature and focuses on the way people deal with their fellow human beings and with the environment. It contributes to people's socialisation and strengthens their ability to participate actively in the life of society – at various levels and in a variety of ways"[6]. She recalls that cultural education has been on the European agenda for many years. It is a professional sphere of activity which involves teachers, cultural educators, and artists, whose aim is to develop cultural competences, which are considered crucial in the 21st century[7]. The scholar emphasises that these competences are vital not only for the humanities and social sciences, but also in economics and exact sciences. "Europe, both as a cultural area and as an economic area, needs qualified citizens with inter-cultural competence, interest in linguistic diversity, the willingness to partake in innovative lateral thinking, a vigorous sense of social awareness and the capacity to act with solidarity"[8]. Culture is intertwined with many different aspects of social life. For this reason, cultural education can reach into many fields, pointing to natural links between culture and many branches of knowledge. Elements of cultural education can be used to strengthen, inspire, and support a wide range of research. The integration of subjects, learning areas and topics within cultural education helps students to understand and perceive relationships between seemingly different fields. Thus, elements of cultural education can be combined with science and humanities, sport, technology, history, geography, and so many others. This education contributes to knowledge transfer, personal development, and social participation. It enables the

» 6 B. Putz-Plecko, *Background report on Cultural education: The promotion of cultural knowledge, creativity and intercultural understanding through education. Prepared for the Committee on Culture, Science and Education*, Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe, Paris 2008, p. 8.

» 7 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ L 394 / 30.12.2006), https://www.academia.edu/6449272/RECOMMENDATION_OF_THE_EUROPEAN_PARLIAMENT_AND_OF_THE_COUNCIL, [access: 02.02.2019].

» 8 B. Putz-Plecko, *Background report on Cultural education* …, p. 10.

development of talents; it teaches understanding of culture and art; it makes one aware of aesthetics and ethics; it demonstrates how to express oneself and one's emotions; it allows one to find one's bearings in the process of learning and communication. It refers to historical awareness and heritage, it focuses on creativity. At the same time, it stresses that one should enjoy life and enhances one's mood. Cultural education is the acquisition of the ability to engage in culture and art, which means getting to know different artistic disciplines, being creative, reflecting on and analysing the cultural process and the values transmitted by the culture of a given time and place. It is the ability to find one's bearings in the world, to study, to implement, and to evaluate. As Urszula Kaczmarek observes[9], cultural education ought to prepare a young person for a life in line with the objectives they set for themselves, enhance their quality of life, develop a civil society and participation in culture via contact with works of art. It must enhance one's knowledge about culture and art, stimulate and hone creative activity, influence one's lifestyle and attitude to the social and natural environment. The British pedagogue Ken Robinson[10] identifies four main pillars of this education: 1) to enable learners to identify, discover, and understand cultural assumptions and values; 2) to enable them to understand cultural diversity; 3) to encourage them to associate contemporary values with the processes and events that have formed them; 4) to enable them to understand the evolutionary nature of culture and the processes and opportunities for change.

In order to answer the question of what the cultural education of students looks like, a survey was conducted among 500 students of twenty-seven study majors run by Jagiellonian University, from administration, law, psychology, through nursing, journalism, and social communication, to various philologies, musicology, cultural studies, and film studies.

The study showed that almost half of the student body of Jagiellonian University do not visit cultural institutions at all within the framework of academic classes and nearly a third do it only once a semester. The most frequently visited cultural institution is museums. Perhaps this is due to the fact that 1) museums are more and more often involved in preparing an extensive teaching program and gladly cooperate with universities, 2) according to the study, museums are perceived as a place of social trust, an authority, and an institution conveying information in

» 9 U. Kaczmarek, *Edukacja kulturalna*, [in:] *Organizacja i upowszechnianie kultury w Polsce. Zmiany modelu*, ed. J. Grad, U. Kaczmarek, UAM Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Poznań 1999, p. 137.

» 10 K. Robinson, *National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, Report to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, May 1999.

an accessible and interesting way. Stephen Weil[11] observes, for instance, that museums as teaching institutions are similar to universities: they are venues of gathering, interpreting, and using knowledge in an academic and practical way. Lynda Kelly[12] also highlights the fact that museums are first of all a source of credible information and learning, and at the same time a mediator between knowledge and information and the recipients, as they help the participants of educational classes to come up with their own ideas and to reach their own conclusions. Moreover, Kelly points out that those who see museums as a provider of information often visit them and take advantage of their collections or educational agendas to supplement their knowledge. Érik Triquet[13] believes that museum education orders one's knowledge and study practice as well as arouses interest. Lynn D. Dierking[14] regards museum education as comparable to that of university education. And although it is true that she applies her arguments to science, they can be extended to social sciences and the humanities. As research shows, museum education most often relates to subjects in humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. This is borne out by the studied students' statements: they most often visit museums as part of their education in the field of social, humanistic, or biological sciences. In most cases, going to a museum means only a visit to an exhibition, mainly with an accompanying academic. Only a third of respondents take part in workshops organized by museums, while 66% of respondents admit that academic teachers encourage them to visit cultural institutions on their own in order to increase their knowledge.

Students themselves claim that going to a cultural institution and learning about cultural life are critical elements of learning. The vast majority (88%) believe that such visits should take place as part of their classes and be organized by teachers, scholarly circles, or students themselves. They also argue that university should inspire students to participate in the cultural life of the city, to build their national, local, regional identity, sensitize them to local or global aspects, change their perspective of some of the city's problems, teach openness to different cultural patterns, encourage the expansion of knowledge in the field of culture, devel-

» 11 S.E. Weil, *From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum*, "Daedalus" 1999, vol. 128, No. 3, p. 230–231.

» 12 L. Kelly, *Museums as Sources of Information and Learning: The Decision Making Process*, https://australianmuseum.net.au/uploads/documents/10049/ljkelly-omj%20paper.pdf [access: 28.03.2017].

» 13 É. Triquet, *Relacja szkoła–muzeum*, transl. J. Skutnik, [in:] *Edukacja muzealna. Antologia tłumaczeń*, ed. M. Szeląg, J. Skutnik, Muzeum Narodowe, Poznań 2010.

» 14 L.D. Dierking, *Lessons without limit: how free-choice learning is transforming science and technology education*, http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0104-59702005000400008 [access: 07.04.2017].

op skills, and draw people away from the internet and computer games. In their opinion, access to cultural institutions is very effective. Such visits help them broaden their knowledge and horizons, teach thinking and concentration, and translate theory into practice. These institutions thus take part in the teaching process, not only by focusing on facts, but also on soft skills, i.e. showing the world from many angles or enabling confrontation of one's opinions with those of others. Visits to cultural institutions sometimes bear fruit in terms of more frequent contact with art or the triggering of an interest in culture. Moreover, students indicate that such visits are an interesting diversification of the form of university classes and offer a chance to integrate their groups, strengthen peer ties, or improve teachers' rapport with students. The perception of the effectiveness of participation in museum or theatre workshops is more developed when students' statements on the advisability of visiting cultural institutions are divided into four thematic groups: 1) knowledge, 2) soft competences, 3) contact with culture, and 4) methodology of teaching. Answers to the question "Why is it worthwhile to participate in workshops during academic activities?" can be divided into six groups: 1) knowledge, 2) soft skills, 3) contact with culture, 4) entertainment, 5) therapy, and 6) class methodology. With respect to enhancing one's knowledge, participation in a workshop helps preserve information, use it in a practical manner, and learn new perspectives, research methodologies, and ways of solving research problems. Participation in activities organised in a museum or theatre increases competences such as teamwork, creativity, and the ability to cooperate; it also activates students and shapes their world views. Moreover, it has therapeutic functions: it increases self-confidence and teaches a different view of the world and entertainment; it provides fun, rest, and relaxation. What is more, it enables contact with culture and thus separation from reality. Finally, participation in museum- or theatre-based cultural education enriches university classes and creates an opportunity for integration.

Both the theory of cultural education and the research conducted among Jagiellonian University students have shown that cultural education improves participants' competences in communication, creativity, critical thinking, as well as cooperation and teamwork. This education is manifested in three aspects: 1) social – inspires one to non-academic education, allows one to understand the world, draws attention to and sensitizes one to the problems of the world, and makes one aware that culture is important; 2) personal and therapeutic – raises the standard of living, makes one more sensitive, motivates to action, stimulates creativity; 3) hermeneutical – it teaches interpretation. Christina Davies, Matthew

Knuiman and Michael Rosenberg[15] prove that two hours of weekly participation in creative workshops involving personal engagement (a minimum of 100 hours per year), boosts one's mood and well-being. Paul E. Bolin and Kaela Hoskings[16] have even created a list of skills that are developed within the framework of cultural education and that correspond to the well-being factor: the ability to define oneself, which influences positive self-esteem; the possibility of self-expression, which produces a sense of autonomy; the ability to express beauty, which allows one to relate to the environment; the ability to engage and interpret as an ability to shape healthy relationships with others; the ability to solve problems, think critically and give meaning as an element of autonomy and personal development or efficient exploration of the cultural values accepted by one's own or a different group as a determinant of healthy relationships and positive self-esteem. Participation in cultural events and experiencing art are therefore described as a cultural stimulus and self-regenerating, respectively. Art stimulates creative behaviour and a positive attitude towards other people; it shows life as more meaningful and restores its meaning. Thus perceived, cultural education has three essential functions: 1) socialising, involving the development of values, attitudes, and social skills; 2) emancipatory,[17] linked with the development of creativity; 3) educational. The task of academic teachers is therefore to stimulate creative and cultural education which, as Stephen Billett[18] stresses, is relational and addresses the dual division into the social and the individual in learning. Through cultural education, teachers stimulate the teaching process and improve students' pool of competence, at the same time increasing their interest in the world, making classes more attractive and increasing the number of creative individuals. Students who participate in cultural education, visit cultural institutions, and attend workshops, become creative individuals, look for innovative methods of solving problems, are open to innovative ideas and respect people who represent different points of view. ●

» 15 Ch. Davies, M. Knuiman, M. Rosenberg, *The art of being mentally healthy: a study to quantify the relationship between recreational arts engagement and mental well-being in the general population*, "BMC Public Health" 2015, No. 16(1).

» 16 P. E. Bolin, K. Hoskings, *Reflecting on Our Beliefs and Actions: Purposeful Practice in Art Education*, "Art Education" 2015, vol. 68, issue 4, p. 47.

» 17 See: J. Florczykiewicz, E. Józefowski, *Arteterapia w edukacji i resocjalizacji. Wybrane działania arteterapeutyczne i studia empiryczna*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczo-Humanistycznego, Siedlce 2011, p. 39.

» 18 S. Billett, *Conceptualizing Learning Experiences: Contributions and Mediations of the Social, Personal, and Brute*, "Mind, Culture, and Activity", Volume 16, No. 1, 2008.

be found in other rooms, too, where the light and colour of the walls are clearly brighter. Unfortunately, the description of this part of the exhibition lacks an adequate explanation of this issue. On the other hand, it refers to the division into the realms of the sacred and the profane, which – unfortunately and paradoxically – is not clearly marked within the space of the exhibition itself. The second clear deviation from neutral grey is the part of the exhibit devoted to Biedermeier, where the walls are painted in a bright shade of green and the arrangement of objects is a classic example of a so-called period room, i.e. a fully arranged interior displaying all the presented objects in their original context. Interestingly, this section contains two paintings, i.e. living room portraits. This set-up is all the more surprising when we realise that the other two styles introduced in the same interior, i.e. Empire and Classicism, are discussed in neutral, glass display cases facing one another.

Unfortunately, the inconsistencies also apply to the layout of the exhibit itself, and not only to the way it is presented. The most striking one is the MSU's presentation of unique artistic fabrics, glassware, and ceramics. These are works of an exceptionally artistic character, which (like the works of Magdalena Abakanowicz) are most often presented on premises reserved for art. While one could justify fabric itself as a medium following the concepts of the previous rooms which display fabrics, the context is completely different. There are no other utility objects, furniture, or anything that would give these items a more utilitarian character. Ultimately, we have artistic works. Such an arrangement of the exhibit also has the disadvantage that it strengthens the feeling in visitors that the closer they get to the present day, the less understandable, the less readable, the more sophisticated, and the less utilitarian the artefacts are. In general, in comparison to the presentations of earlier eras, objects from the twentieth century make up merely three rooms. One small room houses the Secession, the Fashion Parade (from the 1880s to 1960s), and the objects from the interwar period. The next room contains the aforementioned period From 1945 Until Now. The third and last one fits chronologically, but not logically. This is Contemporary Unique Art. (Photo 1) Hence, today's truly contemporary problems related to applied art, such as recycling or the role of technology (digitality of today's world, 3D printing, etc.), in fact do not appear in the exhibit[4].

It may be interesting and enriching to look at this museum exhibition not from the point of view of an educator, but from that of designer-practitioner, graphic designer and, at the same time, a recognized specialist in the field of design, Marcin Wicha. He is the author of the

» 4 Nor are they addresses during lessons for school students. See: https://msu.mnp.art.pl/pl/lekcje-muzealne/kl/sl/wl/2 [access: 26.04.2019].