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ART AS A MESSAGE REALIZED THROUGH VARIOUS MEANS OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

Abstract: From the ancient times, art has performed not only aesthetic, but primarily informational and ritual functions, since people have used artistic means to honour the divinities. In Ukraine, the instances of art have been known since the times of Trypillia culture, from the 5th century BC. Hereafter, art has used various means to deliver information. During the years of

Kyivan Rus, there were mostly religious mural paintings and mosaic pictures in churches. They were not considered by the contemporaries as artworks, but only as images for worship. However, it should be noted that in St. Sophia's Cathedral there are also some secular paintings of those times. Religious and secular murals used different art forms and means to convey information. An icon, restricted by the canon, illustrated a particular Christian dogma, whereas a secular painting gave information about everyday human life and performed some political and ideological functions. These two genres are often combined in the so-called "Ukrainian folk painting". The Mother of God, the Lord and the saints are depicted against the Ukrainian landscape, and they have Ukrainian traits. The background of folk icons depicts scenes from the everyday life of the Ukrainians, and the icons are decorated with embroidered towels and dried flowers. In the Baroque era, secular events and real people are included in canonical Christian plots.

Today, we see a revival of techniques combining secular and religious painting, when icons depict the sacred participants of contemporary political events. Such icons do not meet certain requirements of the church canon, but constitute the society's reaction to what is happening in Ukraine now. On the other hand, it is a kind of an attempt to bring Heaven closer to humans, to modernize canonical subjects and, at the same time, to promote educating the people in the spirit of patriotism.

Despite the canonicity of the icon and the immutability of information conveyed through the sacred image, the methods of informative communication differed. Thus, although both the Byzantine icon and the icon of the Baroque era reported the same plot, the volume of the message that they conveyed was different. The Byzantine icon is an ascetic message-symbol, while the baroque icon is more secular and not only gives you purely religious information, but also information about the traditions, life and appearance of the people living in this period, and the political system of the state.

In canonical religious art, a pictorial image is the only means of narration, whereas modern secular art often turns into a performance, with the simultaneous involvement of painting, sculpture, music and lighting effects, and avant-garde short films.

Keywords: art, icon, narrative, national identity, religious and secular art, Ukraine.

Introduction

Methods of transmitting information by artistic means: the truthfulness of the information content of works of inappropriate time

The analysis of art in Ukraine from the ancient Trypillian culture times to the period of 18th-century baroque should begin with taking into account the purpose for which the art was created. Ukrainian art is an integral part of the world art heritage, so it has some features in common with the art of other nations at different times. Therefore, the analysis should start with a consideration of the general functions that art has performed since ancient times.

According to the art theorist Grzegorz Sztabiński, in ancient and medieval times, the Latin word "ars", which was at that period a translation of the Greek term "techne", had a slightly deeper meaning than what we now associate with

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[1]   G. Sztabiński, *Why Do We Need the Term „Art"?* "Art Inquiry", 2019, vol. XXI (XXX), pp. 19-35.

artistic activity.[1] In ancient Greece and Rome, in the Middle Ages, as well as in the modern era, it was related to a wide-ranging concept of craftsmanship, i.e. it explained how to make an object correctly – e.g. a house, a pot, shoes or a statue.[2] The word "art" incorporated what we now include in artistic activity, as well as mastery in the field of crafts and some branches of science (geometry, for example), rhetoric, etc. At first, poetry and music, which were considered to be an expression of feelings, were excluded from this concept. However, back in the classical period of Ancient Greece, their connection with art was discovered when the Pythagoreans formulated the laws of harmony and began to calculate it, and Aristotle defined the postulates of poetry.[3]

Grzegorz Sztabiński quotes Władysław Tatarkiewicz, who interpreted the art of Antiquity in the broader sense – "for crafts and at least some sciences", and notes that this concept persisted in the Middle Ages, but afterwards a division into mental and physical work was introduced. At the time of Quattrocento, there was no distinct borderline between art and craftsmanship; there was a concept of "craft spirit" and the dependence of a work of art on a customer's order.[4]

However, during the period of Cinquecento, the craftsmanship study lost its direct influence on the development of an artist's style. Scientific understanding of art emerged and the role of personal talent began to be noted. Grzegorz Stabiński points out Arnold Hauser's statements concerning significant changes that occurred during this period, involving not only art, but also the person of an artist who began to be specially honoured. However, in the second half of the 19th century, reservations began to be expressed regarding the legality of including all varieties of artistic activity in the concept of "Fine Arts".[5]

Analyzing attitudes to the concept of art in the 20th century, Grzegorz Sztabinski quotes Morris Weitz, who held the most radical position on the subject, stating that all theories of art relate only to some phenomena that are called "art". Therefore, they are either too narrow or too broad, since they also include objects and phenomena that we do not consider as pieces of art.[6] Consequently, Morris Weitz asked a principal question about the possibility to formulate a profound analytical definition of the concept of "art" – one that determines its meaning and volume. He believed that such a definition could not be formed and those who attempted to do it did not understand the "logic of the concept" of "art".[7] He argued that the concept of "art" has an open

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[2]   Ibidem.
[3]   Ibidem.
[4]   Ibidem.
[5]   Ibidem.
[6]   Weitz, M. *The Role of Theory in Aesthetics,* "Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism", 1956, vol.15, pp. 27-35.
[7]   G. Sztabiński, op. cit.

character for changes and additions – that is, new pieces of art are constantly being created and, due to their features and by their appearance, they change its content and area of application. "The value of each of these theories," Morris Weitz wrote, "is an attempt to establish and verify particular criteria that were missed or corrupted by the preceding theories".[8]

In this article, the authors use the phrase "church art" and "religious or ritual art," meaning art as a high level of mastery of a particular activity, a specific philosophical category, a form of representation of the world around and a significant component of the spiritual culture of humanity.[9] That is why it is useless to compare the artistic heritage of different times to determine highly prized and low-value objects, since all works primarily represent the cultural inheritance of their time. Therefore, the level of mastery of works can only be determined among works of the same rank, taking into account the similarity of the geography of location and chronology. The argument for considering religious works as pieces of art is the opinion that the valuable cultural artifacts of Ukraine – Orthodox temples, icons unrivalled in beauty, paintings and sculptures with religious motifs – steadily remind us of the presence of the spiritual level of civilization which was the source of our ancestors' life.

Art can be oriented at performing a religious ritual function. It is one of the oldest roles of art, known since the prehistoric times of cave rock paintings. However, the paradox is that, in this case, an artwork is not considered as art by believers – it is only regarded as a means of performing a ritual. Consequently, a particular contradiction arises as to whether an object of a religious cult can be considered a work of art at all, or whether it is an object of culture or cultural heritage, since it was not initially considered in terms of its artistic value. In the scientific literature, one can find the terms "ritual art" and "church art". Nevertheless, some scholars think it is more correct not to consider, for example, an Orthodox icon as "church art", but as "an object of cultural heritage" and distinguish an icon, as a holy picture for worship and prayers, from religious painting and murals where famous artists skillfully convey some Bible scenes. As Mykola Dyomin wrote, "the old masters, creators of immortal works of architecture, masterpieces of church painting and music, worked in humility, diligently serving God and, of course, did not set themselves the task

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[8]   Ibidem.
[9]   L. Miliaieva, M. Helytovych, *Ukrainian Icons. Dukhovna spadshchyna Ukrainy*, Kyiv 2007; I. Sandu, A. Crina, S. Bracci, I. Sandu, M. Lobefaro, *Integrated analytical study for the authentication of five Russian icons (XVI-XVII centuries)*, "Microscopy Research and Technique", 2009 – 2010, vol. 72, pp. 755-765; Saint Sophia's Cathedral (H. Logvyn – the author of the introduction and compiler), Mystetstvo, Kyiv 1971; S. Vysotskyi, *Secular murals of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv*, Naukova Dumka, Kyiv 1989.

of creating masterpieces. They were honestly engaged in their craft. From this, as a "by-product", genuine treasures of architecture and art were sometimes born, which later served as landmarks in the development of church architecture, synthesizing the canon and strictly defined semantic and semiotic information ..."

However, old master architects as well as icon painters and songwriters of church hymns regarded their work, the success of which largely depends on inspiration, as a Sacrament".[10]

In the monograph "Architecture of the Orthodox Church: From Design to Implementation", Oleh Sleptsov stated: "In Orthodoxy, an icon is not a picture, not an illustration. It depicts faces and events of the sacred or church history, and has a religious and dogmatic meaning. Hence its unrealism, conventionality of writing, the use of the reverse perspective. The world is not portrayed as real, but transformed. The icon is a dogma of faith, included in the holy picture".[11]

The question of assessing the aesthetic significance of copies replicated from one original work remains quite controversial. For example, in Ukrainian painting, there is a well-known replication of both plots and artistic techniques of famous miraculous icons and folk painting (the "Cossack Mamai" plot). Many ancient icons were not preserved and they are known from their later replicas. From one point of view, if these copies were made by local icon daubers, they lost the aesthetic value of the original work of high pictorial mastery and turned into so-called "naive painting". It is especially noticeable in so-called "home", "rural" icons. At the same time, if you evaluate such "home" icons as objects of cultural (rather than artistic) inheritance, they are undoubtedly valuable, as they represent particular cultural traditions and plots of their time.

With the development of human civilization, the rituals of worshipping higher powers became more complicated. Accordingly, the language of art, as a means of transmitting information, started to be more varied and involved. Art became a specific aesthetic category. There was a synthesis of purely ritual and secular art. In the temples and tombs of Ancient Egypt, along with religious images, objects depicting the daily life of the Egyptians were found.

Such a synthesis also took place in other old civilizations. Thus, Ancient Greece can be considered as the apogee of art understood as performance among antique civilizations, when ritual holidays turned into crowded theatrical productions with dances, music and songs, decorations in the form of special costumes and flower garlands, and sculptures depicting deities (an example of a painting depicting such a holiday is the famous "Phryne at the Festival of

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[10] O. Sleptsov, A*rchitecture of the Orthodox Temple: From design to implementation*, Ukrainian Academy of Architecture, KNUCA, Scientific and Design Architectural Bureau "Litsenziarkh", Kyiv 2012, pp. 9-10.

[11] Ibidem, p. 49.

Poseidon in Eleusis" by Henryk Siemiradzki (1889). This picturesque plot is echoed by the narrative about it in the poem of Lev Mei. This painting was widely recognized in the Russian Empire, which Ukraine belonged to territorially and administratively, and it was widely circulated in the form of millions of reproductions on postcards.

However, the painting by Henryk Siemiradzki is an example of art of later times (namely, historicism of the second half of the 19th century), but depicts events that occurred in the 4th century BC. Such a time gap between the event and its rendering poses a danger of inauthenticity. So was in the case of Siemiradzki's painting. The picture strikes us with its colourful, optimistic, especially impressive landscape, but it was ironically criticized by the educated layers of the Russian Empire. Art critic Vasyl Stasov recognized the mastery of the landscape and the technical mastery of the painting. At the same time, he criticized the inauthenticity of the characters' prototypes and the lack of emotions on the depicted people's faces. In fact, the work of Siemiradzki did not become an evidential source of information about certain events that occurred in Ancient Greece, but reflected the aesthetic ideals of the period of historicism.

If you compare Siemiradzki's picture with authentic ancient Greek paintings, you can see how the methods of informative communication used in artworks changed with time. For Greek artists, the background is practically unnecessary and it is minimized as much as possible.

The principal point in an artwork is a narrative of a particular event with a very restricted number of artistic techniques applied. People and animals are depicted in profile, figures are flat, volume is added with white lines that define facial features, muscles and animal fur. The artist does not depict a specific person only with their facial features, but a certain idealized image, since the main task is not to achieve portrait similarity, but to convey information about a specific event as briefly and at the same time as expressively as possible.

An even earlier instance of giving false information about events without accurate authenticity is the Chinoiserie of the French Rococo artist François Boucher (1703–1770). The paintings from this collection created a false impression on the public about the morals, life and prototypes of Chinese people. The artist depicted the same French plots, but "in Chinese colouring", as he believed. However, an analysis of these paintings indicates that François Boucher did not, in fact, know Chinese people's life and got his ideas from rare engravings and oral stories, i.e. from secondary sources.

It happened while attempts were being made to introduce Chinese motifs to European landscape gardening, if we consider architecture as a particular kind of artistic creation. It is unquestionably true about Chinese architecture with its inherent synthesis of arts. Chinese pavilions were embellished with paintings, carvings and sculptures on the roof, and peculiar theatrical productions involving singing and dancing took place in them (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. The gazebo in the garden of Suzhou. Watercolour by Chang Peng, 2020.

In Ukraine, such famous examples of "Chinese" gazebos can be found in the landscape garden of Sofiivka (Uman town) and the historical landscape park Arboretum Oleksandriia (Bila Tserkva town). They reproduced only simplified forms of traditional Chinese landscape gardening architecture (Fig. 2, 3). While comparing such reproductions with the originals, we can easily notice their non-identity. The architecture of small Chinese forms was formed over thousands of years in other climatic conditions. It was influenced by Taoism, Buddhism and Feng shui in compliance with a clear social hierarchy, as well as local architectural and construction traditions that together determined the originality of the silhouettes, the outline of the roofs, fine details and polychrome. However, their European copies did not have a particular philosophical, religious, cultural or artistic foundation that would have been tested for millennia. Therefore, only those elements that the Europeans associated with China at that time were reproduced.

Once again, this fact indicates that the best evidence of a certain period is the art of this particular period, which, incidentally, is inherent in architecture, if we analyze it from the standpoint of art.

It is worth noting that a similar transformation of past into present events, close in colour to the present, and then of saints to contemporaries through an appropriate landscape and clothing, has taken place in European countries since the Middle Ages.

That is why the authors decided to trace the informative content of Ukrainian art in different periods using actual examples of the works of these periods, i.e. authentic ones. Before analyzing the works of ancient art in Ukraine,

Fig. 2. The Chinese gazebo in Oleksandriia. Watercolour by Chang Peng, 2020.

Fig. 3. The Chinese gazebo in Sofiivka. Watercolour by Chang Peng, 2020.

it is worth asking a crucial question: how do scientists understand the purpose of art in society and the meaning of this term? Morris Weitz considered it impossible to define the criterion of "a work of art". A.P. Marder divided art into varieties, based on the methods of expressing a particular artistic image, their development in time and the specificity of artistic imagery and artistic perception.[12] Serhii Bezklubenko considered various aspects of art assessment, including art in interaction with or in opposition to power.[13]

A widespread phenomenon in the literature on art is the distinction of types of art based on the applied system of artistic tools (on the number of

[12] A. Marder, Yu. Yevreinov, O. *Plamenytska et al., Architecture. Brief reference book* (edit. by A.P. Marder), Budivelnyk, Kyiv 1995, pp. 110-112.
[13] S. Bezklubenko, *Art and power. Grumpy spouses?*, "Viche", 1997/ 8, pp. 125-134; S. Bezklubenko, *Essays on the general theory of art. I. What is art?*, "Bulletin of KNUKIM". "Series in Arts", 2000/ 3, pp. 4-19; S. Bezklubenko, *Essays on the general theory of art. II. The origin of art*, "Bulletin of KNUKIM". "Series in Arts", 2001/4, pp. 4-33; S. Bezklubenko, *Essays on the general theory of art. III. The formation of art form. What is „artistic"*, "Bulletin of KNUKIM". "Series in Arts", 2001/6, pp. 16-26; S. Bezklubenko, *Essays on the general theory of art. V. Formation of the arts*. Ch. I. *Applied art*; Ch. II. *Building art*, "Bulletin of KNUKIM". "Series in Arts", 2002/7, pp. 10-20; S. Bezklubenko, *Essays on the general theory of art. Culture and art in the modern world: scientific issues*, "Bulletin of KNUKIM", 2002/7, pp. 164-168; S. Bezklubenko, *Essays on the general theory of art*. VI. *The formation of the arts*. Chapter 3. *Painting;* Chapter 4. *Musical art*, "Bulletin of KNUKIM". "Series in Arts", 2003/8, pp. 12-29.

means – simple or complex; the attitude to the environment being described – realistic or fancy; development in time and space – spatial, spatio-temporal or temporal; periodisation – traditional or innovative, as well as the sphere of application – material-substantive or intangible).

From this point of view, the authors assume it is possible to apply the term "art" to objects of a religious cult if such objects are considered in terms of their cultural value and transfer the aesthetic perception of the world around the artist through the artwork to the viewer. At the same time, with such semantic content, the term "art" depends on the tastes of the society of a particular period and its meaning changes with time.

You can evaluate the information content of artworks in terms of what the subject of the narrative exactly is: either a specific image-symbol without any reference to individuality (it is characteristic both for the Orthodox icon of the period of Kyivan Rus and for Chinese canonical painting, which also depicted non-specific, but idealized images which embodied some advantages for imitation). So, art delivers two types of narratives: 1) it is an informational message about reality in particular chronological and geographical frames, 2) it is an informational message about how to aestheticise the environment and household items by artistic means.

1. The information content of Trypillian art and its echoes in Ukrainian folk wooden architecture

A testimony of Trypillian civilization with a diverse ethnic composition was obtained as a result of archaeological excavations, and the Trypillian culture of the Eneolithic and Early Bronze Age (mid 5th millennium BC – 2650th BC) was first discovered by the archaeologist Vikentii Khvoika, first in 1893--1894 in Kyiv at Kyrylivska Street 55 and then in 1896–1897 near the town of Trypillia of the Kyiv province. It is believed that this culture stretched to the village of Cucuteni in Romania, near the town of Iaşi (Ukr. Трипільська культура, культура Кукутéнь; Rom. Cultura Cucuteni, Eng. Cucuteni-Trypillian culture). Scientists distinguish three main periods of the Trypillian culture of farmers and cattle-breeders which are of interest to us in terms of artistic manifestations that convey information.

At the early stage, art included decorating household items (ceramic kitchen utensils were decorated with simple ornaments in the form of notches, intaglio) and performing ritual functions (depicting a sitting female deity and animals). At this stage, the designs were becoming complex, various tools were being used and improved, the products were complicated and decoration was more varied. Polychrome ceramics, as well as ceramics with an admixture of crushed shells, smoothing strips and ornaments of the "pearl" type came into

use. Ritual figures, except for female ones, were more diverse than male ones; in the figures, parts of the body were more detailed.[14] At the late stage, the number of painted ceramic items decreased and a technique using an admixture of crushed shells for decorating dishes with specific ornaments in the form of a string, presswork, etc., appeared. Sculptural female images changed, becoming more elongated, with schematically depicted heads.[15]

In fact, the ornaments on household items and ritual figures are carriers of significant information about this ancient civilization. It is believed that the art of Trypillian tribes, as well as the layout of their vast territories of settlements (up to 400 hectares) and life itself, were determined by cosmogonic beliefs and the occupation of Trypillians.[16] Since, during the Eneolithic and Early Bronze Age, the hunting theme present in the rock paintings of the Paleolithic and Neolithic age is inferior to the theme of the principal occupation – farming and cattle breeding, it leads to a form of information transfer by artistic means. If, at the initial stages of the development of a human civilization, a ritual "murder" of animals painted on a wall was considered the key to a successful hunt, the change of occupation of the majority of the population – a transition from hunting to cultivating land and cattle breeding – led to a gradual loss of the "hunting" plot's dominant position and its replacement with stories that somehow reflect the occupation of the population. The chief belief of Trypillians is connected with agriculture and land – it is embodied in a sculptural female image. An essential part of the belief is the cult of rain and the snake as a harbinger of rain, as snakes are more active before rain.[17]

The distribution of female figures at all stages of the Trypillia culture testifies to the preservation of matriarchy, but these sculptures are more elegant than the famous "Paleolithic Venus". The ritual use of female clay figures is evidenced by the presence of grain impurities. The fertility of a woman was to be symbolized by the fertility of the earth, an ornament on the chest in the form of a coil made of two snakes was a symbol of rain and water, whereas a stylized plant or rhombus on the belly depicted a sown field. Scientists believe that such ornamentation was also a comparison of breastfeeding to land rain. This meaning is also conveyed by ritual female figures with dishes for collecting water. According to one source, they depict priestesses who would bring rain onto fields.

[14] N. Burdo, M. Videiko, *The Trypillia culture. Memories of the Golden Age*, Folio, Kharkiv 2007; M. Videiko, *The world of Trypillia*, Laurus, Kyiv 2014.
[15] Ibidem.
[16] Ibidem.
[17] Ibidem.

So, the art of Trypillians was not a means of aesthetic pleasure. Above all, it performed a ritual function to bring rain onto fields, since agriculture at that time did not include watering and was entirely dependent on rain. Water symbols in the form of horizontal zigzags and vertical lines, not only on ritual figures, but also on dishes, especially those for storing grain and water,, and on the bodies of priests and priestesses during ceremonies, were to attract rain and appease the forces of nature.[18]

The decoration of ceramic dishes also reflected cosmogonic ideas concerning the three levels of the world and was not only an aesthetic means. The lower strip of the ornament, horizontal one, symbolized the land. Above it, there was a strip of the sky with a simplified image of the sun and clouds connected with the level of the land using vertical lines ("rain"). On the uppermost level, water was depicted in the form of wavy horizontal lines. Again, there was simple space full of water falling to the ground as precipitation from time to time. At the late stage of the Trypillian civilization, ritual cosmogonic images of two levels of the world instead of three were depicted on dishes. Instead of two "heavenly" levels, one large face was depicted, with its gaze directed to the earth. According to some sources, it expressed a belief in the Mother of the whole world.[19] There are some difficulties regarding the interpretation of images depicting a group of several suns in various positions in the sky, found on pots. It is believed that Trypillians tried to portray a change in time.

There is a difference between the cosmogonic ideas of the Tripillians concerning the hierarchy of the world, with only one earthly level and two heavenly levels, and the ideas of ancient Slavs, as well as their descendants, who distinguished one underground, one earthly and one heavenly level of the world (later, these traditions were reflected in Orthodoxy, where the underground level of the world was hell, the earthly one – the world of people, while the heavenly one – the world of God and angels, which became the theme of numerous folk icons).

It should be noted that even after the majority of Trypillian tribes left the territory of modern Ukraine and the tribes of the carcass and cord ceramics culture came there, the echoes of beliefs in the supernatural forces of rain and the adoration of mother-earth were preserved in folk rituals and decorations until the beginning of the 20th century. A significant example is the conversion of ancient pre-Christian ornaments of ritual significance to decorative elements of wooden churches. The ornaments used symbolic images of the sun in the form of a circle with straight or swirling "rays", water signs – the so-cal-

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[18] Ibidem.
[19] Ibidem.

led "braid" or "chain" (a wavy ornament), a sown field – rhombuses, cutting, a "necklace" or "pearl" ornament.[20] The same ornaments, though in a slightly different form, were used in the Trypillia culture and were later transferred to the culture of the ancient Slavs who also worshipped water, considering it holy, and the earth. However, in the case of wooden churches of the former Kyiv province, which were studied by Yu. Ivashko, we are dealing with a loss of the artistic element of its original information narrative (ritual meaning) and its transformation into an element of decor. It is characteristic that ornaments which symbolized the water world among the Trypillians, the upper levels of the Universe, were used to decorate the eaves of the wooden St. Paraskeva's church in the village of Zarubyntsi, although it is unlikely that the craftsmen used them with an understanding of the symbolism of these images (Fig. 4). So, the artistic device remained and survived for many centuries. However, as a result, it lost its meaning as a particular informative message. It is worth quoting the famous ethnographer Khvedir Vovk: "obscuring knowledge, beliefs are kept very stubbornly, changing, however, over time and easily absorbing new elements which are brought in from the outside. Depending on this, beliefs hide in themselves whole layers of different cultures and influences.

When the traces of gross fetishism in Ukrainian beliefs were almost entirely erased, there are still enough traces of animism and anthropomorphism ...".[21]

Fig. 4. The use of ornamental water symbols on the eaves of Saint Paraskeva's church in the village of Zarubyntsi (1742). Photo by Yu. Ivashko

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[20] Kh. Vovk, *Studies on Ukrainian ethnography and anthropology*, Mystetstvo, Kyiv 1995.
[21] Ibidem, pp. 170-171.

2. From Kyivan Rus canonical art to folk style art of the Baroque era: a synthesis of the religious and secular in painting

Byzantine Orthodox painting was subject to the requirements of clear canonicality. The Lord, the Mother of God and the saints were portrayed as if in space against a gold background. It can be compared to ancient Greek and ancient Chinese symbolic painting, where the main goal was not to express a picturesque plot, but to transfer certain content in the most concise form. That is why in the plot of Heracles's kidnapping of the beast called Cerberus (or Kerberos) there is no second-hand perspective space, while in the portraits of thirteen Chinese emperors, in addition to a lack of background, the laws of perspective are intentionally violated by the size of the figures, since the main idea was to express the social hierarchy of the depicted.

Canonical Byzantine painting was also an exponent of a specific idea using the most concise means.[22] In the Byzantine tradition, church images were subordinated to the clearly defined canons of God, the Mother of God, evangelists and saints depicted as if in open space, against a gold background, with an expression of calm on their faces and in rather static poses.[23] The same applies to ceremonial imperial images, where, although a long-range plan is used, the figures are extremely static and unperturbed (here it is worth recalling the famous images of Emperor Justinian with courtiers and Empress Theodora with court ladies).

As Mykola Orlenko emphasized, "the principal features of the interiors of the Old Russian period are associated with the presence of mosaics and frescoes, carved slate slabs, marble columns and mosaic floors (St. Sophia's Cathedral, the Church of the Savior at Berestove). It requires an understanding of mosaic and fresco techniques, and restoration work is preceded by thorough archival and field surveys, especially since each temple is distinguished by its specific colour scheme and the colour of the mosaic set".[24] Despite the fact that all the churches were built during the period of Kyivan Rus, each of them is unique in terms of its architecture and decoration.

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[22] M. Allenov, O. Yevangulova, L. Lifshits, *Russian art of the X – beginning of the XX century*, Iskusstvo, Moscow 1989; M. Orlenko, *Uspenskyi Cathedral (The Dormition Church) of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra: methodological foundations and chronology of reproduction*, Phoenix, Kyiv 2015; Rybakov, B. *Kievan Rus and Russian principalities of the XII-XIII centuries*, Nauka, Moscow 1982.

[23] M. Allenov, O. Yevangulova, L. Lifshits, op. cit.; V. Lazarev, *Mosaics of St. Michael's Cathedral, Iskusstvo*, Moscow, 1966; L. Lyubimov, *The art of Ancient Rus, Prosveshchenie*, Moscow 1981; L. Miliaieva, M. Helytovych, op.cit.

[24] M. Orlenko, *Issues and methods of restoration of architectural monuments in Ukraine (11ᵗʰ century – the early 20ᵗʰ century)*, Phoenix, Kyiv 2018, p. 140.

Having borrowed Orthodoxy from Byzantium, Kyivan Rus also borrowed the Byzantine canons of church wall paintings in murals and mosaics, which is confirmed by the murals and mosaics of St. Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv (Fig. 5). St. Sophia's Cathedral performed a unique role in the ancient Russian state and throughout Eastern Orthodoxy.[25] Although all the walls, arches, apse, pillars and cupolas inside are covered with mosaics and frescoes, it is altogether not enough to create the impression of the temple "as not belonging to the earthly world". As for the canonical religious murals and mosaics of Sofia, it can just be said that their principal information content was due to the canon, i.e. involved disclosing the basic tenets of Orthodoxy and embodying moral qualities – purity, fidelity, devotion and modesty in the images of saints worthy of imitation. The Powers of Heaven were embodied in the images of the protectors and patrons of humanity. In general, the decoration of the main temple contributed to creating a general impression of monumentality, grandeur and uplift.

A special place among the plots of Sofia is occupied by the monumental image of Our Lady of Oranta in the altar of the central apse. When it comes to artistic means, it includes contrasting polychrome (violet-blue and dark lilac clothes against a golden background). Thus, it creates a feeling of elation and spiritual take-off in a simple person – this is the information content of the canonical image.

As noted above, a characteristic feature of images used in icons painted in the Byzantine style is the fixed and serious look of the faces, to convey the fact that the depicted are not governed by human emotions and doubts. While preserving these properties of mural painting in St. Sophia's Cathedral, ancient artists diversified them, embodying morality and perseverance in the figures of saints. Besides, some of the images were given Slavic facial features. It is also characteristic for the later frescoes and mosaics of St. Michael's Golden--Domed Monastery, which is preserved in a fragmentary form.[26]

So, the Byzantine tradition was continued in the frescoes and mosaics of the churches of Kyivan Rus, which developed according to the Byzantine canons. However, at the same time, secular plots penetrated even the murals of temples. For example, images of noble families' members, secular in terms of plot, but canonical in the method of delivering visual information, appeared on the walls of the stairs of the Northern and Southern towers of St. Sophia's Cathedral. They are decorated with murals depicting buffoons, mummers, hunting scenes, horse racing and musicians (Fig. 6). Moreover, the method

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[25]   S. Vysotskyi, *Secular murals...*, op. cit.
[26]   M. Orlenko, *St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery: methodological principles and chronology of rebuilding*, Phoenix, Kyiv 2002.

of transmitting information through the mural here becomes fundamentally different from the ones used in canonical frescos or mosaics, or even in the gallery of images of noble families' members. As in ancient Chinese pictorial images, commoners are depicted in natural poses, with emotions on their faces. In the fresco "Hippodrome", the artist tries to embody the prospect of space and draws tiers with the boxes for spectators, window shutters and even the rustication of walls in detail (Fig. 7).

Fig. 5. Eucharist. Fragment of a mosaic in St. Sophia's Cathedral. Source: funds of the "Ukrrestavratsiia" Corporation

During the Renaissance and Baroque period in Ukraine, there was a radical change regarding canonical borrowings, compared to the period of Kyivan Rus when the Byzantine canons were taken as a model. In the 16th–18th centuries, along with the embodiment of folk traditions in art, we can speak of the transformation of borrowed Western European painting traditions, which can be seen in religious painting plot compositions of this period. The Catholic art of Poland had a special influence on the sacred art of Ukraine of this period. In addition to that, European Baroque traditions came to Ukraine mostly from Poland and mainly in the Polish interpretation. A separate section of the paper

is devoted to the Catholic icon of Poland of the 16th–18th centuries, which allows us to understand trends typical for the development of Ukrainian sacred painting in comparison with the development of Polish sacred painting.

Fig. 6. The fight of the mummers. Fresco on the walls of the stairs of the Northern Tower of St. Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv. Source: funds of the "Ukrrestavratsiia" Corporation

Fig. 7. Hippodrome. Fresco on the walls of the stairs of the Southern Tower of St. Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv. Source: funds of the "Ukrrestavratsiia" Corporation

3. Icons in the art of the Republic of Poland in the 16th–18th centuries and the influence of Polish art on the sacred art of Ukraine

In the vast territories of the former First Polish Republic, the influences of the West and the East met and interpermeated for centuries, also with reference to sacred art. The icon as an art theme, with its form, tradition and theological context, was particularly present in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and in Ukrainian lands. The sacred painting of the Eastern Church gradually became westernised, while its unique form and tradition also influenced recipients from the Latin Church. It can be very generally said that the icon and the associated Eastern art tradition had a significant impact on the sacred art of the First Polish Republic – in spite of significant differences in the functions and tradition of these images. In modern times, this characteristic divergence can be traced, for example, with respect to their realism. On the one hand, we have Western demand for mimesis, on the other one – the power of the canon shaped by the Eastern tradition.[27] Nevertheless, the influence of the icon on Polish art was undeniable, which can be illustrated by numerous Hodegetrias present as early as in the Middle Ages, or examples of 15th-century Eastern wall painting.[28] The popularity continued in the modern period, concentrating on cult images of Eastern origin and their Latin copies.[29] Particularly important influence is attributed to the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa, but also Our Lady of the Snows, Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Loretto.[30]

Research on the presence of the icon in Latin art and its influence on it is very complex. It must take into account purely formal relations and the inter-permeation of iconographic patterns. It is where the complex problem of the unique role of icons in the Eastern Church arises. On the one hand, an icon can be analysed from a formal point of view, as a painting work, but at the same time it needs to be set in a unique theological context which influenced its perception in supernatural categories[31]. The specific sanctification

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[27] T. Chrzanowski, *Orient i orientalizm w kulturze staropolskiej*, [in:] eadem, *Wędrówki po Sarmacji europejskiej*, Kraków 1988, p. 182.

[28] T. Mroczko, B. Dąb, *Gotyckie Hodegetrie polskie*, "Średniowiecze. Studia o kulturze", vol. 3, 1966, pp. 32-64; J. Gadomski, *Gotyckie malarstwo tablicowe małopolskie*, ..., p. 53 n; Anna Różycka-Bryzek, *Malowidła ścienne bizantyńsko-ruskie* [in:] *Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce...* 2004.

[29] Trajdos 1984; Kałamajska-Saeed 1997.

[30] M. Janocha, *Icon Painting in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Sixteenth – Eighteenth Centuries,* "Acta Historiae Artium Balticae", 2 (2008), pp. 79-98; M. P. Kruk, *Ikony-obrazy w świątyniach rzymsko-katolickich dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, Kraków 2011, p. 29.

[31] L. Uspienski, *Teologia ikony*, Poznań 1993; B. Dąb-Kalinowska, *Pojęcie ikony i obrazu sakralnego* [in:] eadem, *Ikony i obrazy*, Warszawa 2000, pp. 123-138; H. Belting, *Bild und Kult. Eine Geschichte des Bildesvordem Zeitalter der Kunst*, München 2001.

and uniqueness of such images permeated the Western Church. Interest in the sanctity of images was extremely clear at the turn of the 16th century and in the subsequent century; it was also reflected in the Eastern Territories of the Republic. A theological discussion, defending holy images against Protestant iconoclasm, naturally directed the interest of Catholic theologians to the legacy of the Eastern Church that had previously been struck by iconoclasm. In this respect, the cult of holy images united Catholic and Orthodox believers, and miraculous images (mostly Marian ones) were the destination of pilgrims of various denominations.[32] At this level, the Eastern "ancient" tradition of sacred images could be used in a polemic with Protestant teachings. It is difficult to mechanically compare the situation of religious art in the western and eastern part of the Republic. In the west, there was a polemic between Catholics and Protestants, using religious art as an important tool for emphasizing dogmatic differences.[33] While, after the Union of Brest in the 17th century, the Eastern Church experienced the time of disputes between Greek Catholics and the Orthodox, it was not reflected at that time in Orthodox art.[34] A more sensitive touchstone of the ongoing transformations were the rapidly developing Orthodox church graphics.[35]

The popularity of the icon as a religious and miraculous painting was supported by numerous factors. Almost every such image displayed in Catholic temples was accompanied by a number of legendary stories or tales of miracles which emphasized its uniqueness and miraculous character.[36] There had to be an account of how the image had been miraculously found and placed in the target location. The factor that played a crucial role was the earlier history and origin of the given image. Images imported from the East, whose creation

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[32]   P. Krasny, *Visibilia signa ad pietatemexcitantes. Teoria sztuki w pismach Roberta Bellarmina, Cezarego Baroniusza, Rudolfa Hospiniana, Fryderyka Boromeusza i innych pisarzy kościelnych epoki nowożytnej*, Kraków 2010.

[33]   S. Michalski, *Protestanci a sztuka. Spór o obrazy w Europie nowożytnej*, Warszawa 1989; K. Cieślak, *Między Rzymem, Wittenbergą a Genewą,* Wrocław 2000; G. Jurkowlaniec, *Epoka nowożytna wobec średniowiecza. Pamiątki przeszłości, cudowne wizerunki, dzieła sztuki*, Wrocław 2008.

[34]   J. Stradomski, *Spory o "wiarę grecką" w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, Kraków 2003.

[35]   W. Deluga, *W kręgu cerkwi prawosławnej i kościoła greckokatolickiego XVII – XVIII w.* [exhibition catalogue in the Department of Old Art in Chełm, April - May 1993], Chełm 1993; eadem, *The Influence of Dutch Graphic Archetypes on Icon Painting in the Ukraine, 1600-1750*, "Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes" 34 (1996), 1-2, pp. 5-26; M. Janocha, *Niektóre aspekty ikonografii unickiej na terenie Rzeczypospolitej* [in:] *Śladami unii...* 2010, pp. 495-543.

[36]   A. Różycka-Bryzek, J. Gadomski, *Obraz Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej w świetle badań historii sztuki*, "Studia Claromontana" 5 (1984), pp. 27-50; A. Różycka-Bryzek, T. Grzybkowska. *Ikona Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej od Andegawenów do Jagiellonów,* "Folia Historiae Artium" 26 (1990), pp. 133-136.

was associated with antiquity and Byzantium, were of particular importance. Another significant thread was the tradition of images associated with St. Luke. Analysing this issue, M. Kruk also paid attention to other threads accompanying such paintings. Among others, the topos of wounded images, cases of bleeding or shedding tears were of importance. Some of the images were associated with stories of sacrilegious attacks and attacks on miraculous images.[37]

Faith in the antiquity of these images and the accompanying stories of supernatural events increased their popularity. Only a small fraction were actually of Eastern origin, while many imitated the forms of old images, especially those of Our Lady. Although most of them had the formal features of Western painting, they took on a kind of the miraculous aura of the Eastern prototypes. This resulted in their special placement within the church. They either had a separate chapel, the best example of which is the Jasna Gora painting, or they were located in the main altar. The cult that developed around such images influenced their decoration. Votive offerings appeared in the altars near the paintings. Another important element were the coronations of the paintings and added ornaments, usually made of metal. In Polish art, this phenomenon was not limited to silver dresses. Smaller elements were frequently used, creating quite extensive ornaments covering the painting. Polish researchers have developed divergent theories explaining the origins of this trend. On the one hand, they pointed out Eastern influences, on the other one – referred to Western inspirations. Recently, the permanence of the medieval tradition of decorating images has been more strongly emphasised.[38]

Undoubtedly, research on the icon cannot be solely reduced to formal and stylistic analysis. In this case, evaluation and understanding require considering a wide theological and, more broadly, anthropological context. This complexity seems obvious in research on art of the Eastern Church. However, at the same time we should not forget about the presence of the icon in the West. In the Latin Church, it appeared as an example of old painting, dating back to the ancient beginnings of the Church. This uniqueness was supported by legends about its origin and the accompanying supernatural events. This had an impact on the special position of these miraculous images and demand for their copies, which, despite a similar cult function, adopted formal Western features.

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[37] M. Kruk, op. cit.
[38] The Eastern origin of this tradition was supported by T. Chrzanowski, *Orient i orientalizm...*, as well as Janocha; the Western origin – by M. Karpowicz, *Notes on ornaments placed on paintings and the role of silver elements in the former Republic of Poland*, "Rocznik Historii Sztuki" XVI (1986), pp. 123-158, marking a more universal tradition; K. Czyżewski, W. Walanus, M. Walczak, *A tombstone of the Suffragan of Płock*, Piotr Lubart, in St. Mary's Basilica, Krakow "RK" LXXV (2009), pp. [11]-41; cf.: Kruk, op. cit.

4.   Specific features of Baroque religious painting in the Hetmanate territories

Although the Cossack era is considered to be the period of bloom for folk style traditions in art, it can be argued that these traditions were established much earlier, at the times of Kyivan Rus, when three main ways of transmitting information by artistic means were formed: 1) a purely canonical, principal one, where the image is a special symbol and the transmission method requires maximum precision without unnecessary details – it was applied to the most visible and expressive planes; 2) a purely secular one which depicted scenes from people's lives, hunting for animals and entertainment; at that time, it was considered secondary (the secular mural of St. Sophia's Cathedral was located in the stairwells of the Northern and Southern towers and free admissions were made impossible); 3) an intermediate one, where rulers and their families were portrayed using imaginative canonical means (an example is the gallery of Yaroslav the Wise's noble family members on St. Sophia's Cathedral's central nave walls).[39]

In the days of the Cossacks, i.e. the period also called the era of the Cossack Baroque, the synthesis of canonical and secular painting became more pronounced. Icons and murals depicting not only the Heavenly Forces, but also quite earthly people – burghers, hetmans, foremen, often with family members – were no longer considered to be of secondary importance, but became really significant. The images on the icons of the Protection of the Hetmans: Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, Ivan Mazepa, Petro Kalnyshevskyi with a foreman, Pereyaslav Colonel Ivan Myrovych, Archbishop Lazar Baranovych, Prefect of the Kyiv--Mohyla Academy Feofan Prokopovych and other figures are known (Fig. 8). For example, such a gallery with images of philanthropists was placed in the Assumption Cathedral of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra.[40]

A similar tradition spread not only in Ukraine: one of the most famous examples is the image of Pope Sixtus in the "Sistine Madonna". The influence of Catholic Baroque traditions on the Orthodox painting of the Ukrainian Baroque period was marked by picturesque compositions with saints depicted in dynamic poses, very emotional faces and poses, the use of bright polychromy and pronounced detail, giving canonical plots greater secularity and making saints' images resemble ordinary people with emotions. This distinguishes the religious painting of the Baroque period in Ukraine from the more conventional, restrained in color, static and rigidly defined canonical painting of Byzantium and Kyivan Rus. The compositions of family icons or icons depicting donators

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[39]   L. Miliaieva, M. Helytovych, op.cit.; V. Lazarev, op.cit.; L. Lyubimov, op.cit.; D. Stepovyk, *The history of Ukrainian icons of the tenth – twentieth centuries*, Lybid, Kyiv, 2008.
[40]   Ibidem.

are also borrowed from the Catholic tradition, where real people with their wives and children are depicted under the protection of the Mother of God, Jesus Christ or patron saints.

Fig. 8. The Sich icon of "The Protection of the Theotokos" or the "Intercession of the Theotokos" that depicts the last koshovyi otaman (Cossack leader) Petro Kalnyshevsky, a Zaporizhzhia Sich foreman, judge, clerk and others. A copy of 1836 of the original Sich icon, as evidenced by the inscription on the back: "A copy of the old icon located in the Zaporizhzhia Sich and now intact located in the village of Pokrovske which used to be the Sich. A copy of 1836 was written for the Odessa Society of History and Antiquities". Source: funds of the "Ukrrestavratsiia" Corporation.

During the Baroque period, folk tradition were manifested in icons in the lands of Right-Bank and Left-Bank Ukraine, especially in naive folk painting by local rural artists. The Mother of God and child Jesus, as well as respected saints, were endowed with Ukrainian features. A fragment of the Ukrainian landscape was sometimes shown behind, while strict unperturbed facial expressions and static flat figures typical for Byzantine-style icons were replaced by affectionate, friendly facial expressions and lively poses of figures depicted on baroque icons that were noted by contemporaries. Despite the preservation of the canonical tradition, the information content of the icons of this period somewhat changed. In the times of Kyivan Rus, images of Yaroslav the Wise's family members, although located close to holy persons, were separated from them. However, in the Baroque era (especially in the icon of the Intercession), heavenly powers and earthly contemporaries were united in one plot in the icon, which had a particular political connotation to express the heaven's blessing on earthly figures. Besides, unlike Orthodoxy in Byzantium or Russia, Orthodoxy in Ukraine has historically been combined with unquenchable pagan traditions of the exaltation and veneration of nature and the world around it. Therefore, Orthodoxy in Ukraine was not based on a boundless fear of God's wrath, but respect and love for God, the Mother of God, the saints and a poetic attitude to the world around us, which is manifested in poetic carols (koliadka and shchedrivka).

General conclusions

The short review of the means of conveying information in Ukrainian art, from ancient times to the era of the Baroque, shows how, despite changes in civilizations, echoes of old information narratives were stored over millennia and lost their information content over time to only express a message about aesthetic criteria. It can be seen in how the ornamental messages of the Trypillian civilization turned into a certain element of decor in the later Ukrainian national style traditions. These narratives were preserved through the symbolism of rituals in folk customs and Ukrainian beliefs until the beginning of the twentieth century. The specificity of this phenomenon is that Christianity has never been able to completely eradicate the remnants of pagan beliefs.

The most informative narratives about a particular era are the authentic works of that period. The works of later times that reflect the events of distant past often create an unreliable impression of these events and rather illustrate the artistic and aesthetic preferences of their time. It can be clearly proven by comparing the canvas of Henryk Siemiradzki with authentic Greek paintings on an amphora, paintings by François Boucher with an authentic Chinese painting scroll by Yang Lieben and authentic Chinese gazebos with the "Chinese"

pavilions of Sofiiivka and Oleksandriia. That is why it is very important to preserve the authenticity of ancient art and to restore it with the study of old painting techniques. However, as for religious art, conflict often arises between the requirements of conservation and the needs and desires of the clergy and society. Systematizing the practical experience of the Ukrrestavratsiia Corporation, Mykola Orlenko noted: "Interiors of a particular period were marked by the use of certain materials and technologies, so the problems, causes of the emergency condition and restoration techniques have their characteristics (in interiors of the 11th–12th centuries: mosaics and frescoes, 13th–15th centuries: mural painting using the fresco technique – secco, secco on lime plaster, 17th –19th centuries: oil painting)".[41]

By comparing the canonical Orthodox mural paintings of the times of Kyivan Rus with the Orthodox icon of the Intercession of the Cossack times and with the modern icon of the Intercession, one can see how the artistic methods and direction of the flow of information gradually changed. Moreover, the canonical images of the Ukrainian Baroque period did not give people a literal idea of the Christian events of antiquity, as they embodied the artistic-figurative features of their time. At the same time, the aesthetic function was added to the symbol transfer function, since in religious painting of the Baroque era special attention was paid to polychrome and detail, and the supporting role was growing. As a result, scenes of ordinary human life that were not related to the religious content of the plot were often depicted.

The tradition of combining the religious and secular in one plot has always intensified during liberation struggle. A typical example, relevant for the current situation in Ukraine, is the fresco "The Intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos" by the artist Yulian Butsmaniuk, dating from the 1930s, located in the Church of the Basilian Fathers in the town of Zhovkva in the Lviv region. Despite the religious plot of the Intercession, the fresco is a carrier of powerful political and creative folk information, since it presents political events and concepts significant for Ukraine, such as the Act of Reunification, Holodomor (man-made famine), the Ukrainian People's Republic, Hetmanate and the Western Ukrainian People's Republic. The depicted figures are symbolic. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi is surrounded by bishops: Hryhorii Khomyshyn and Josaphat Kotsilovskyi, and Basilian monks. The events of the Holodomor are depicted under the row of the clergy in the symbolic figure of a woman in torn clothes, crying over her son who has died of starvation. The fresco also shows the main Orthodox shrines of Kyiv – the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra and Saint Sophia's Cathedral, under which there is a portrait gallery of figures of the Ukrainian People's Republic and Hetmanate: Symon Petliura, Mykhailo

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[41] M. Orlenko, *Issues and methods of restoration*, p. 139.

Hrushevskyi, hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi, Mykhailo Omelianovych-Pavlenko and Marko Bezruchko. Under the panorama of Lviv, there is a portrait gallery of figures of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic: Kost Levytskyi, Yevhen Petrushevych, Sydir Holubovych, Vasyl Paneiko, Dmytro Vytovskyi, Hryhorii Kossak and Myron Tarnavskyi. In addition to the historical figures, the fresco also depicts the symbolic figures of a kobzar with torn strings, a destitute peasant woman reflecting on how difficult Ukraine's path to independence has been, as well as a Sich rifleman, a reconnoiterer and peasants with sheaves.

The location of the Virgin with an omophorion in the sky above these groups expresses the idea of protecting the whole of Ukraine – both Western and Eastern, with priests, politicians, the army and the people. The transformation of the canonical religious plot as evidence of the political challenge of the time is being revived against the background of political events in contemporary Ukraine.

The modern icon "The Intercession of the Holy Virgin" depicts the Mother of God with angels, using an omophorion to cover ancient princes, Cossacks, heroes of the liberation struggle, heroes of Maidan and soldiers who died in the East. Such an icon becomes the bearer of a particular political and national implication of the immortality of the Ukrainian nation; it illustrates the sacrifice of the heroes who laid their lives on the altar of the Motherland and the idea of national rebirth under the protection of Heavenly Forces. Such a plot is analogous to the old Cossack Sich icon which depicted Cossacks with Hetman regalia and weapons. Such patriotic images are typical for muralism and street art in Ukraine. However, they penetrate canonical plots as well.[42] According to Grzegorz Sztabiński, such a transformation of art and the emergence of new plots and new expressive means of the art piece does not mean the end of artistic creation.[43] It is sooner the unlimited and comprehensive development in the context of the abolition of many traditional rules that transforms the concept of "art" into an integrated one, including various cultural phenomena that would otherwise be difficult to classify.

Using religious painting as an example, it is possible to analyze how each epoch with its peculiarities influenced even such a conservative genre as church art, whose main task was to convey certain canonical dogmas by artistic means. Analysing Ukrainian art from ancient times to the present, one can clearly see it has been subject to constant changes and external influences. Thus, the conservative ascetic Byzantine icon, transferred to the territory of Ukraine with strong pre-Christian beliefs, undergoes changes in terms of its informative content. The main message of the plot remains the same, but secondary mes-

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[42] O. Ivashko, *Social Nature of New Artistic Trends in the Urban Environment*, "Space / Urbanism / Architecture", 2018/ 2, pp. 167–176.

[43] G. Sztabiński, op. cit.

sages are gradually added to the central, purely religious message about certain biblical events and the added elements are often unrelated to the canonical plot. This is clearly seen in religious baroque painting in Ukraine, formed under the significant influence of the Polish Baroque. It is in baroque icons that special attention is paid to detail: saints are depicted against the background of the Ukrainian landscape, often in stylized national costumes, along with real historical figures. In such cases, the icon informs us not only about the canonical Christian plot, but also about the traditions and life of the Baroque era, the social hierarchy of the Cossack regimental system, if we are talking about the so-called "Cossack" icon. Similarly, the modern icon often reflects certain significant events in the history of Ukraine – the era of liberation struggles, the Chernobyl tragedy (the so-called icon of the Mother of God of Chernobyl with the image of a star in the sky, reactor, red forest and liquidators), or Maidan events. This indicates that, at the turning points of Ukrainian history, the canonical message of the icon is supplemented by a historical-political message with a certain national connotation and then the work of religious art begins to perform a powerful political and educational function.

In summary, it should be noted that although the narrative of religious art has differed from the narrative of secular art, these two types of art have always influenced each other. This led to the emergence of so-called "secondary narratives", secular in the canonical plot and religious in a secular one (when a real person was depicted with objects of Christian worship, against the background of church attributes, icons, in the atmosphere of a church holiday, etc.). The interaction of secular and religious painting has resulted in a special genre of painting in which the artist depicts a canonical Christian plot without being tied to the canons of religious painting and is solely guided by the textual description of the plot and the canons of beauty. In this case, although a painting on a religious theme conveys the same thing as an icon, it nevertheless ceases to be an icon understood as an object of reverence and worship.

In modern Ukraine, the religious genre remains the last of the most conservative ones, inherited from previous centuries, as secular art is increasingly detaching itself from tradition and looking for new unusual ways of expressing its narrative. This results in the multifaceted nature of the concept of "narration of art" in contemporary secular art, as more and more components are being included in the message. Most exhibitions of modern painting are no longer limited to a purely static display of paintings on the walls, but also include dynamic installations, sound effects, music, theatrical performances, etc. Short avant-garde films are also often broadcast in the background. This proves that the contemporary secular art of Ukraine is developing in the direction of a dynamic multifaceted narration, thus increasingly moving away from the static ways of narration by means of images in religious art.

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SZTUKA JAKO PRZEKAZ REALIZOWANY ZA POŚREDNIC-TWEM RÓŻNYCH ŚRODKÓW WYRAZU ARTYSTYCZNEGO (streszczenie)

Od najdawniejszych czasów obiekty artystyczne pełniły złożone funkcje społeczne, estetyczne i religijne. Na terenach dzisiejszej Ukrainy najwcześniejsze zabytki sztuki są związane z okresem kultury trypolskiej. W czasach Rusi Kijowskiej miał miejsce rozkwit sztuki sakralnej rozwijającej się pod wpływem tradycji bizantyjskiej. Funkcjonujące we wnętrzach sakralnych malowidła, a zwłaszcza ikony zajmowały ważną rolę w ramach rozwijającego się kultu. Należy przy tym zastrzec, że już wówczas tematyka czysto religijna przeplatała się z elementami świeckimi z wykorzystaniem zróżnicowanych środków przekazu. Centralne miejsce w tradycji wschodnio-chrześcijańskiej zajmowała ikona. Jej forma i kompozycja była ściśle określona obowiązującym kanonem. Podporządkowane potrzebom politycznym i ideowym motywy świeckie nie były poddawane tak ścisłej kodyfikacji. Oba wątki łączą się m.in. w tak zwanym „ukraińskim malarstwie ludowym", w którym przedstawienia świętych poddawano aktualizacji poprzez wprowadzenie motywów rodzimych (np. krajobraz, szczegóły strojów). Przemianom tym sprzyjał też proces okcydentalizacji malarstwa religijnego zapoczątkowany w XVII i XVIII w.
Współcześnie można obserwować zjawisko wykorzystywania tradycyjnych form i technik pisania ikon do tworzenia kompozycji służących bieżącym potrzebom, także politycznym. Realizowane w ten sposób malowidła wyłamują się z tradycyjnego kanonu ikony. Równocześnie jednak obiekty te są odpowiedzią na aktualne zapotrzebowania społeczne, będąc świadectwem przemian współcześnie zachodzących na Ukrainie. Popularność malarstwa ikonowego i ponowne odkrywanie związanych z tym technik, służy też jego upowszechnianiu. W realiach współczesnej Ukrainy łączenie elementów tradycyjnych, w tym religijnych, z bieżącymi wyzwaniami społecznymi i politycznymi jest atrakcyjne.
Ikona pozostaje ważnym elementem składowym wschodniej tradycji religijnej o czytelnych, ujętych kanonem formach artystycznych. Można przy tym zauważyć odmienne cechy obrazów tworzonych w ścisłej tradycji bizantyjskiej i obiektów wywodzących się z okresu nowożytnego. Forma tych pierwszych jest ściśle skanonizowana, zamykając się w ascetycznej narracji symbolicznej. Poddające się wpływom sztuki Zachodu religijne obrazy epoki nowożytnej ulegały stopniowym przemianom formalnym. Ich przekaz ulegał elastycznej aktualizacji dostosowanej do współczesnych potrzeb.

Słowa kluczowe: sztuka, ikona, narracja, tożsamość narodowa, sztuka religijna i świecka, Ukraina.

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