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## PRESERVATION OF THE ICONOGRAPHIC CANON AMONG UKRAINIAN DIASPORA

### ABSTRACT:

Iconography of the Ukrainian diaspora is an important component of Ukrainian (Western Ukrainian) canonical sacred art. Genetically, the iconography of the Ukrainian diaspora is based on the principles of Byzantine iconography, which included the color canon, the compositional canon and the canon of proportions, which performed important functions in Byzantine art. Ukrainian artists of the diaspora, adhering to the Byzantine iconographic canon, believed that it brings to the art information of utilitarian, historical and narrative plan. Scientific intelligence is devoted to these issues.

The purpose of the section is to analyze the preservation of the iconographic canon in the sacred art of artists of the Ukrainian diaspora in the United States, Canada and Western Europe. It is necessary to consider the Byzantine iconographic rules, which serve as an artistic scheme for the creation of Christological, Mariological and festive themes in the iconography presented in the temples of ethnic minorities.

Using the principles of Byzantine aesthetics, the diaspora artists of Ukrainian origin (Petro Kholodny Jr, Sviatoslav Hordynsky, Juvenal Mokrytsky and Khrystyna Dokhvat) managed to preserve the ancient Eastern Christian tradition of cult painting. The art of the above-mentioned artists is based on strict artistic rules recognized by the official Church after the Trullian Council (691-692), the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787) and the «Triumph of Orthodoxy», associated with decisions to introduce the dogma of icon worship in Constantinople Council (843). Preservation of the iconographic canon in the Ukrainian diaspora is a manifestation of the ancient Christian artistic spirit, which determined the types of major saints. The principles of the iconographic canon used in the painting of the Ukrainian diaspora also substantiated the location of the main gospel scenes in certain places on the walls of Christian religious buildings.

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### INTRODUCTION.

Iconography of the Ukrainian diaspora is an important component of Ukrainian (Western Ukrainian) canonical sacred art. Genetically, the iconography of the Ukrainian diaspora is based on the principles of Byzantine

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iconography, which included the color canon, compositional canon and canon of proportion: they performed important functions in Byzantine art. Ukrainian painters of the diaspora, adhering to the Byzantine iconographic canon, believed that information of utilitarian, historical and narrative plan is being brought to art.

For the long time, the ideology of the Soviet Union has caused moral and cultural devastation in Ukrainian art history. Since the independence of Ukraine, there has been considerable interest and attention to the ancient canonical East Byzantine iconography and artistic creativity of many artists of the past. In the XXI century the appeal called «return to the original sources» is revived, and interest in preserving Byzantine iconographic church rules and artistic canons is growing. From a theoretical point of view, it is easy and clear, but from a practical point of view it is the opposite. Modern science needs a modern presentation of ancient art. However, for a long time there were no relevant staff or opportunities in Ukraine. In the so-called era of «stalinism» it was impossible to properly build domestic iconology and iconography. There is an opinion that the study of the iconographic canon in the Ukrainian interpretation should begin from scratch. However, contrary to the inhumane Soviet worldview, the preservation and active development of the iconographic canon in sacred art was felt in the diaspora. Outstanding masters of Ukrainian origin created new (modern) iconographic schemes in compliance with the norms of ancient styles and canons, corresponding to aesthetics and ecclesiology of the Eastern Christian worldview. Today, their works are of great artistic value and adorn the temples of the United States, Canada and many Western European countries. And all this was happening at a time when cult art in Ukraine was discriminated under the pressure of Soviet social realism. Therefore, the study of the reflection and preservation of the iconographic canon in the works of Ukrainian world-famous diaspora painters is relevant.

At present, there is enough scientific material in Ukrainian art studies about the study of the Byzantine iconographic canon and deviations from its norms. Special attention should be paid to the monographs of the authoritative Ukrainian icon researcher I. Svetsitsky, who tells in his scientific works about the preservation of the Byzantine tradition and provides for the gradual evolution of style. Patriarch Demetrius (Yarema) also held a similar opinion. Reading the work of Zalozetsky-Sass V., it is impossible not to see his interest in comparing Byzantine and Western European canonical principles, which are combined in Ukrainian iconography. V. Svetsitskaya dealt with the problems of the dialectic of canonical and non-canonical elements and the transition to



realistic motifs in domestic art. The world-famous painter of the diaspora and art researcher S. Hordynsky called the reasons for the destruction of canonical sacred art by the Soviet authorities and outlined ways to reproduce cult images in exile. H. Novozhenets characterizes the canonical iconography of the diaspora quite thoroughly. D. Stepovyk is also a great researcher of canonical styles in Ukrainian iconology and iconography of ethnic minorities. It is he who presents the term «Ukrainian style of icons». Some important facts about the iconographic canon are also found in the works of foreign researchers on this issue: V. Bychkov, V. Lazarev, D. Ugrinovich, G. Wagner, M. Alpatov, U. Eco and others.

The purpose of our research is to analyze the preservation of the iconographic canon in the sacred art of the Ukrainian diaspora painters in the United States, Canada and Western Europe. It is necessary to consider the Byzantine iconographic rules, which serve as an artistic scheme for the creation of Christological, Mariological and festive themes in the iconography of ethnic minority churches.

## **FEATURES OF THE BYZANTINE ICONOGRAPHIC CANON.**

The phenomenon of Ukrainian emigration is a unique phenomenon in world art. Due to discrimination against culture, spirituality and the enlightenment in general by Soviet ideological propaganda, Ukrainian sacred art was forced to develop far beyond its homeland. Since the end of the XIX century, there have been four major waves of migration of Ukrainians to Western Europe, Canada, the United States, Brazil, Argentina, and others. (1890–1914, 20–30s of the XX century, 1939–1946, 1994–1995).

It is known that each ethnic group tries to express their creative potential in their own way. The Ukrainian people have long nurtured their Christian worldview, and accordingly in the territory of Kievan Rus after 988 the Christian art was developed and built on the East Byzantine iconology and iconography principles, which led to the preservation of the iconographic canon.

The idea of the canon and the canonicity of the icon is connected with the worldview specifics of the Orthodox East, where the understanding of God's providence and the history of the Christian church were inseparable from the idea of order. This Divine order is present in everything created by God. The artistic canon in relation to sacred works arose in the process of historical formation of the medieval type of aesthetic perception in the form of a clear system of creative activity internal norms and rules. Some rules for icon



painting were determined by the Quinisext Council in Constantinople in 692 (canons 73, 82, 100) and the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787. The canons reflected, embodied and consolidated the aesthetic ideals of a particular era, culture, and artistic direction. The canons also enshrined an adequate system of pictorial means for these ideals. The canon consisted of a certain set of structures that expressed the basic elements of the spiritual content of culture; the canon was the first expression level of an artistic symbol. In the ancient Ukrainian art of Kievan Rus, the canon came from Byzantium and became the bearer of the tradition. He discovered an unattainable spiritual world. In the system of the Christian worldview, he was tasked with expressing the eternal existence on a visual level, that is, the tasks of a symbols system inherent in the culture of his time.

The monks of Mount Athos called their rules for drawing icons «erminia» (gr. Ἐρμηνεία – explanation, interpretation) – a special kind of instructions on icon painting. These were handwritten notebooks in Greek or ancient Slavic. In the XVIII century, a monk named Dionysius (a native of the town of Furna, hence the name Dionysius Furnoagrafiot) collected numerous written erminias and, summarizing them, compiled a universal rulebook for drawing icons. This book has been repeatedly published in the languages of the countries where the Eastern Christian painting of icons was nurtured.

According to the iconographic canon, space and time in the icon are outside nature. In the canonical icon, space and time are not governed by earthly laws. For example, the mountain seat of Jesus Christ, under the influence of direct perspective, the viewer sees as a narrow strip – very uncomfortable to sit, so the icon depicts the seat only very roomy and comfortable due to the fact that it unfolds strongly to the viewer.

The image of a child in the foreground in a canonical icon will never be larger than the image of an adult behind or in the distance. The crown of the saints' head is focused on the worshiper, as if a little above, which makes the forehead look quite high – wise. With a slight shift of the center of the face to the right or left, the side of the face is not hidden, but remains visible.

Figures, unlike the faces of saints, are not painted with the application of many paint layers, this work is simpler and easier in its complexity. The canonical icon should show the body in easy way to the worshiper as a sign of the transition to eternal life, where the laws of this world do not apply, where the laws of nature do not apply.

The royal chambers are painted so small that it would be impossible for an adult to enter them. But not only each individual building, but also the whole

city is miniature. Architectural structures with large curtains indicate that the event took place inside the house, church, etc. They should always be only two-dimensional, because the third dimension of the icon is its dogmatic depth. The color and background in the icon are in no way determined by the laws of spatial vision. All items are processed in the same detail. There is no light source in the icon and the brightness does not depend on the location of the object. The canonical icon does not allow the image of shadows.

The attributes of power on Earth – the crown and the scepter – came into the canonical icon of Catholicism; they were never symbols of Christ's power, as far as the Savior Himself said in Scripture, «My kingdom is not of this world» (Jn 18:36). The three stars on the shoulders and forehead of the Mother of God are a symbol of the virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary throughout Her earthly life. The small lips of the saints indicate that during their sojourn on earth they spoke little, but worked and listened a lot. Iconologists explain this by the saints' tendency to modesty, humility, silence, meditation and heartfelt prayer. The saints led a lifestyle completely subordinate to God's will. Ears are always painted big, because saints tend to say little but listen a lot. Blessed, monks and martyrs on East Byzantine icons appear before us with large strong necks: this is a sign of inner spiritual strength. The graceful, elongated fingers of the blessed are a symbol of spirituality, a symbol of the spiritual life austerities. In ancient Mediterranean cultures, an elongated nose is a symbol of beauty and belonging to a high status in society. The icons also have saints with simple and elongated noses.

There is no horizon line in the icon, the concept of the globe is completely absent. Mountains can be located above or below, but this is determined by compositional reasons. All objects are depicted convex. The icon depicts an organized and closed space of the sacred world of the New Testament Church.

The old Byzantine icon is symbolic. The symbol expresses the reality of a higher order and thus brings us closer to this reality. The Orthodox icon never conveys the mood, nor do the impulses and emotions: these are unstable and changeable categories. The saints are depicted as dispassionate, they are in a state of constant rest. There is no distinct experience on the faces of the ascetics. The absence of expressions on the saints' faces reveals the most important idea of impartiality for Orthodoxy. And important task for Christians of the XXI century is purification from passions and maximum approach to Christ through the example and godly life of the saints.

The features of the canonical icon include invariable forms of clothing, which completely cease to depend on fashion, time, national color. In



iconography, clothing indicates belonging to a certain type of holiness or ministry: prophets, apostles, saints, etc. Sometimes the saints were depicted in the clothes they wore before death.

The icon usually depicts saints in robes. Clothes are a certain sign. The chasubles are divided into: saints, priests, deacons, apostles, kings, monks, and others.

For example, Jesus Christ is depicted naked in passionate scenes («Scourging», «Crucifixion», etc.), in the composition «The Epiphany». Saints are also depicted naked in scenes of martyrdom (for example, the life icons of Saints Gregory, Paraskeva). The nudity depicted here is a sign of complete devotion to God. Ascetics, pilgrims, hermits, fools of Christ are often depicted naked and half-naked, because they all took off their old clothes, gave «bodies for a living sacrifice» (Rom. 12:1).

There is an opposition to the saints - sinners. Sinners are usually also portrayed naked. For example, in the icon of the Last Judgment, where people burdened with sins, naked, burn in the fire of God's justice. The isographer paints the sinner naked as a symbol of the sinfulness and nakedness of the Adam's and Eve's human ancestors, who, having sinned, were ashamed of their nakedness, hiding from God the Father: «I heard Your voice in paradise and was scared, because I'm naked, so I decided to hide» (Gen. 3:10).

According to the ancient East-Byzantine iconographic rules, anatomical muscularity is completely forbidden in the images, and the clothes of the saints were limited in the sense of comprehensible human forms. It is forbidden to depict natural folds; shading and lighting of the icon is not allowed. Reverend righteous people should have peaceful, dispassionate faces, because the saints are in this world, but not of this world.

Halo is mandatory in the Orthodox icon - a golden glow around the head of the saint, which symbolizes the glory of God. The shrines on the icons are depicted both externally and internally (exterior and interior). The holy warriors on the icon stand simply, courageously - in this way they testify to their devotion to God.

In the iconographic canon there are compositions with a detailed history. These include life icons with marks, in which five rows of compositions are placed around the image of the saint, presenting some important episodes from the life of the saint.

In general, the above iconographic rules can be reduced to seven main points:

1. The image of saints on icons should be static as a symbol of permanence and immutability in the transcendental reality of cult art.
2. The key to a prayerful meeting with God with help of icons is through a frontal posture, a pronounced look and facial emotionlessness.
3. Divine aesthetics in the iconographic program is expressed through the absence of elements of ancient Greco-Roman hedonistic preferences. Therefore, the body is usually completely covered with many folds of clothing.
4. The rules of gravity and natural order in Byzantine iconographic art are absent, because the center of the icon is (according to the medieval understanding) in the heart of the spectator-prayer, which allows meditative prayerful contemplation.
5. The iconographic canon forbids realistic compositional interpretation. The icon is always planar (without depth). Since the authoritative figures in Christianity must always be out of space and time, they are in an «eternal place».
6. «Deformative appearance» of objects, animals, architectural buildings and the saints themselves testifies to the total separation of «the world of God» from the «world of the earth».
7. The «reverse perspective» artistic principle makes it possible for the faithful to obtain a penitential character, because it demonstrates the distance of man from the «ideal world».

### **«BYZANTINE AUTUMN» IN UKRAINIAN DIASPORA ART.**

Among the constellation of the diaspora artists who professed the stylistic principles of Byzantine medieval art, it is necessary to single out several artists who have almost completely preserved the principles of the iconographic canon in their work: Petro Kholodny Jr, Sviatoslav Hordynsky, Juvenal Mokrytsky and Khrystyna Dokhvat. It was they who managed to recreate in their sacred plots Byzantine aesthetic features close to the epoch of the «paleological revival».

It should be noted that the iconographic canons in the art of the diaspora are closely interrelated with the basic religious worldview of the artist and the art school. Here the iconographic canon defines the static rules of the «*replicatio*» in the iconographic stylistic and genre pattern of the Byzantine past.

The proposed church art by P. Kholodny, S. Hordynsky, Y. Mokrytsky, K. Dokhvat is guided by the voluntary use of iconological rules approved by the Eastern Byzantine tradition in the creation of iconographic images. Of course,



such art is not a simple copying. It leads to a certain typology, compositional stability and color scheme. Ultimately, such a canonical theological work needs a successful artistic and theological commentary.

**Petro Kholodny Jr. (1902–1990).** Petro Kholodny is the son of the famous scientist and painter Petro Ivanovych Kholodny, one of the most prominent Ukrainian painters of the XXth century in the United States. The world remembers him as an outstanding icon painter<sup>1</sup>. Its canonical style is characterized by flatness and localization of colors<sup>2</sup>, which brings the artist's work closer to the Byzantine art of the Palaeologus era. P. Kholodny in his canonical iconography successfully combined the Eastern Christian traditions of color saturation with modern trends of contemporary art<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 1).

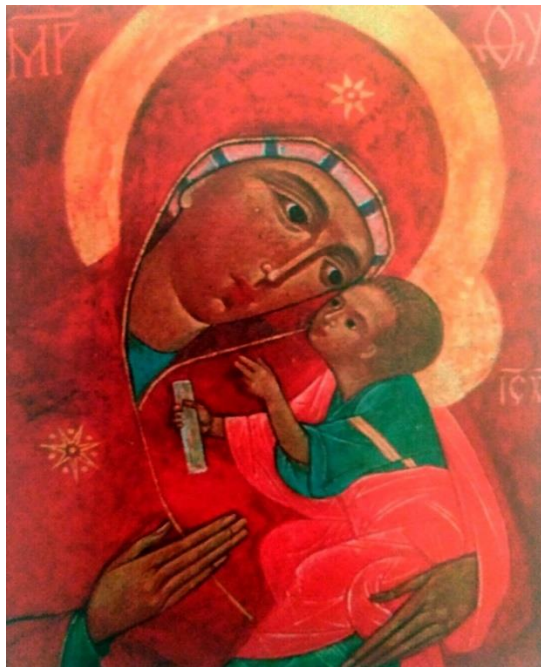


Fig. 1. Petro Kholodny. Virgin of Tenderness. New York. 1983. Fragment

<sup>1</sup> Stepovyk D. (2012). *Nova ukrainska ikona XX i pochatku XXI stolittia* [A new Ukrainian icon of the XX and the beginning of the XXI century]. Zhovkva: Misioner. P. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Stepovyk D. (2003). *Ukrainska ikona. Ikonotvorchyi dosvid diaspori* [Ukrainian icon. Icon-making experience of the diaspora]. Kyiv: Baltiia-Druk. P. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Stelmashchuk H. (2013). *Ukrainski myttsi u sviti. Materialy do istorii ukrainskoho mystetstva XX st.* [Ukrainian artists in the world. Materials on the history of Ukrainian art of the twentieth century]. Lviv: Apriori, Lvivska natsionalna akademiia mystetstv. P. 488.

**Sviatoslav Hordynsky (1906–1993).** Svyatoslav Yaroslavovych Hordynsky is a painter, writer, encyclopedist, and leading Ukrainian art researcher. His artistic work was based on soft iconographic Byzantine aesthetics<sup>4</sup>. There is a slight «European» pre-Renaissance motif in the faces of the saints. This indicates that S. Hordynsky allowed the evolution of the iconographic canon (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Sviatoslav Hordynsky. St. Volodymyr and Olga. Stained glass. Ukrainian Pontifical College. Rome.1988. Fragment

**Juvenal Mokrytsky (1911–2002).** Juvenal Josyp Mokrytsky – a famous Ukrainian theologian, hieromonk-icon painter of the studite order. His greatest creative work in the art of the diaspora was the iconostasis of the Ukrainian Church of St. Sophia in Rome. Mokrytsky's personal style is based on the

<sup>4</sup> Stepovyk D. (2012). *Nova ukrainska ikona XX i pochatku XXI stolittia* [A new Ukrainian icon of the XX and the beginning of the XXI century]. Zhovkva: Misioner. P. 137.

symbiosis of icon painting canonical means of the Kievan Rus epoch (XI–XIII centuries). In the compositional construction of the saints' faces there is a significant influence of the gaze power and insightful psychologism. According to D. Stepovyk: «Saints on the icons of Juvenal Mokrytsky's brush can be described by the words: restraint, kindness, sensitivity, attentiveness, love»<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 3).

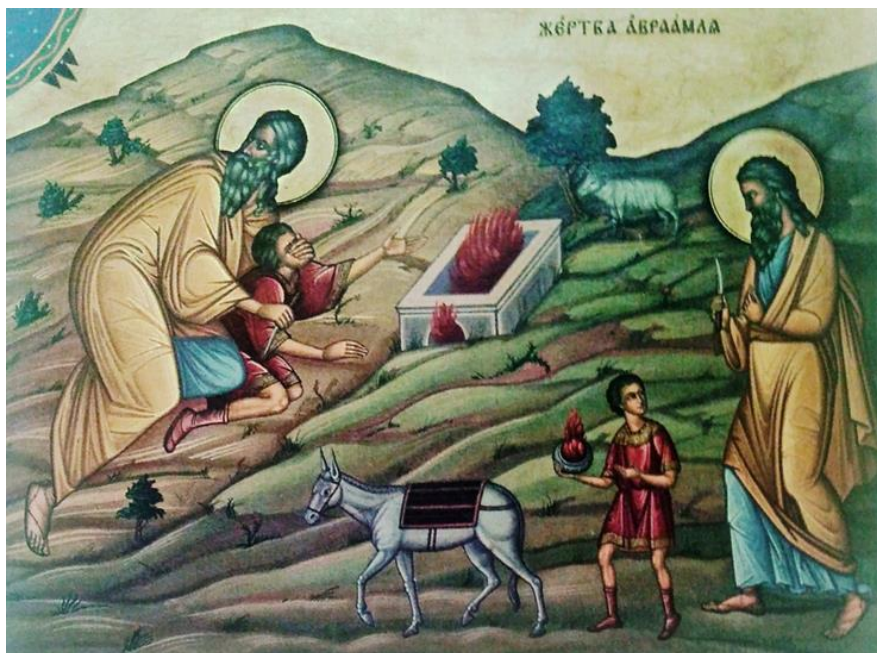


Fig. 3. Juvenal Mokrytsky. Abraham's sacrifice. Basilica di Santa Sofia iconostasis. Rome. 1970 p. Fragment

**Christina Dokhvat (\* 1934).** Khrystyna Dokhvat is one of the iconic masters who brought up her artistic worldview completely outside the Soviet Union. It is characterized by the syncretism of Byzantine canonical elements with artistic and spiritual Western principles. K. Dokhvat meticulously processes every detail of the saints' clothing, has an extremely subtle sense of rhythm and decoration. As with paleological painters, the artist adheres to the canonical

<sup>5</sup> Stepovyk D. (2012). *Nova ukrainska ikona XX i pochatku XXI stolittia* [A new Ukrainian icon of the XX and the beginning of the XXI century]. Zhovkva: Misioner. P. 136.

tradition of gilding the background and frame of icons. Dokhvat's experiment on the combination of Byzantium and the Renaissance is mostly expressed in the icons of the Virgin cycle<sup>6</sup> (Fig. 4)



**Fig. 4. Khrystyna Dokhvat. Virgin of Tender Vyzhhorod icon.  
Ukrainian Catholic University. Rome. 1969 p. Fragment**

Speaking about the general place and significance of the iconographic canon in the Ukrainian painting systems, developed by such masters as Petro Kholodny Jr, Sviatoslav Hordynsky, Juvenal Mokrytsky and Khrystyna Dokhvat, it should be noted that the observance of the iconographic canon is one of the

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<sup>6</sup> Stepovyk D. (2003). *Ukrainska ikona. Ikonotvorchyi dosvid diaspyry* [Ukrainian icon. Icon-making experience of the diaspora]. Kyiv: Baltiia-Druk. P. 71–72.

defining ones among Ukrainian diaspora isographers art. In the work of the above-mentioned artists, a fundamental place is occupied by an inseparable symbiosis between religious-spiritual and artistic-cultural experience. The combination of spiritual and cultural in Ukrainian diaspora iconography precisely outlines such a phenomenon as the Byzantine iconographic canon.

As is known, medieval cult painting has its own expressive symbolic language. Therefore, if a work of art of a religious nature is written with certain «paracanonical» additions or deviations, it loses its theological and artistic commentary and ceases to be, in the words of Gregory the Great, «theology in paint.» The iconographic canon in the works of diaspora artists is also considered in terms of artistic and spiritual processes related to cultural perception, artistic cognition and spiritual interpretation. Eventually, the isographic canon becomes a certain norm for the regulation of spiritual perception and the function of the iconographic image.

The artistic significance of the iconographic canon in the works of diaspora artists is manifested in the selection of certain traditional, conservative and immutable rules (κανόν), which determine the rules of spiritual perception and representation in the field of Ukrainian iconography, and that it defines the main principles characterizing the aesthetic impact of the art work on the spectator-prayer. Ukrainian painting of the diaspora shows by example that the artistic canon of the church itself cannot be beautiful or ugly, spiritual or secular. Icon-painting rules together create a stable artistic pattern for the transfer of painting composition, genre and style. The canon precedes the creative act of the isographer and the prayerful contemplation of the prayer. The Byzantine iconographic canon encourages the viewer to pray, makes the iconographic work a some kind of tool to achieve a transcendental high Christian spiritual feeling.

On the example of the Ukrainian diaspora creativity, we see that the isographic canon demonstrates an inseparable connection with the structure of the work of art, but is not reduced to itself. The iconographic canon proposed by artists of the diaspora is a set of certain ecclesiastical and artistic rules that allow to fix the cult painting to some extent, make it static and create a planar artistic reflection of theological science and historical experience of the church tradition. By its nature, the iconographic canon is not discursive, and therefore does not suggest to address naturalism in art directly for the iconographer. In the Renaissance and Baroque eras, where there was a high interest in humanism and creative uplift, canonical principles were significantly weakened and there was a certain transformation (evolution) of the canon. Thus arose the



«para-canon» or «quasi-canon». On the other hand, in times of interest in medieval painting (late XIX – early XX centuries), the dominance of strict artistic principles determines the interest in the image of «non-bodily beauty». Therefore, in common opinion, the iconographic canon organizes all the artistic work of the Church.

## CONCLUSIONS.

The analyzed work of prominent Ukrainian icon painters of the diaspora calls for certain conclusions. First of all, today, when Ukraine is also gaining artistic independence, there is a great need to decorate new churches of the Byzantine rite. It was the artists of the diaspora who managed to preserve the canonical East-Byzantine style and «canned» it for future generations. Secondly, the canonical style, which was followed by Petro Kholodny Jr, Sviatoslav Hordynsky, Juvenal Mokrytsky, Khrystyna Dokhvat and others, is based on important traditions of antiquity sacred painting. Thirdly, temples have been built in the Ukrainian diaspora in recent years, which should include painters from Ukraine, who will be able to take on the secrets of iconographic canons, preserved in the works of the above-mentioned isographers.

Ukrainian cult painting, created in the diaspora, is characterized by the adoption of dominant artistic canons. Such sacred art does not copy the aesthetic principles of the Latin world. The art, proposed by the artists of the diaspora, aims to bring the viewer closer to the «invisible reality» in order to comprehend the spiritual values of Christianity. In the art of the diaspora, the iconographic canon serves as a set of internal and external norms, generally regulated by the Eastern Christian churches. Therefore, the iconographic canon is a kind of «musical state for the symphony», in which the isographer realizes church canvas. Deviation from the canonical scheme in the performance of a work of art leads to a leveling between *eikón* and the Prototype. The proposed cult painting by the masters of Ukrainian emigration is extremely static. The root cause of such immobility lies in the very function of icon painting. Eastern Christian art of the diaspora of the XX century is traditionally built on the «fixed principles» of the Byzantine canon, so it is fundamentally, in contrast to the European Renaissance or Baroque, remains stable and sedentary.

From the iconographic practice of the diaspora we learn that artists used generally accepted iconographic schemes from the lives of saints, Twelve Great Feasts, etc. for the painting of Ukrainian Eastern Byzantine temples. The iconographic scheme itself, although not a canon, is organically connected with

it. Compositional frameworks have never tabooed the personal work of the master.

Icons were painted in such a way that they were able to evoke a state of deep spiritual uplift in Christians. Diaspora icon painters Petro Kholodny, Sviatoslav Hordynsky, Juvenal Mokrytsky and Khrystyna Dokhvat focused on revealing the spiritual side of the artistic image in their iconography, by following the rules of the iconographic canon. The peculiarity of the icon-making experience of the Ukrainian diaspora is that artistic approaches have not only cognitive, didactic, but also therapeutic character. Thus, due to the principle of canonical construction, the icons of diaspora artists have a positive effect on the spectator-prayer. Isographers paid special attention to the transmission of transcendental beauty through the face of the saint. It is thanks to the prayerful contemplation of the saints' faces on the icons that the process of recognition and then empathy are actualized in the prayer, which in turn nurtures the true Christian faith.

In summary, it can be stated that the Ukrainians of the diaspora have created a specific «brand» of original Ukrainian-Byzantine art far from home. In a number of artistic phenomena, they profess a unique national icon-painting tradition of Kyivan Christianity. The preservation of the iconographic canon in the diaspora is guided by a tradition firmly based on the evangelical doctrine of the holy image, on the decrees of the ecumenical councils and on the doctrine of the holy fathers. The Ukrainian icon of the diaspora is canonical. It is a glorious and solemn heritage of the art of our great Christian nation, which has preserved the faith of the Ecumenical Church, revered and reveres the sacred art of both East and West, and above it all – its own icon painting, recognized by the official church, tradition.

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