

SPIRITUAL SYMBOLISM OF KYIV RUS AS AN ELEMENT OF CHRISTIAN CULTURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

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INTRODUCTION

We believe that the search for humanity, aimed at determining the ways and means of spiritual development of the individual, is associated with the attempt to answer the basic questions of philosophy about the purpose of human life. From ancient times for this purpose man used rational reasoning, the method of recollection (Platonic anamnesis), meditation, listening to being. Therefore, today, when the issues of revival of Ukrainian spirituality are important, research on the symbolic foundations of the culture of Kievan Rus is especially relevant, because it has left a bright imprint on the formation of national culture. We agree with modern scholars that tracing the essence and specifics of the mythological and pagan worldview of the ancient Rus is indisputable for studying the problems of origin and formation of culture and worldview of the era of Kievan Rus and later times of national history.

Both domestic and foreign modern researchers have turned to the research concerning the problems of the Ukrainian revival and spiritual culture of Kievan Rus: V. Gorsky, S. Bondar, N. Nikitenko, M. Nikitenko, T. Chaika, A. Tykholaz, Ya. Stratiy, M. Kashuba, I. Zakhara, N. Vereshchagina, I. Zherebylo, N. Naumova, I. Chernyakov, A. Golub, S. Cherepanova, V. Bolshakov, T. Volodina, N. Vyzhletsova, D. Michels etc. In particular, studies of the spiritual culture of Kievan Rus relate to the worldview-religious and moral-ethical aspects (Yu. Zavgorodniy, A. Golub, N. Zhirtueva, V. Kushakov, N. Naumova, V. Paterikina, T. Gorbachenko, N. Vereshchagin, I. Zherebilo, O. Kirichok, T. Chaika); problems of formation of philosophical thought (G. Olefirenko, I. Tkachenko); philosophical and aesthetic issues (S. Bezkluba, R. Demchuk). Worldview and epistemological aspects of the philosophical culture of Kievan Rus in the context of the study of the manifestation of the phenomenon of symbolism in the culture of Ukraine are considered in the study of M. Shumka, symbols of Ukrainian culture are studied by V. Kotsura,

O. Potapenko, V. Kuybida (*Shumka*, 2001), (*Entsyklopedychnyi slovnyk symboliv kultury Ukrainy*, 2015). In our opinion, the key concept that connects these areas of research is the category of the symbol. It should be noted that the problem of the peculiarities of the representation of the spiritual symbolism of Kievan Rus as a component of the Christian culture of the Middle Ages is poorly studied.

The purpose of the study, from which its *tasks* follow, is to identify the peculiarities of the manifestation of spiritual symbolism in the culture of Kievan Rus in the context of the medieval Christian worldview. The *scientific novelty* lies in the analysis of the peculiarities of the representation of medieval Christian spiritual values in the symbolic culture of Ancient Russia. This study is based on a religious *approach* to the study of historical and philosophical problems. We also turned to textual, comparative-historical and systematization *methods* in connection with the analysis of texts and were guided by the *principles* of objectivity and historicism.

1. Christianity as a spiritual practice: worldview-symbolic aspect

When we talk about superpersonal feeling, superpersonal experiences, the inevitable need to turn to symbolic language. In this regard, researchers have repeatedly argued the indisputable link between mythology, symbolism and religion. In particular, N. Smirnov notes: “such properties of myth as imagery and emotionality make it ... convenient for the spread of doctrine, and symbolism gives the ideologues of religion the opportunity for a broad” maneuver “in interpretations” (*Smirnov*, 1992:15).

According to E. Yakovlev, each of the steps of spiritual ascent has its own characteristics. In particular, in Revelation there is a gradual attraction of man to the Absolute through the Word, which is most clearly heard in silence and stillness. The eternal seems to meet man and gradually opens to him in spiritual contemplation. There comes a time when the truth must be revealed in its fullness and completeness. This happens in Enlightenment, when the “impregnable light” of this truth opens on the border of silence. Like a bolt of lightning, this light illuminates all being, destroys all boundaries between the Absolute and man. In the Transfiguration it merges with the Absolute and Eternity (*Yakovlev*, 1994:50).

It is clear that the path to Revelation, Enlightenment and Transformation is equally common to all human cultures and religions. The goal is one – merging with the Absolute, Eternity, which in Christianity is achieved through “reasonable prayer” (*Sinergiya, 1995*).

In order to study the problem in more depth, let us turn to Christianity, which is based on the traditions of spiritual formation that are closest to our culture. Mystics of all times have spoken of their union with God, using the symbolism of human love.

W. James draws attention to the fact that when the human soul is tuned accordingly, we are captured by mystical experiences, especially if they are accompanied by special combinations of words, musical sounds (*Dzhems, 1993*).

A. Bely notes that “religion is a system of consistently unfolding symbols” (*Belyj, 1994:247*). He also notes that not all human beings are fascinated by events but symbols of another. The music perfectly expresses the symbol. Therefore, the symbol is always musical. In music, the greatest approximation of the depths of the spirit to the surfaces of consciousness. The symbol awakens the music of the soul: “When peace comes into the soul, it will always sound” (*Belyj, 1994:246*). We believe that this is the chain of associations that permeates the entire Christian tradition: the symbol is music; music – a symbol; symbol – the music of the soul; peace, tranquility – the music of the soul. We see here the manifestation of the essence of the relationship between the symbolic and the religious, the physical and the metaphysical. In connection with the above, we can equally emphasize the role of hymnography, church hymns, and the prayer of silence in Christianity.

Silence – basic principle of Christianity. In Byzantium and Mount Athos, this principle was cultivated by monks – hesychasts (from the Greek verb “hesyhazo” – to be silent), and in Western Europe – Trappists and Benedictines. The Benedictines (St. Benedict founded a monastery in Monte Cassino in southern Italy in 529 year) lived by the commandment “pray and work”. The hesychasm of Kievan Rus appeared as a personified way of ascension to God, the basis of which was the moral perfection of man. It began to develop in the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra. Its founder can be considered Theodosius of Pechersk, who contributed to the spread of Kievan Rus’ ideas of Byzantine ascetic proto-hesychasm and the formation of the ideal of active holiness, based

on the practice of good deeds and love for the created world. Note that thanks to Theodosius in the culture of Kievan Rus was founded the cult of the Holy Trinity as the ideal of catholicity and unity of man with the world (*Abramovych, 1991*).

For a deeper understanding of the origins of Christian ethics, it will be important to get acquainted with the figure of Gregory of Nyssa, the great Father of the Eastern Church and one of the most prominent Christian mystical writers. The works of Gregory had an impact on Pseudo-Dionysius and St. Maximus the Confessor, that is – on all the spirituality of the Christian East (*Misticheskoe bogoslovie, 1991*). The thinker also played a huge role in shaping the Western mysticism of the twelfth century. The doctrine of St. Bernard of Clervaux (XII century) is indicative of the fact that in his understanding the Christian mystical experience is not simply a deepening of oneself, one's essence, but it consists in a true and necessary deepening of faith. "During mystical states we form one with the Absolute and realize this unity" (*Dzhems, 1993:333*). The mysticism of Gregory of Nyssa, based on the philosophical concept of religious experience, first of all considers the theme of the Logos, "the Incarnate Word who, through the sacraments performed in the Church, deifies the soul". (*Nyskyi, 2001:9*). This understanding of the spiritual life, in our opinion, offers the modern man a truly Christian vision of his relationship to God, his Creator, and Savior.

So, let's turn to the main work of Gregory of Nyssa "Life of Moses". Conventionally, it can be divided into three parts – three successive stages of spiritual life, the prototype of which the mystic chose three stages of coming into contact with God in the life of Moses:

I. "Clarity, or About purification" – 3 periods:

II. "Cloud Pillar, or Contemplation".

III. "Dark Cloud, or About Love".

This is the stage of the mystical life. The symbol of the "dark cloud" in which God appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai shows a negative aspect of mystical life that goes beyond intellectual knowledge. In reality, it means a break with the "symbolic knowledge" of God and introduces the soul into a personal relationship with Him. The mystical life is a life of love that creates unity with God.

Thus, having read the basic tenets of the philosophical and theological teachings of Gregory of Nyssa, we can note that his

mysticism is the mysticism of the “image of God”. It is remarkable that the mysticism of the bishop is a mysticism of unceasing development and improvement.

Thus, the philosophical achievements of Bishop Gregory of Nyssa, who sought to combine and reconcile gnosis and love (*Misticheskoe bogoslovie, 1991*), and stood at the origins of mystical Christian theology, is a clear example of the fact that Christian mysticism, and especially ecclesiastical mysticism, is the mysticism of the Logos, the mysticism of Christ, the Son of God. (*Misticheskoe bogoslovie, 1991:343*). Note that the main stages of the soul’s comprehension of God, which are clearly distinguished in the achievements of the mystic, are correlated with the Revelation, Enlightenment and Transformation discussed above as steps of spiritual formation. In the exposition of the theologian’s own mystical possessions, we also observe the signs of the symbolic method of cognition and the characteristics used by W. James to distinguish mystical experiences (*Dzhems, 1993*).

The mystical theological teaching of Gregory of Nyssa adheres to the traditions of hesychasm. God can be known only through contemplation, which is conditioned by the austerities begun earlier. Thus, Gregory of Nyssa formulates the appropriate purpose of “symbolic knowledge” of God, which is based on the knowledge of God’s signs through His revelations in the visible world (*Ocherk misticheskogo bogosloviya Vostochnoj Cerkvi, 1991*).

We are inclined to the opinion of D. Chizhevsky, who notes that the main feature of the worldview of the Middle Ages is consistently “symbolic” view of the world (*Chyzhevskiy 1994:133-134*).

2. Symbol in the spiritual culture of the Middle Ages

It is noteworthy that from the first years of its existence, Christianity used the concept (symbol) in its ontology, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics, organizing on its basis a whole system of worldview, and explained with it what can not be formally explained.

It should be noted that since the symbolism of Kievan Rus is an element of the spiritual and symbolic culture of the Middle Ages, the latter, therefore, had a great influence on the formation of the spiritual culture of Kievan Rus.

Medieval literature and medieval art were imbued with a desire for a symbolic interpretation of the phenomena of nature, history and writing. Already the late Greeks (Hellenistic period) interpreted their mythology. The apostles had a symbolic interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. Influenced by late Greek philosophy, it became important in Alexandria, where it became a system in the philosophy of Origen, who symbolically interpreted all biblical events. He symbolically interpreted the Pentateuch, the books of Joshua, the Judges, the first book of Kings, Job, the Psalms, the prophets, and the New Testament (*Origen, 1993:283*). Following the symbolic interpretation of Scripture, the symbolizing thought of the Middle Ages (both in Eastern Europe and in the West) interpreted all the phenomena of nature. The facts of history and nature itself, according to medieval notions, are only writings that need to be read. Nature is the second revelation, the second Scripture. The purpose of human cognition is to reveal the secret, symbolic meaning of natural phenomena. Everything is filled with secret symbolic relations with the scriptures.

The whole world is full of symbols, and each phenomenon has a double meaning. Winter symbolizes the time before the baptism of Christ; spring is the time of baptism, which restores a person on the threshold of his life; in addition, spring symbolizes the resurrection of Christ. Summer is a symbol of eternal life. Autumn is a symbol of the last judgment; it is the time of the harvest that Christ will gather in the last days of the world, when each person will reap what he has sown. In all, the four seasons correspond to the four evangelists and the twelve months to the twelve apostles. The visible world and the invisible world are united by symbolic relationships that are revealed through the scriptures. The main purpose of medieval “science” and medieval art is to reveal these symbolic relations.

Physiologists, six-dayers, alphabets and other collections distributed in Europe were of exceptional interest in terms of revealing the symbols of the environment. According to medieval notions, nature is a set of expediently arranged objects. In particular, animal symbolism provided voluminous material for medieval moralists. For example, a deer goes to spring not only to drink water, but also to set an example of love for God. The lion sweeps its tail with its tail not only to escape from the hunter, but also to show the person the secrets of the incarnation. The physiological saga (epic, legend) considered all animals

and all their properties, real and fictional, in terms of the secret instructive content hidden in them. The “sacred history of animals” had few real observations, directed human thought into the world of abstractions, in search of “eternal” truths (*Fiziolog*, 2000: 411), (*Campbell*, 1987: 498).

The same symbols of “eternal” and “timeless” relations were plants, precious stones, numerical relations, and others. For example, a special article by Epiphanius of Cyprus on the symbolic meaning of precious stones was widespread in ancient Russian literature (in chronographs and chronographic parts of the chronicle, in alphabets, in iconographic originals, etc.). It was even included in the Collection of Svyatoslav in 1073 (*Iz izbornika 1073 goda*, 1990:253). The Middle Ages permeated the world with complex symbols that connected everything into a single a priori system (*Campbell*, 1987:551).

In the West and in Rus the essence of medieval symbolism was basically the same; mostly identical were the symbols themselves, which have traditionally been preserved for centuries and saturated the artistic imagery of literature. That is why, referring to the voluminous Western encyclopedias, which were especially widespread in the thirteenth century, it is possible to find much incomprehensible about the traditional images of ancient Rus art and ancient Rus literature, and hence – ancient Rus philosophical thought. For example, Christ and the apostles in iconography (Kyiv and Western) have always been depicted barefoot. As you know, this is due to the fact that the prototype of Christ Moses, taking off his shoes, symbolically made up the vanity of wealth. However, it is noteworthy that in medieval symbolism there are differences between Western European and Byzantine-Orthodox ideas: for example, Maxim the Greek denied the use of the Catholic symbol of the Mother of God – the rose.

Especially significant are the local differences in medieval symbolism in those cases when it is indirectly “adjacent” to the symbols that reflect the people’s views of the world, in which symbolic connections are taken as real, and based on signs, signs, prophecies, and sometimes medical methods are also built (for example, medicinal qualities of plants, precious stones, derived from their symbolic meanings) (*Potebnya*, 2000:22).

As for the works of medieval literature, which are the object of study for us (to establish the peculiarities of the manifestation of the

symbol in the philosophical thought of Kievan Rus), we note the presence of quite common so-called commonplaces of medieval literature. In many cases, they reflect the features of the medieval symbolizing worldview. For example, medieval symbolism explains many “literary stamps” of medieval hagiography. The drawing up of life schemes takes place under the influence of ideas about the symbolic significance of all events in human life: the life of a saint always has a double meaning (in itself and as a moral example for other people). Hagiographers avoid the individual, looking for the general, which appears to them in the symbolic. “Commonplaces” in the depiction of the saint’s childhood, the struggle against demons in the desert, death and posthumous miracles are primarily imbued with symbolism. Hagiographers seek to embody in the lives of the saints “eternal truths”, symbolic relations, which in our time in many cases are perceived only as “literary patterns”. The life of a saint is sometimes depicted according to a religious canon, founded largely by symbolizing thinking (*Zhitie Feodosiya Pecherskogo*, 2000:353).

It is also impossible to avoid the question of substituting the metaphor with a symbol because it is not uncommon in medieval literature. What we can take as a metaphor is in many cases a hidden symbol, which arose as a result of the search for the secret correspondences of the material and “spiritual” worlds. In contrast to metaphor, comparison, and metonymy, symbols are brought to life by mostly abstract idealistic theological thought. The real worldview is supplanted in them by theological abstraction, art by theological scholarship. In medieval works, the metaphor itself is often a symbol, meaning a theological teaching, theological interpretation or the relevant theological tradition, based on the dual perception of the world, which is characteristic of the symbolizing worldview of the Middle Ages.

3. Spiritual symbols of the Christian Middle Ages and the philosophical culture of Kievan Rus

It should be noted that it was religion that gave medieval culture as a whole that universal language beyond which the real functioning of any of the spheres of culture was impossible – a symbolic language. The symbolism of Kievan Rus is an element of the spiritual and symbolic culture of the Middle Ages, which, therefore, had a great influence on the formation of the spiritual culture of Kievan Rus. According to

A. Golub, in the era of statehood the inhabitants of Kievan Rus knew not only the worship of a deity, but also created a system of mythological understanding of the world, which absorbed a complex set of understandings and specific interpretations of certain facts and phenomena of the world. We are thus talking about the mythological consciousness, or, more precisely, the mythological type of consciousness, which was the essence of the pagan worldview (Holub, 1994). The mythological worldview of Kievan Rus acts as a rather complex worldview system and one of the main factors that forms the worldview basis of Kievan Rus' spiritual culture.

Speaking of the symbolism of mythological antiquity and Christian times of Kievan Rus, it should be noted that it is transformed from cosmocentric to theocentric. If during the reign of mythological symbolism the universe was like a human being as a single, integral and living organism, then in the Middle Ages the symbolism of the microcosm was focused on the mystical world, its hierarchical spiritual structure, the top of which is God.

The main life vocation of man was to “read” the symbolic book of existence. The basis of ascension to God is the way of knowing the world through symbols. Thus, the essence of knowledge comes down to understanding the meaning of symbols that have a sacred magical property. Culture, which develops under the influence of the Christian religion, seeks to know the hidden truth, reflects on the symbolic, metaphysical meaning of the Word, which contained a powerful creative force. It was identified with wisdom and reason and carried truth. The Word (Logos) – Christ was considered a mediator between God and man, therefore, it was attributed the functions of its creator – God. The word as the highest Wisdom, Beauty and spirituality, embodied in ancient Rus culture in the image of St. Sophia, the Wisdom of God (*Bolshakov, 2002*).

In Rus, the understanding of Sophia as the semantic content of the temple, the awareness of its involvement in beauty, joy, light, artistic creativity have determined the special significance of icon painting and fine arts in general. In the sophiological space, the Mother of God is a theocratic symbol in which everything is united in unity; through a higher plan and spirituality turns into a material force, and material force allows spirituality to be realized (*Bolshakov, 2002*). It is known that the concept of “Sophia” has its roots in antiquity. It is a symbol of the clear

light of Christian teaching. God's Wisdom was above everything and everything was hierarchically subordinated to it. The philosophically abstracted image of Sophia-Wisdom became extremely popular with the establishment of Christianity in Rus (late X century). The image of the Council illustrates the embodiment of the highest spirituality – Sophia-Wisdom of God. The world is represented in the image of the temple, which serves as the ideal place where people were united with God's Wisdom.

The construction of the Church of St. Sophia of Kyiv symbolizes the transition from paganism to the new Christian religion. The first monumental temples conveyed concretely and visibly not an impersonal-cosmic worldview, but a “personally-organized” one, according to P. Florensky, ie anthropomorphized, which filled it with “collective spirituality”, brought it closer to the unattainable beautiful world (*Bolshakov, 2002*).

The semantics of the thirteen-domed composition of Sophia of Kyiv organically combines parts and integrity, universality. In the temple (as well as through prayer) man's communion with God takes place. The dome composition is directly visible from the ground, and spiritually – is perceived as the embodiment of the highest, divine. It reflects the divine order of the cosmos, based on the ontology of numbers – the embodiment of the universal, infinite through the separate, limited.

The large dome, surrounded by four middle ones (five heads), symbolizes Christ and the four evangelists, and therefore the Ecumenical Church. The western facade with the central portal meant the entrance to the temple, above it were 7 domes – a symbol of the Church as the house of Wisdom, the personification of the seven sacraments (baptism, anointing, communion, marriage, atonement, conciliation; of particular importance is the priesthood – the sacrament of ordination). The number seven is a symbol of the Virgin Mary, the earthly Church, which combines the spiritual and the corporeal. The Trinity in the perception of medieval man is first of all the Holy Trinity, a symbol of the spiritual. Mykola Kuzansky interpreted the essence of the number as the first prototype of the mind, because the trinity concretized in the plural was first embodied in the number. The number four symbolizes the four elements of the material world, ie earth, water, fire, air.

The union of the heavenly and earthly Churches is effected through the descent of Wisdom from heaven. This indicates a symbolic lowering of the domes: from the central large – to four medium and eight small. Thus, 1 – a symbol of the One, 4 – symbolizes the four ends of the Earth, illuminated by the teachings of God, 8 – a symbol of baptism, union with God. The number 8 consists of 1 and 7, contains the idea of God’s entry into the Church. The Church is the Temple, Christian Rus, and every single baptized person. The symbolism of the number 8 is considered the most archaic since ancient times, when a man perceived the world through spatial-visual images. The octagon was considered the connecting link between the circle (celestial vault) and the square (earth plane). In the architectural semantics of Orthodox churches, the number 8 – a symbol with a special meaning – in the Christian East was quantitatively dominated by octagonal church buildings, most often this form had baptisteries (baptisteries) (*Cherepanova, 2002*).

The composition of 13 domes is crowned by a cross – a symbol of the God-sanctified idea of the unity of the East Slavic lands (the baptism of Rus by Vladimir the Great). The symbolism of the painting of the temple was read in the “liturgical development” – from west to east: the western (narthex) symbolized the earth, the central (ship) – the visible sky, the eastern (altar) – the throne of God. The general architectural and artistic complex of the temple embodied the monumentalized world history (*Vagner, 1987:98-100*). It is noteworthy that in the Middle Ages, the temple as a spiritual unity of all believers (catholicity) was a symbol of a centralized sacred state. It is noteworthy that in the Middle Ages, the temple as a spiritual unity of all believers (catholicity) was a symbol of a centralized sacred state.

The property of the image to express what exists outside it, is the basis of symbolization in art. In particular, in the monumental painting of Sophia of Kyiv, in the image of the Virgin Mary, a clew of red (purple) yarn is accentuated, from which the thread extends to the spindle. The purple yarn from which the fabric of the temple veil is woven is an image of “spinning” in the womb of the Mother of God of the flesh of Christ, who became the Body of the Church. The thread is a very ancient symbol of the essential connection, including the spiritual with the material, heaven and earth. The spindle is also a symbol of the connection between the two worlds, spirit and matter. Symbolically

identical to the spindle is the mandorla – an almond-shaped halo, because it is formed through the intersection and interpenetration of two circles (worlds). The mandorla usually depicted Christ, the Virgin or the Virgin with the baby. It is clear why in the Annunciation of Sofia the thread, connecting the heavenly with the earthly, stretches from top to bottom. It is noticeable that the thread diagonally draws the figure of Mary, intersecting with her belt. In Christianity, the belt is a symbol of service to God (*Nikitenko, 2007:149*).

The sacred worship of the Archangel Michael was also manifested in his numerous images, including mosaics and frescoes of the main church of Kievan Rus – Sophia of Kievan. In addition, as a patron saint of the security of the human soul and protector against evil forces, his image was widely used on amulets. As a defender of the Christian army and the military and political power of the Kyivan princes, the image of Michael the Archangel was depicted on tiaras, crowns, barmes, helmets and seals-bulls (*Cherniakov, 1999*).

It should be noted that in the days of Slavic Christianization in the process of assimilation of mental features and Christian science there is a new quality of worldview of the Slavs, which, by analogy with the most important church of Kievan Rus, is called “Sophia” and interpreted as a qualitatively new sense of the world, the basis of which is the desire for poeticization.

For example, “Rejoice, inviolable wall of the kingdom” reminds us of the altar mosaics of the tenth and eleventh centuries, including the mosaic of the Sophia of Kyiv. The mosaic of the so-called Inviolable Wall in the Kiev-Sophia Cathedral is an image of colossal dimensions, executed between 1037 and 1050. It is firmly connected in the cathedral with the image of God placed in the dome. The Almighty is depicted in it on the chest, and therefore appears inside the round medallion, as the image of the Savior in glory; below it, on the sides of the drum, are depicted four angels, on the four corners of the world, as the four chiefs of the heavenly forces. The next belt of the drum presents the apostles, complementing the composition of the God’s Demolition, divided architecturally.

Based on the fact that the philosophy of Kievan Rus was characterized by the ability to universal comprehension of reality, it is sophistic (“universal means of human self-determination and self-exaltation”(*Nesterenko, 1995:51*)), in contrast to the epistemic, which

focuses on knowledge of the scientific type. The type of philosophizing that is formed is distinguished by the subject of knowledge. Emphasis is placed on the individual ethical path. Accordingly, in Kievan Rus' philosophy was thought of as practical morality. As T. Chaika notes, "medieval culture, in general, has, as we know, a clear moral orientation; Kievan Rus is perhaps the most striking example of this in the medieval Christian world". (*Chaika, 1995:47*).

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the culture of Kievan Rus was an element of the spiritual and symbolic culture of the Middle Ages, aimed at finding ways of spiritual formation and moral improvement.

The main features of the medieval worldview, which are reflected in the culture of this period, are symbolism and hierarchy in combination with universalism and mysticism. In the Christian worldview, the symbol becomes not only the most secret and deep form of knowledge of the world, but also its essential substantive expression – serves as an image of the universe.

Medieval symbolism as a system of medieval imagery acquired its clearest development in Rus in the XI–XIII centuries (just like in the West). The spiritual symbolism of Kievan Rus is connected with religiosity. The close connection between the image and medieval theological teachings led to the repetition of symbols because they were drawn from the same theological fund. Therefore, as a compensation, writers often resorted to creating whole pictures from symbols. Monuments of ancient writing and painting show that archetypal images have permeated human culture for a long time. An icon is a symbol that can be attached to higher religious values. Therefore, the main thing in it is the inner involvement in the symbolized.

It is established that the word and the image in Ancient Rus were strongly connected. For this reason, there is a "symbolization" of the material or "materialization" of the symbol, when its spiritual part predominates. Thus, works of art, the plots of which were drawn from written sources, also differed in symbolism. The specificity of the images, manifested in the rejection of the "vanity of the world", seeking simple means to express the majesty of the divine, the wisdom of the universe, the universal symbolic connection of phenomena, in turn, also led to spiritual growth.

In the context of the study of spiritual and symbolic aspects of cultural consciousness, it is proved that the symbol reflects the spiritual development of man and is a universal factor of human self-knowledge. This is manifested in such characteristic features of cultural consciousness as syncretism, the absence of subject-object oppositions, the tendency to intuitionism.

Thus, in the spiritual development of Kievan Rus, the archetype of the Sophia of the world acquires a worldview value and artistic meaning. The Christianization of Rus, the spiritual mission of the Word, the sophistication of existence led to new worldviews. It should be noted that the sophistry of Ukrainian philosophy is inseparable not only from its religiosity, but also from its symbolism. After all, the basis of the Sophian way of being of philosophy is the ability to universal comprehension of reality. Therefore, we give an important role to religious symbolism, seeing in it one of the main components of the philosophical thought of Kievan Rus. No wonder the religious symbolism of Kievan Rus widely represents itself in art, in particular, in the architecture of religious buildings. It is noteworthy that Kievan Rus, through Christian values, realized itself as a subject of world culture.

In order to establish the role of the culture of Kievan Rus in the further formation of the mentality of the Ukrainian people, in the future we see the need to explore its spiritual ideals, “symbolically” represented in the monuments of art. This can be done by analyzing the role played by the religious-symbolic aspect of the archetype of the Sophia of the world in the spiritual development of Kievan Rus.

SUMMARY

In the article the author considers the problem of the peculiarities of the representation of the symbol in the spiritual culture of Kievan Rus as a component of the Christian Middle Ages. It is noted that such a property of the formalist way of logical thinking characteristic of the Middle Ages, as a refusal of observation and experiment, leads to symbolism. It is emphasized that for the medieval Christian worldview, the symbol is an image of the universe. The sources of Ukrainian philosophical symbolism were Platonism and Neoplatonism, Byzantine mysticism, and Christian symbolism. The origins of Ukrainian philosophical symbolism go back to the ideas of ancient Platonism and Neoplatonism, Byzantine mysticism, Christian symbolism and national

tradition. The main symbols that vividly reflect the Ukrainian mentality are the symbols of light, sophianic essence, man, word, heart (soul). Great importance is attached to the human symbol. In our opinion, this statement is reinforced by the fact that the other symbols that we observe in the cultural situation of Kievan Rus, are strongly associated with this symbol, namely – with the spiritual development of man, his self-realization through active service to others, activity empathy as imitation of the individual of higher moral standards. Analyzing the spiritual symbolism of Kievan Rus as a component of Christian culture of the Middle Ages, the author concludes that the symbol is a reflection of the spiritual development of man.

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