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**SPECIFICITY OF ART FACULTIES STUDENTS'
COMPREHENSION OF UKRAINIAN MYPHOLOGY IN THE
CONTENT OF THE COURSE "HISTORY OF UKRAINIAN CULTURE"**

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Abstract. *The paper actualizes the problem of art faculties students' comprehension of mythological artistic and figurative language of Ukrainian folklore works. Insufficient attention to this problem makes future specialists separated from the whole stratum of ideological values of Ukrainian culture. The schematic and specific way of thinking, which prevails today, is increasingly displacing the associative and figurative one, this weakens the creative potential of artistic disciplines specialists. Future art disciplines pedagogues' comprehension of Ukrainian mythology opens up the whole world of philosophical and ideological coordinates of the common culture of the Ukrainians, expands the horizons and activates the associative and figurative way of thinking. A more complete understanding of the reality phenomena encourages the use of creative approaches not only in working on folk art pieces, but also in various spheres of modern art.*

Keywords: *myth, mythological language, associative imagery, Ukrainian tale.*

In the course "History of Ukrainian Culture" Ukrainian mythology occupies a special place, it is directly associated with the symbols of the Ukrainian language, songs, ancient fairy tales, as well as embroidery symbols, Easter eggs, since almost every embroidery has its own special purpose. The famous statement of Confucius that signs and symbols guide the world plays a

unique role in our lives. The Word-Logos emphasized the secret senses of objects and, thus, made them more accessible to human cognition. Florii Batsevych argues, that the word is not an object itself, but a sign, a symbol of object [1]. In the archaic epochs, the internal unity of the word and the subject was so tight that the real name was perceived as a certain part of its bearer, as the bearer itself. Visible world is a certain symbol, a hieroglyph, a mysterious text that foretells its creator, carries some information about him. It is believed that the whole world is information laid down by God and potentially available for human reading. However, to do this, one needs to master the skills of symbolic reading. “The whole conceivable world is mysteriously and symbolically portrayed in the sensual world portrayed by those who have eyes to see, and the whole sensual world – if seen in its foundations, logos, – is in the thinking world; this one is in that one with its beginnings, and that one is in this one with its symbolic images” [3, pp. 337-338]. The aforementioned manifests the peculiarity of understanding the essence of mythological thinking not on the materialist basis. Different aspects of this problem were considered by S. Krymskyi, H. Skovoroda, V. Simovych, O. Potebnia, A. Losev, V. Yurchenko et al. Without deepening in philosophy, we are interested in purely practical issues related to the awakening of art faculties students’ interest to sources of mythology, or rather to the associative and figurative way of thinking, which underlies every myth. It is this way of thinking that broadens the horizons and thereby gives the potential for a more complete understanding of the phenomena of reality, for their disclosure in various spheres of modern art.

The aim of this work is to reveal a number of theoretical aspects of the process of art faculties students’ comprehension of Ukrainian mythology laid down in works of folk art.

The difficulty in understanding the mythological language lies in the selection of appropriate associations, in the breadth of the metaphors, comparisons selection, in the knowledge of natural symbols and the ability to compare and draw certain conclusions. Without following the above mentioned conditions, the associative and figurative language will sound like a foreign language. The first layer of information is read out, and nobody looks for any deeper information. This will be best understood by concrete examples.

Apparently everybody has heard since childhood the fairy tale “Mottley pullet”. There are many characters in it, but let us consider the main ones. The egg symbolizes life; the mouse is a symbol of fuss, bustling that breaks the egg – life. The tale is about the sense of our life, in which there is so much fuss. We lose our lovely gift of life with our hands.

There are a lot of such fairy tales, whose sense is impossible to understand without knowing the symbols.

Ukrainian folklore is a rich integrated material created by the genius of the folk, which reflects the uniqueness of the nation's culture. Knowledge of folklore inspires, develops the language, promotes a better understanding of the essence of what is said.

Why did it happen that a modern person, having sufficient education, basically thinks linearly and schematically (but not in a voluminous, associative way) and does not understand a simple, as it can seem, fairy tale for kids?

M. Chumarna thinks that Ukraine began to fall into the darkness of unconsciousness, and the first indication of this process was the song's dying out. But, if you look at this process from the point of view of evolution, then, when something dies, something new is born. "The world has to overeat chaff, to descend into the deepest depths of its deafness, in order to re-seek to hear, to see, to feel, to realize; to concentrate all the power of its spiritual nature on rising up, towards light and mystery. And then the music of the soul will sound that will correspond with its new self-awareness. To bring this golden time of resurrection closer, we must consciously penetrate the mystery of what has been saved from the treasures of past generations. Because these imperishable grains are preserved for a new sowing" [2].

There are a lot of symbols in Ukrainian ancient fairy tales, carols, songs, and it is not possible to decipher their content without knowing their associative meaning. Maria Chumarna has made a great contribution to the comprehension of folklore works [2]. In addition to her extremely poetic interpretations of various folk texts, she published a dictionary of symbols in each of her research books.

For example, FIRE is a symbol of life, spiritual purifying energy, the highest deity – and at the same time God's punishment. The analogue of fire in the fairy tale is the Sun and Gold (fairy tales about the poor and rich brother, "Bread and Gold", "Foster father", etc.). Fire often performs two missions at the same time: appeasement as punishment for injustice and renewal as a reward for righteous life. Fire changes the nature of entities: burning with fire means cleaning, switching to another quality.

WATER is a conjugate with fire beginning – Mother of life. The folk proverb says: "Fire is a father, water is a mother". Water plays a vital role in a tale as an emanation of divine energy: we find here live and dead, healing and living water, strong and weak; the heroes also get rejuvenating water. Dead water is a healing water: it heals the body biologically, gives life to substance, and nutritious water inspires a person with a spiritual power, it is the soul itself. Rejuvenating water promotes the renewal of the world, it encodes the energy of reproduction and rejuvenation of the universe.

SPINDLE is the axis of the universe, the light of the world. In fairy tales spindle, spinning wheel act as an instrument in the hands of the Mother of the World, the ruler of the fate. Spinning of life, spinning of fate, magic thread and

magic tangle – all these symbols reveal the pattern of eternal life cycle.

There are a lot of such explanations (about 200) in the dictionary for any book and they really help to understand the meaning of a fairy tale-myth or carol. It is advisable to pay attention to the fact that it is thanks to these vocabulary that you begin to think differently, to look for the hidden sense of the text. Students often admit that they have not previously thought that besides the “external” text there is another, inaccessible information for uninformed people. This process is cognitive, often you feel like you are changing yourself.

The symbols of embroidery have also interesting interpretation among the people. Here it is advisable to refer to the lecture by Yuriy Oleksiiiovych Melnychuk [4], in which the author reveals in a very interesting manner the mysteries of embroidery symbols.

Human life for some time used to be subordinated to the cycle of agriculture, and the embroidery used to have many images and symbols of fertility cults, agricultural cults. In harmonious connection all the elements were depicted – sun, moon, stars, fire, air, earth and water.

In general, stitching is considered a magic process. In this case, the word “magic” is understood as an action. This is an action of putting signs on the fabric.

Our ancestors used to see that there was a system of signs working like codes, keys. It was believed that in order to keep light spirits in the aura of your body or in the atmosphere of your home, towels were placed (a kind of test for a stranger). When people worked with land, they simultaneously worked with the energy of nature (with spirits of land, fire of air, water).

It is interesting that the front and the back of the towels should be the same. As Yuriy Melnychuk claims, the front side, is our deeds, our physical being, it is the life of the “human eye”, that is, its visible side, which we show to people, but its back is an invisible side of our being, our thoughts, feelings, we can hide them. This moment reflects our attitude towards the outsides of the product. It can be assumed that if the back of the work is of low quality, then the embroiderer has imbalance, disharmony in her soul. In this way, a person is driving himself into a dead end. The back side of the embroidery is a projection of our subconsciousness, so you need to embroider carefully.

It is important to remember that the needle is a very powerful magic instrument, they are used by Gypsies and all sorts of witches, good and bad, the Chinese, with needle therapy, treat all kinds of illnesses, tucking their needles at their respective points on the energy meridians.

It turned out that if you take the pieces of steel wire and leave one of them as it is, and the second one is sharpened from one end, and another one is transformed into a needle eye, then the bioenergy conductivity after such a simple procedure increases hundreds of times.

Ancient wise men said that space and time are crossed over the needle. When we take a needle into our hands, everything we have thought, wished, comes to the end of the needle through our biofield. The needle has a magnet power, it strongly clings to everything, therefore, its energetic footprint remains on everything it touches.

We see that women have embroidered motifs on the bottom of their dresses, snakes, and knots – symbols of maternal moisture. Such motifs are embroidered on the sleeves, but only of women's shirts. These elements rigidly hold the energy framework and do not allow the energy to flow out.

It is known that semantics is some meaning, a symbol with a certain content. Yuriy Melnychuk argues, that it is recommended to consider it in three aspects – exoterically, conceptually and esoterically.

Exoterically, the outer plan is viewed, what we see with our eyes. This is the color, lines, geometric marks and signs, the whole array of folk names – bugs, spiders, knuckles, etc. The people called them morphologically, according to the form, and, on the other hand, more ancient names have preserved, they call swastika a spider, although there is no spider there. The spider is a symbol of the creator who weaves the web through a spiral.

Conceptual level is information that is layer by layer superimposed on certain signs and symbols and which we can draw like a well without a bottom. It depends on erudition, scientific knowledge, knowledge of the subject. For example, a circle with a dot is a symbol of the sun, another level of concepts is a symbol of the Creator, this is a sphere of the Spirit's activity, the center from which it began its action, which it consciously restricts, so that it does not spread, but is organized in concrete forms. That is the symbol of the Logos, the Creator. We can talk about it for a very long time. This is a bottomless well.

The third level is esoteric, hidden from the physical eye, and information about it can be obtained from our spiritual centers or chakras. This level involves indescribability, concealment of feelings that can not be expressed in words. An ornament brings up individual associations in each person.

It is very interesting that each shirt has a certain ornament. The grandmother embroidered for her grandson a shirt with snakes, jerks, which cured him of hemophilia. One should not be categorical in interpreting symbols. Symbolism is multifaceted as crystal. Is snake poison life or death?

Matrixes and circuits in shirts and towels are transmitted through numbers. Everything, including codes, can be transmitted mathematically. The number of ornaments, the number of elements, their sequence – everything is transmitted through numerical symbols.

Let us start with a one. This number is more present in the towels – the tree of life, Podilsky towels have a large single element – a rhombus, a star, a cross. This number corresponds to the Almighty. It is believed that all the

numbers are odd in relation to the spiritual plan, all the even numbers are material. The odd ones provide dynamics, constant motion, even numbers provide completeness, statics. A two – duality – is the union of two beginnings – male and female. (Each branch of the embroidered tree has two flowers). We can consider each number as the sum of the components $2 = 1 + 1$, that is two self-contained units are combined in a pair

The simplest record of a tree is a tree of three branches that sprout from one point. There are also elements of “bird’s feet”, “shamrock”. In these symbols, there is always a central axis, and symmetrically two opposite processes nearby, for example, creation and destruction.

The number three is the number of the Spirit. Four is the number of substance, the sacred tetrad.

Stars are astral signs: octagonal stars are the most famous in embroidery. They are related to the symbol of God, the sun, the stars, the year. Together with an octagonal star you can see the octagon – a symbol of the transformation of soul in substance. The octagon is an intermediate figure between the circle – a symbol of the Spirit, and the square – a symbol of substance, that is, it is the combination of the Spirit and the substance.

As we can see from the individual examples given, there is also some information encoded (sewed) in the embroidery which is important for a person and it needs to be treated more closely.

The present has unblocked, to a certain extent, the rigid framework of materialism, a person began to understand that they live in the world of energy, vibrations, and we need to evaluate our environment differently. But this process is difficult, because comprehensive school has not yet adapted to such changes and, unfortunately, the system of education and training has remained in the plane of gross materialism. For most first-year students, this is only the beginning of a difficult path that leads to a deep comprehension, understanding of the world phenomena and the cognition of their “Self” in this world, through the awakening of mythological associative and figurative thinking.

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