

## HISTORICAL-CULTURAL AND LIGHTING CONTEXT OF ARTISTIC EDUCATION IN UKRAINE IN THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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### Abstract

*The purpose of the work is to reveal artistic-pedagogical experience in the work of Ukrainian artists of the XX century. The methodology of the research is to apply art-historical, comparative, historical-logical methods. Its methodological framework is the principles of systematicity and historicism. The methodology of artistic education is considered in the context of the general development of the main Ukrainian and Western European art tendencies with the usage of a cultural approach. The article analyzes the historical-cultural circumstances forming the fine-art education in Ukraine for 20 years. We study a new concept and design direction of national art education. There are reviewed methodological bases of the development of ethnopedagogy as a social and cultural phenomenon. It is shown that these 20 years marked as the emergence of the fine-art education in Ukraine with focus on the revival of ethnic and cultural traditions. It is concluded that the artistic elite, which personified outstanding cultural and educational figures, for a long historical period, created national treasures in their own creative workshops and transferred their experience to the next generations, performing the role of carriers of artistic culture. It formed the artistic ground on which a new stage of the development of national education was possible.*

**Keywords:** Ukrainian culture of the 20th century; Fine-arts; G. Skovoroda; World Tree; Symbolism; Creativity; Artistic education; Values.

### Introduction

Social transformations, which began with the turbulent events of 1917, radically changed the ideological, moral, and social-economic structure of society. Provincial teaching, which was subject to the standards and stamps of the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts, no longer met the requirements that formed the new Ukrainian state before artistic education. Its own national school gradually began to form, which made a big step in the development of special education with a guide to the best methodological achievements of European art schools.

The research used the theoretical works of famous scientists, devoted to artistic education and main tendencies of Ukrainian and Western European fine arts using the cultural approach.

The artistic and aesthetic thinking of Ukrainian avant-garde artists, first of all O. Bogomazov, was considered in V. Lychkov's work [1,2]. The author provided a cultural analysis of the artist's essay "Painting and Elements", which was intended as a textbook for Kiev Art Institute students.

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Researchers *M. Svoyskiy* [3] and *V. Faber* [4] paid attention to the development of avant-garde art associations in the late 1920s in Kharkiv, the first capital of Ukraine, and their impact on the cultural, artistic and pedagogical atmosphere in the country.

The article analyzes the historical-cultural circumstances forming the fine-art education in Ukraine in the late 1920s. We study a new concept and design direction of national art education. There are reviewed methodological bases of the development of ethnopedagogy as a social and cultural phenomenon. It is shown that late 1920s marked as the emergence the fine-art education in Ukraine with focus on the revival of ethnic and cultural traditions.

## Methods

Historical-political events of 1917-1919 actively influenced the system of cultural and educational values by changing the perceptions of teachers for the theoretical foundations of artistic education. Pedagogical methods characterizing the essence of the educational process, were updating with the development of science and living conditions.

## Results and discussion

The artistic elite that impersonated by outstanding cultural and educational figures such as M. Boychuk, G. Narbut, the brothers Krychevsky and many others, during a long historical period, created national treasures in their creative workshops and passed their pedagogical experience to the next generations, performing the role of carriers of artistic culture. They constituted the artistic-pedagogical ground, which defined a new stage in the development of national education. The abolition of the Petersburg Academy of Arts as an institution, separation from it of the Higher Art School, the removal of the Academy from the leadership of all the artistic schools of the former empire and giving them full autonomy had a great deal of resonance in the artistic space of Ukraine and embodied a new vision of the revolutionary orientation of art. Artistic methods developed by the great teachers of the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts I. Kramsky, P. Chistyakov and others did not always receive support in the newly created artistic institutions. In the artistic life, there was a tense ideological struggle between the adherents of realistic art with adherents of formalistic directions, the ideas of symbolism were put forward on the fore, the artists paid more attention to the objective laws of perception of color and form, the total reflection of nature as a relic of the system of academicism was rejected, chromatic and picturesque perception was propagated, when the visual impression was considered as a series of color correlations, and so on. The art of the 1920s was seen as a metaphysics of creativity, with the aesthetics of symbolism, sensuality, and feminology of expressive forms.

However, it should be noted that in Ukraine the disclosure of the essence of artistic creativity, its specifics and understanding of the symbolic nature of fine art was still considered at the time of university education at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kharkiv and Kyiv Universities, when graduates were trained in various branches of the arts, in particular, the graphic profile.

Due to the Kyiv Mohyla Academy in Ukraine, there was one of the most powerful arts and engraving schools based on the ideas of symbolism and emblems. Several generations of artists, architects, musicians, and scholars were brought up in the Baroque philosophy of symbolism: the architect Ivan Grigorievich-Barsky, the philosopher Hrigory Skovoroda, the scientist Mikhail Lomonosov and others relied on the basic philosophical idea of *Sacrum'y*, spiritual development, which was and is nowadays transversal in the ethnonational figurativeness and was expressed through the plot, stylistics, coloring. The general provisions of philosophical knowledge about the understanding of the symbolic nature of art, its spiritual role

in teaching and upbringing of the personality are outlined in the works of famous Ukrainian thinkers F. Prokopovich, G. Skovoroda, P. Yurkevich.

H. Skovoroda, whom D. Chyzhevsky considered "the centerpiece of the Ukrainian intellectual tradition" [9], also had an artistic talent and repeatedly accompanied his ethical thoughts with symbolic drawings.

Thus, in his works, H. Skovoroda linked the microcosm of a man with the macrocosm of society through the world of symbols, as mentioned in such works as "Narkis", "Melody", and others. According to the philosophical teachings of H. Skovoroda "about the symbolic secrecy world", the indivisible "visible" and "invisible" nature transforms it into a special plexus of "figures" and "symbols" [5]. H. Skovoroda taught students to "get into the depths of the image-symbol, to realize its inner, hidden essence" [6] (Figs. 1 and 2).



**Fig. 1.** Snippet from the book «Symbola et emblemata selecta», Amsterdam, 1705. This publication inspired G. Skovoroda on his philosophical thoughts about the magical image of the Yabluny.



**Fig. 2.** Snippet from the book «Symbola et emblemata selecta», Amsterdam, 1705. This publication inspired Skovoroda to his philosophical reflections on the magical image of Apple.

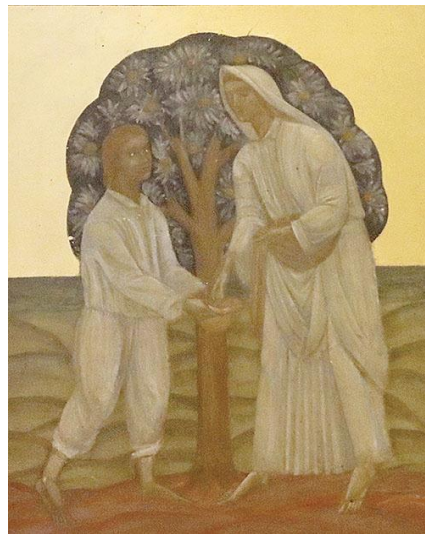
H. Skovoroda presented a whole theory of emblems in his works, moreover, he often accompanied his manuscripts with emblematic drawings and short descriptions or «mottos», which contained the philosopher's most beloved ethical thoughts. For a traveling philosopher, the relation to the world was formed by understanding the man's essence, and it was the thinker's symbolism which was brought up in the bosom of Ukrainian nature. While traveling, H. Skovoroda preached his ideas among the common folk, and his philosophical and aesthetic views were closely linked with the spiritual traditions of Ukrainian life, found understanding and spread both in the region and far beyond, influencing the development of the spiritual culture of Sloboda Ukraine, which could not but be reflected in iconography.

The philosophy of Ukrainian art, based on the idea of Sacrum'y, on the sacred signatures of national literary works, derived an authentic understanding of artistic and pedagogical concepts.

It is not by chance that the teachings of H. Skovoroda influenced the artistic concept of many Ukrainian artists, first of all, M. Boychuk. As Y. Kravchenko notes, "... in the early 1910s, H. Skovoroda presented Boychuk "the magic image of Yabluny". The symbols of the people's philosopher were organically close to the ethical postulates of Mikhail Boychuk, the didactic value of the creations of the boychukists who cultivated the traditions of the national "nature", united the Garden of Good, laid like each person ... the image of Yabluny, Garden, and Gardener, as a slogan, the emblem of his culturable acts, most often they took plots in the monumental and easel painting " [7] (Figs. 3, 4 and 5).



**Fig. 3.** T. L. Boychuk "In the Apple Tree", 1920, cardboard, tempera, National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv.



**Fig. 4.** M. L. Boichuk "Under the Apple Tree", 1912-1913, wood, tempera, gilding, Collection of the Lviv National Gallery of Art. B. G. Voznitsky, Lviv.



**Fig. 5.** M. L. Boychuk "Near the Apple Tree", 1912, graphite pencil, cardboard, National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv

The modified figurative symbols of H. Skovoroda in the works of Ukrainian artists, first of all, the boychukists, reflected the idea of the Ukrainian Sacrum'y, the mythological conceptual scheme of the World Tree, when this symbol acts in the ethnoarchitectonic origins and the visual "visual" scheme: the upper, mountain world: sky, sun, moon, dawns, birds; medium earth world: hut, heart, soul; the lower, and beyond, world: gate, serpent, etc., which testifies to the identity with the national-religious outlook following collective and national memory.

The use of this motive in the work of Ukrainian artists was conditioned by the need to address the transcendental world ordering function of rituals at the critical moments of personal and social chaos, a demonstration of the sacramental balance of worlds according to the structure of the World Trees.

The universal value of the sacredness of Ukrainian art, with its profound aestheticism, with a tendency toward Sophia and Cordocentrism, was manifested both in the "philosophy of the heart" of H. Skovoroda, P. Kulish and P. Yurkevich and in the figurative stylistics of G. Narbuta, M. Boychuk, B. Krychevsky, O. Bogomazov, K. Malevich and others.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Ukraine created its national system of higher artistic education, which was deprived of "provincialism" and "peasantness", which was imbued with the imperial policies of the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts. The Ukrainian art school mastered almost all the directions of the European avant-garde, new symbols of fine arts appeared, a new understanding of the Sacrum's idea, reflecting the revolutionary "myth-making" and reincarnating the persistent Ukrainian archetype of new artistic images. The construction of this national higher education of the art of the '20s was based on the traditions of Ukrainian culture and methods of formal-technical experiments. The analysis of the internal and external factors of the development of higher artistic education proves that this was the time of the greatest ideological and theoretical tension between the main directions of artistic education. So the philosophy of the new artistic concept can be traced in the methodology of professors O. Bogomazov, M. Boychuk, P. Golubyatnikov, K. Gomolach, K. Malevich.

We agree with V. Lychkov's opinion devoted to the logic of denying academism, naturalism and even symbolism in the works of many Ukrainian avant-garde teachers. For example, O. Bogomazov developed his concept of "spatial painting" with the dominant color principle, the primacy of "magic color" over the construction of lines. He emphasized the superiority of the sensual over the rational, the coloristic perfection over the logic of the composition. V. Lychkov notes that in one of his letters (1908) O. Bogomazov wrote: "Mind without feelings will never comprehend the beauty because the logic of reason does not coincide with the logic of beauty, for which there are quite other scales that cannot be measured by logical arshin ...".

M. Boychuk's universal pedagogical and visual concept, picked up by his students, was aimed at the revival of the national identity of art, the search for a Ukrainian style in the stream of the formation of a modern nation. The creation of a national style by boichukists became possible due to new mythology. The Ukrainian style, based on neovizantyzm, proposed by M. Boychuk, was to become a national spirit and to penetrate deeply the everyday life at all levels. The philosophical basis of the artist's pedagogical and creative conception did not correspond to the officially recognized "proletkult", and its ideas, inspired by the revival of spiritual culture, could not predict the consequences of the infernal explosion of Stalin's "socialist realism." It should be noted that M. B. Boychuk's developed formal methodology consisted of constructive techniques of Ukrainian-Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic painting, and methods of generalizing the form corresponded to the present stage of constructivism [8].

A lot of attention to the development of conceptualization and the implementation of new forms of the material was paid to Karol Gomolach, who, taking into account the connection of educational tasks with industrialization, clearly directed the customized by him methodology on the development of professional education. Considering the decorative and practicality matters, he insisted that the interaction and the absence of profound contradictions between the two types of beauty he identified (practical and constructive) are programmed by the artist and are the ultimate goal of creation. His artistic and pedagogical work, consisting of combining the traditions of Ukrainian applied art and modern technology, was the basis of design projection.

However, the age of the Soviet ideological dictates, affecting the form and content of fine art, led to a new understanding of art through "the method of socialist realism", and later these theories also affected methods of teaching in artistic and pedagogical education, the emergence of "myths" in the work of many artists. Thus, A. Tarasenko notes that the mythology of the art of the Soviet period is connected with the social myth of a totalitarian society, when there are such "myths like communism – "the golden age", the father-leader, the Motherland,

the hero - a man of labor". Totalitarian art, as a type of normative aesthetics, accompanied the rigid centralized state structure [9]. Ukrainian artists carried out remythologizing, creating new social myths based on etymologically - mythological folk symbols. Their unique models of world perception were based on the revival and transformation of traditional schemes: "myth", "symbol", "Tree of Life", "miracle garden", "soul", etc. M. Epstein stressed that the appeal to eternal themes, myths in the early twentieth century "became a means of overcoming canonicity... the discovery of the essential, which made the development of a selected theme, given the historical moment " [10]. The concept of teaching at the Ukrainian Academy of Arts in the early twentieth century was aimed at the development of contemporary national art based on the revival of the national culture of Ukraine, the historical origins of the Ukrainian icon, models of ancient wooden architecture, Hetman parson portraits, and the Ukrainian Baroque. In the archival documents of the Academy, this concept was confirmed by G. Pavlutsky's "Explanatory note": "... the political and cultural opportunities brought by the Ukrainian revolution open optimistic prospects: to create new national art ...".

Thus, Mikhail Boychuk based his creative method on the study of Ukrainian sacral art, Vasyl Krichevsky taught to seek inspiration for creativity, for new ideas in folk ornamentation, and Georgiy Narbut taught students fonts in the examples of Ukrainian early-age books of the 17th-18th centuries in his graphic workroom, via symbolism and the emblems of the Ukrainian Baroque, which he admired. G. Narbut often combined text and image, as was customary for baroque artists. The inclusion of letters or words in the composition added a kind of tuning for a significant transformation of object forms.

Although G. Narbut-teacher offered his students' preselected topics, he also allowed students to express themselves, apply their creative techniques, he tried to convey the substantive forms of the material world in unique interpretation through methods of stylistic imaging. He demanded technical skill from his students, without interfering in the very artistic plan, without leveling out their abilities. It was not practical for G. Narbut to provide the teaching material in the form of a lecture, he only used it for clarifying. So, he brought students to historical and artistic museums, to the archive of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, where he studied patterns of the printing school, often worked with students in the workroom, where they had the opportunity to "learn the drawing techniques directly from him."

The universal model of teaching, which gave stylistic integrity and clarity to the art of the past, was based on the use of a wide range of artistic practices from ancient times to modern trends, based on which individual techniques of the rhythmic-spatial structure of works were produced, united by national themes, expressed in images-symbols. The desire of individual teachers to use in the pedagogical activity of the formal-painting abundance and abstraction capabilities was spontaneous and unstructured. The presence of theoretical and pedagogical discoveries by the artists themselves, such as O. Bogomazov, K. Malevich, P. Golubyatnikov and others. Testifies to their desire to realize the "revelation" of a new spatial-temporal dimension.

By reforming the educational process, artists-educators expanded creative approaches to teaching and determined the new structure of educational institutions. Thus, the rector of the Kyiv Artistic Institute I. Vrona (1924-1930) noted that specialists who "fully meet all the requirements of a new school ... do not exist: they still need to be ideologically educated from the visual works of artists... to pick and choose such candidates is a huge process that takes time and great, sustained work" [11]. To carry out the restructuring of the educational process, two All-Union competitions for vacancies in teaching positions were announced (1925, 1926). Thanks to this competition, many young talented Russian artists, who promoted the formalist trend in pedagogical work – P. Golubyatnikov, K. Malevich, V. Palmov, V. Tatlin, L. Chupyatov, and others - arrive at the Kyiv Art Institute.

P. Golubyatnikov, who studied at K. Petrov-Vodkin in free state art workrooms (Petrograd), introduced the idea of rethinking of the painting's texture of the work, a systematic



understanding of the space, a clear justification of the construction of the form and its connection with the color to the teaching, and K. Malevich taught students the new language of modern abstract painting, consisting of geometric forms, the search for extraordinary means of artistic expression. O. Bogomazov taught painting as a system in which the main element was the color mass. V. Palmov organized an optical laboratory, where the physical properties of color were studied [12]. Each teacher tried to add something new to the understanding of the tasks of fine art. They sought to create a form that would perceive the content of the whole world. Their creative method was in harmony with what P. Florensky noted: "From reality to the picture, in the sense of likeness: here is the gaping, skipped for the first time - by the creative mind of the artist, and then by the mind, which co-creatively reproduces the picture in itself".

Thus, teaching formal and technical disciplines immediately revealed their avant-garde orientation. O. Bogomazov, who believed that the picture should be studied in the styles and areas of art, carried out the most daring experiments with the geometric construction of space. O. Bogomazov, just as P. Golubyatnikov, gave great importance to the color as the main material with which the painter works in his teaching methodology, and taught to perceive painting as a certain system. He formulated his formal-technical method of studying the color based on the study of elements of the form of fine art and production and their association with the subject of art. In his scientific work, "Theory of Color", he developed a series of formal tasks for students of the artistic department: "understanding the color movement in the form" or "to present a group of geometric white bodies painted in one color and tone - the task of color relief".

Pedagogical Approaches P. Golubyatnikov directed that the study of the nature of color should occur through the gradual knowledge of the palette, starting with the study of the properties of one color. The task of painting in the first year, according to the memoirs of V. Ovchinnikov, became a blue still life, the purpose of which was to study the blue color (ultramarine, light and dark cobalt, Prussian blue, Berlin azure). Students who did not have drawing skills had difficulty performing such a task, but they quickly mastered the technique of tone stretching of color, so the following tasks for studying other spectral colors - yellow and red - seemed less severe to them. Working on a certain color, students, in the opinion of the artist, had to learn to psychologically feel the slightest changes in color in the overlay and the development of paint, as well as to learn the possibility of transferring the material plane of the object [2]. For the students to learn to reproduce various materials in their works, P. Golubyatnikov developed many specific productions aimed at learning how to find the right correlation between colors. The expressiveness of students' artworks was achieved due to the high degree of the conventionality of spatial, light, color and linear decision of staging. Traces of national origins were present in the compositional and color scheme of these works (pysanka, embroidery, folk icon painting, painted portrait, folk painting, etc.). P. Golubyatnikov directed the students' view on the display of events in the history and culture of Ukraine. The basis of his methodology was a clear system understanding of space, a clear justification for building a form, the relationship of form and color, as well as active encouragement of students to solve various creative tasks. "Studies at P. Golubyatnikov required thoughtful work at the first stage of creation of an artistic work, when the teacher and students began to thoroughly work on sketches, trying to achieve the extreme expressiveness of the image... Work on sketches... required to find a solution to a distinct, contrasting, materially isolated subject, and drawing exercises taught a strict logical design. In the drawing tasks P. Golubyatnikov taught to model the shape not starting with a contour, but from it by building an axial dynamic frame from within, on which the voltage of the outer line forming the shape will depend. He believed that the shape is not formed by geometry, but the movement and stratification of the shape must correspond to the axial tension of motion".

Thus, the method of formation was used as an invention method, which was based on actions with non-verbal codes in the material culture, facilitating constructive thinking and its concentration.

## Conclusions

The analysis revealed the prospect of studying the artistic and philosophical experience of the creative heritage of Ukrainian artists-teachers. It is determined that the ideas of cordocentrism, anthesis, sophistry, and humanism are inherent in the Ukrainian philosophers F. Prokopovich, G. Skovoroda, P. Yurkevich, were embodied in the figurative stylistics of G. Narbut, M. Boychuk, V. Krichevsky, O. Bogomazov, K. Malevich and others. The philosophy of Ukrainian art, based on the idea of "Sacrum", on the sacred signatures of the national arts, formed its understanding of artistic and pedagogical concepts. The philosophical dimension of artistic and pedagogical education from the end of the twentieth century turned to the synthesis of artistic creativity, ethnocultural, comprehension of national artistic and cultural queries in the Ukrainian artistic and educational space. The work has a prospect of continuation because, based on the study of the development of higher artistic education, the priority tasks are distinguished, which play social, ethnocultural, self-identification, the aesthetic role of fine arts, securing the internal connection with heredity roles.

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