

The Image of Homeland in the Works by Alphonse Mucha “Madonna of the Lilies”, the Poster for “The Lottery of the Union of Southwest Moravia” and the Poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition”

Yuliya S. Zamaraeva, Kseniya V. Reznikova and Natalya N. Seredkina

Siberian Federal University

Krasnoyarsk, Russian Federation

E-mail address: rybka08@bk.ru

ORCID: 0000-0003-1299-6741 (Zamaraeva);

0000-0002-9248-8810 (Seredkina)

Abstract. Understanding the specifics of creativity, the features of the artistic method of not a single artist can be achieved without a meaningful analysis of their works. The purpose of this study is to analyse three works by the Czech artist A. Mucha “Madonna of the Lilies”, the Poster for “The Lottery of the Union of Southwest Moravia” and the Poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition”, to reveal the programmatic content of each of these works, as well as their general artistic idea.

The works by A. Mucha were analysed using the method proposed and justified in the field of theory and history of culture by the Russian scientist V.I. Zhukovsky. This technique determined the logic of analysis of the selected works. Such methods as observation, formalisation, analysis, synthesis, analogy, extrapolation and interpretation were applied.

The result of a methodical analysis of the three selected works by A. Mucha testifies to the programmatic creativity of the artist, to a single semantic regularity in his works. The key theme uniting all three works being analysed is the theme of divine patronage of the homeland (native land, people). However, the authors draw attention to a number of aspects of visualisation of this topic in each of the works. If the work “Madonna of the Lilies” expresses the idea of patronage in its very initial moment, the moment of faith in patronage coming from above, then in the poster of the lottery divine patronage becomes doubtful. Nevertheless, the analysis of the poster for “the Lottery of the Union of Southwest Moravia” revealed a number of artistic signs indicating the possibility of a revival of faith in patronage. Based on the interpretation of these signs, such conditions for the revival of faith as the lack of fear “to look and see, to fight” were formulated. Confirmation of the idea of revival is expressed in the third analysed work of the artist, i.e. the poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition”. Methodical analysis allowed us to characterise this work as a statement of fulfilled expectations, prosperity and dawn at the same time. The terms “death, withering, fossil”, which are defined as temporary phenomena, act as a programmatic condition expressed through the artistic signs of the work.

The results of the methodological analysis of the three works by A. Mucha significantly complement the existing data on the conceptual aspect of the artist’s work.

Keywords: A. Mucha, “Madonna of the Lilies”, poster for “The Lottery of the Union of Southwest Moravia”, poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition”, image of homeland in art works, theme of divine patronage.

Research area: theory and history of art, theory and history of culture.

Образ родной земли в произведениях А. Мухи «Мадонна в лилиях», «Плакат лотереи Союза Юго-Западной Моравии» и «Славянский эпос»

Ю.С. Замараева, К.В. Резникова,

Н.Н. Середкина

Сибирский федеральный университет

Российская Федерация, Красноярск

Аннотация. Понимание специфики творчества, особенности художественного метода ни одного художника не может быть достигнуто без содержательного анализа его произведений. Цель данного исследования – проанализировать три произведения чешского художника А. Мухи «Мадонна в лилиях», «Плакат лотереи Союза Юго-Западной Моравии» и «Славянский эпос», выявить программное содержание как каждой из этих работ, так и общую для них художественную идею.

Анализ произведений А. Мухи осуществлялся по методике, предложенной и обоснованной для применения в области теории и истории культуры российским ученым В. И. Жуковским. Данная методика определила логику анализа выбранных произведений. Были применены такие методы, как наблюдение, формализация, анализ, синтез, аналогия, экстраполяция и интерпретация.

Результат методического анализа трех выбранных произведений А. Мухи свидетельствует о программности творчества художника, о единой смысловой закономерности его произведений. Ключевой темой, объединяющей все три проанализированных произведения, определена тема божественного покровительства Родине (родной земле, народу). Однако, авторы обращают внимание на ряд аспектов визуализации данной темы в каждом из произведений. Если в работе «Мадонна в лилиях» выражена идея покровительства в самом своем исходном моменте, моменте веры в покровительство, идущее свыше, то в плакате лотереи божественное покровительство становится под сомнение. Тем не менее, анализ работы «Плакат лотереи Союза Юго-Западной Моравии» позволил выявить ряд художественных знаков, указывающих на возможность возрождения веры в покровительство. На основе интерпретации данных знаков были сформулированы такие условия возрождения веры, как отсутствие боязни «смотреть и видеть, бороться». Подтверждение идеи возрождения выражено в третьем анализируемом произведении художника – «Славянский эпос». Методический анализ позволил охарактеризовать данное произведение как констатацию свершившегося ожидания, расцвета и рассвета одновременно. В качестве программного условия, выраженного посредством художественных знаков произведения, выступают понятия «смерть, иссушение, окаменелость», которые определены как временные явления.

Полученные результаты методического анализа трех произведений А. Мухи существенно дополняют имеющиеся сведения о содержательной стороне творчества художника.

Ключевые слова: А. Муха, «Мадонна в лилиях», «Плакат лотереи Союза Юго-Западной Моравии», «Славянский эпос», образ Родины в произведениях искусства, тема божественного покровительства.

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Introduction

Alphonse Maria Mucha is rightfully considered a prominent representative of the art nouveau (1880s-1910s) style of the modern era. Альфонс Мария Муха по праву считается ярким представителем «ар-нуво» (1880-1910-е гг.) – художественного стиля эпохи модерна. The turn of the 19th-20th centuries is considered the classical stage of the development of art nouveau, when art showed a new understanding of the world: its openness for transformation and technological effectiveness, man and society as a value, the possibility of building a new industrial future. Researchers note the innovativeness of A. Mucha in his ability to artistically express the concept of mass culture, the art of modernity and advertising in a changing form of culture (Solomyanaya, 2019; Raluca, 2008).

Most of the existing publications are devoted to the analysis of poster and advertising works of the Paris and American periods of the artist's work for a number of reasons.

Firstly, art nouveau had been actively developing in the field of graphics. In 1868, the printing technology was improved, which provided new opportunities for replication. In 1879, colour lithography was discovered, which was a condition for the development of an art poster (General History of Art, 2008: 951). The spread of the poster genre showed a desire to get something different from the world that surrounds a person here and now. Researchers believe that A. Mucha's advertising posters reflected a new mythology of modernity: the desire for universal harmony and happiness. The poster image uses art nouveau elements: light asymmetry, the predominance of floral patterns, delicate tones and halftones. Mucha's works provoke the viewer to consider details, immersion in sensual female images (Osborne, Ogata, 2011; Basova, 2017). Compositional compactness, colour and sharpness of lines determine the specifics of the instant exposure of an advertising image (Subbotina et al., 2014).

Secondly, the artist developed two trends in poster art: commercial and theatrical poster. Theatrical posters embodied the techniques that became characteristic of the art nouveau style: mosaic of colour, a combination of dynamics and statics, the monumentality of figures in the ornamental environment of flowing lines, a kind of ceremonial representation (Monasherova, 2018).

Thirdly, Mucha's unique style was manifested in graphic art. His artistic techniques developed due to the unique synthesis of a fairly wide range of style and national traditions. *“Alphonse Mucha used various elements in his drawings, including features of the Byzantine, Celtic, Japanese, Gothic, Jewish and Czech folk styles. His arsenal includes the subtlety and luxury of baroque and rococo, as well as harmonious shades and ‘natural’ curves. With the help of sensual decorative lines, laconic contours and a vivid effect of watercolour paints, the artist created life images in his style. In the history of the development of art, Mucha's style is the Art Nouveau style formed on the basis of a synthesis of Chinese and Western European cultures, which was of great importance for the exchange in the field of art and culture”* (Van, 2019: 186). Researchers of Mucha's style note the advantage of several traditions in the artist's works: Byzantine (mosaic character, ornament of lines, fitting female figures into a circle or arched semicircle, stylisation of religious attributes, monumentality), oriental (decorative, geometric and rhythmic elements), with the inclusion of the elements of mannerism (S-shaped line and arabesque line) and symbolism (the linear form is endowed with the quality of the symbol). In art nouveau the shapes of nature were taken as the basis. One of the common methods of organising images in Mucha's works was a winding line that permeates all levels of composition.

Over the past ten years, publications have been discovered that reveal the symbolic nature of Mucha's works. Thus, the inclusion of geometric figures in the image is interpreted by their symbolic purpose: the shape of a circle as harmonisation with calm, curved lines as a visualisation of the connection between the natural and human worlds (Rusakovich, 2014), *“the presence of a circle in a composition as a symbol of endless repetition, a cycle and a feminine principle”* (Solomyanaya, 2019: 112). Symbolism is very characteristic of art nouveau works. Most works with female images by A. Mucha contain flowers as symbols of the modern era.

Some authors perceive the artist's special love for symbols in connection with his intellectual affiliation with Masons (López, 2012).

There are two major themes in the art of A. Mucha: visualisation of the essence of female nature and the theme of pan-Slavism. Female images are present in almost all his works "from theatre posters and advertisement posters to his series works" (Pushkareva, 2012). Some researchers note the features inherent in Mucha's works: the modernity and beauty of his female images have their own reflective image (Garipov, Discaeva, 2015). Others give a detailed description of A. Mucha's interpretation of the female image, "*his paintings fully reflect the tenderness, beauty and elevation of women. With the help of sensual decorative lines, laconic contours and the bright effect of watercolour paints, the artist creates life images in the so-called Mucha's style ... In addition to beautiful female images, Alphonse Mucha also quite often depicts young and beautiful girls in his paintings surrounded by decorative flowers and herbs made using light and wave lines. These paintings have pronounced features of the art nouveau style*" (Van, 2019: 186). However, others pay attention to the key plot image of his paintings: a woman of Slavic appearance (Raluca, 2008; Petukhov, 2012; Tarasova, 2016).

Extremely small art criticism is given to the series of monumental paintings "The Slav Epic" (1910-1928). A. Mucha devoted one third of his career to this series: twenty monumental canvases show the turning points in the history of the Slavic peoples. The picturesque collection is attributed to the ideas of pan-Slavism, patriotism and national identity. Considering himself a "Slavic" Czech, the artist constructed the image of the Czech Republic's revival at the beginning of the 20th century, which largely predetermined the development of his homeland in the future (Dusza, 2012, 2014). During his work on "The Slav Epic" A. Mucha visited Russia. Thus, D.V. Tokarev, analysing the "Russian theme" in the works by A. Mucha, notes a sharp change in compositional and colour solutions towards an almost photographic display of real historical events in Russia at that time. Analysing the work "The Abolition of Serfdom in Russia" (1914), D.V. Tokarev notes similarities with the picture by V.I. Surikov "The Morning of the Archery Execution" in the application of multi-figure composition and monumentality (Tokarev, 2012).

In conclusion of the review of existing research on the creative heritage of A. Mucha, the following can be summarised. The universality and dominance of visual culture, the multi-vector path of development, the continuous innovation, the manifestation of the relationship between people and environment, the importance of subjective presentation and personal outlook on the world - all these features are characteristic of A. Mucha's work. As one of the leading artists of the art nouveau project, A. Mucha integrated art forms, striving to create works of art synthesis in which everything is subordinated to a single concept (Komtsyan, 2016; Martynenko, Gaiduchenko, 2016; Dolmatova, 2018; Solomyanaya, 2019; Van, 2019; Lyukhanova, 2019; Daley, 2007).

Methods

The research methodology is based on the technique of analysis of art works proposed and justified in the theory and history of culture by the Russian philosopher, art critic, artist, specialist in the field of philosophy and history of fine art V.I. Zhukovsky (Zhukovsky, 2008). The author has identified a number of methods, which allow us to formulate the artistic idea of the work during the analysis if the methods are followed successively. These methods include observation, formalisation, analysis, synthesis, analogy, extrapolation and interpretation. They have been successfully applied in the analysis of architectural, pictorial, literary and cinematic works of art (Amosova et al., 2019; Avdeeva et al., 2018; Koptseva et al., 2017; Koptseva et al., 2018). This logic of methodological analysis was used to analyse three works by the Czech painter and poster artist A. M. Mucha (1860-1939): "Madonna of the Lilies" (1905), the poster for "The Lottery of the Union of Southwest Moravia" (1912) and the poster for "The Slav Epic Exhibition" (1928).

The choice for the analysis of these works was determined by two main criteria. Firstly, each of the works represents different periods of the artist's work, which allows us to trace the

dynamics of his creative method. Secondly, in the artistic space of all three selected works female images are depicted in the foreground, which generates a research interest in revealing the conceptual meaning of these artistic signs in the works by A. Mucha.

Analysis of the works by Alphonse Mucha

“Madonna of the Lilies”, 1905. (Fig. 1)

Three anthropomorphic characters are represented on a vertically oriented canvas. In the lower left quarter, there is a teenage girl with long red hair sitting on a stone, dressed in a light dress embroidered along the hem, collar and sleeves with traditional national geometric patterns. On the girl’s head there is a wreath of clusters of small white flowers. Another larger wreath made of ivy is located on her lap. The girl is sitting half a turn to the viewer. The hem of the girl’s dress is embroidered with an ornament reminiscent of city walls with towers. There is a volumetric sewing similar to flower heads on the sleeves. Judging by the traditional ornaments on the girl’s clothes, including those reminiscent of the city walls, her image can be correlated with her hometown, her native land, her homeland as a whole.



Fig. 1. Alphonse Mucha. “Madonna of the Lilies”, 1905

On the right side of the work, there is an image of a standing woman in a light, spacious robe. Clothing falls from her shoulders with wide textured folds in which her body is completely lost. The woman’s hands are crossed on her chest, strands of long hair fall beneath her arms, almost matching the girl’s hair in tone. The woman’s head is bowed, her face is calm, her eyes are closed. The foothold of the woman remains unclear: it seems that she is floating in the air.

From the woman to the girl, a light piece of cloth extends, enveloping the shoulders and head of the girl. This painting can be interpreted as a patronage of a girl by a woman.

The third character is a baby in the arms of the woman. His presence is quite difficult to notice - only his tiny right hand on his mother's shoulder is shown. He himself is hidden by a light cloth of his mother. Therefore, we can talk about the concealment, implicit divinity, divine help, divine cover, a patronage of a teenage girl.

The girl is sitting on a stone. At the right edge of the work at the girl's level, as well as in the upper part of the picture there are large flowers and buds of white lily. There is not a single flower with signs of wilting. Lilies are presented both in the foreground, clearly drawn, and in the background, barely recognisable. Consequently, homeland is as pure and innocent as Mary, as indicated by the lilies surrounding Madonna and those located at the girl's level. Typically, lilies are an attribute of the scene of the Annunciation, which is also shown in a similar way: Virgin Mary and the archangel Gabriel descending to her. In the work "Madonna of the Lilies", not the archangel descends, but Mary with the baby Christ, not to the Mother of God, but to the girl who represents the motherland. Therefore, we can say that the scene of the good news for the people, for the homeland is depicted. The good news is likely to be divine protection. At the same time, divinity will not be revealed immediately and probably not to everyone. Only a detailed examination allows one to notice the hand of Christ.

The question remains open, for whom is the wreath intended? The one on the girl's lap? Its size is much larger than the head of a girl or Mary. There is hardly a person with such a large head. This wreath is probably not for a specific person and not for a person as such. Wreaths in the Slavic tradition were intended not only to be worn on the head, but also for other ritual functions (for example, they were released in the water); all of them were connected with the moments of transition. Therefore, in this work, the transition is presented to the viewer as a crossroads faced by the homeland. Its fate may be different, but the presence of divine protection gives hope for a successful outcome.

To sum it up, we can say that this work reveals the idea of the good news about the divine protection of the pure and innocent homeland captured in a transitional stage. The good news is presented compositionally and through the attributes of the Annunciation (the convergence of the archangel to Mary, the presence of white lilies); divine protection is revealed through the image of the Mother of God with the baby, the cloth of which covers the head of a teenage girl; the purity and innocence of the homeland - the image of the teenage girl surrounded by white lilies, the girl is sitting in the place that belongs to the Mother of God in the scenes of the Annunciation; transitional stage is shown through the presence of a large wreath of ivy on the girl's lap, which is not suitable for any person's head in size.

The Poster for the Lottery of the Union of Southwest Moravia, 1912. (Fig. 2)

On a vertical canvas with rounded upper corners, two characters are depicted. In the foreground to the right of the central vertical axis, there is a girl wearing a white shirt with a short sleeve, a light brown skirt to the knees and brown stockings. The lower part of her legs and feet are not visible to the viewer, they remain below the edge of the work. On the neck of the girl there is a small rounded medallion on a ribbon without any images. She is squeezing writing utensils in her right hand; in her left hand she is holding a book and a notebook. The girl's face is serious, she is looking from underneath, past the viewer.



Fig. 2. Alphonse Mucha. The Poster for “The Lottery of the Union of Southwest Moravia”, 1912

In the background, in the centre of the work, there is an image of a woman sitting on a tree, bending her head to her knees. The woman is represented in light clothes that cover her almost completely. The woman’s face is covered with her left hand with fingers wide apart, the viewer can see only her right closed eye and eyebrows. The woman’s right hand covers the base of the idol. The woman is wearing low brown traditional shoes. The tree the woman is sitting on, is bent in zigzags many times, its trunks and branches are the background for almost the entire space of the picture. It is noteworthy that the branches are lacking leaves.

Behind the woman and the tree on the left side of the work there is a Slavic pagan idol. The viewer can see its three faces: one facing frontally and two facing the sides. There is one headdress that all heads are covered with. The expressions of the faces depicted in profile are not clear; the face of the idol facing the viewer has straight emotionless lips, slanting outlines of the eyes. There are four images on the chest of the idol: on the left, the sword points down; to the right there is a harnessed horse, above it there is a horn, with the sun above it all. The background of the work is homogeneous, brown, smoothly passing from dark to light when moving from the top to the bottom. The whole work is made in brown, in the upper part of the canvas the space is the darkest and the lightest area is the girl’s clothes in the foreground.

It can be assumed that the people, homeland in this work is shown through all the characters, both anthropomorphic and not. Before the viewer, in a single moment, different relationships unfold, different facets of what is happening. The idol in the work is the most vertical image, it is crossed by both the upper and lower edges. It is the axis of what is happening, the axis of the homeland. However, it remains lifeless, indifferent to what is happening. The woman mourns about what is happening, clearly connected with the idol, which she embraces with her hand. At the same time, the woman being on the tree and in contact with the idol, remains indifferent to the girl in the foreground. The figure of the girl echoes the verticality of the idol, she is not fully represented - her feet are not visible to the viewer.

Nevertheless, unlike the idol, she is not lifeless, not apathetic. On the contrary, she is in tension due to an external source. She squeezes the writing utensils, her face is emotional, although in outline (straight lips, slanting open eyes) she resembles the face of the idol. Therefore, in front of the viewer, there is a contrast between a dead, indifferent, frozen idol and a lively, keenly responsive, growing (the figure of the child is crossed only by the lower edge, there is still a lot of space to the upper edge, which is potential space for growth) girl.

The girl is opposed to the woman: she is direct and decisive, her eyes are open, she does not reconcile, does not mourn, her body is not broken. The girl is contrasted to the dry tree, bending in each of its parts and not only by her directness: on the neck of the girl a medallion is depicted, its shape resembling a linden leaf. It is linden that is a symbol of Alphonse Mucha's motherland. Consequently, the revival of the tree is possible through the girl, the revival of the motherland can occur. That is, the girl can be compared in this work with a tree branch, which occupies almost the entire space of the picture. Moreover, in contrast to the lifeless tree without a single leaf, with curved trunk and branches, it is the girl who represents its viable sprout, it is her neck where the medallion in the form of the leaf hangs. Moreover, the homeland tree can get a new life not so much through a certain child, but rather through the development and support (growth) of education, as indicated by objects in the hands of the girl.

Attention should be paid to a different degree of attitude to what is happening, which can be understood through the ability to look and see of the characters. The eyes of the idol are represented only by the outlines of the eyelids - it cannot see, it does not have such an ability. The woman did not only close her eyelids, but she also closed them with her hand - she does not want to see. The girl's eyes are wide-open, she looks from underneath, but does not look away - she is ready to look and see even what she does not like. She is ready to see and hold steady, resist, while the woman was broken by troubles, the tree was withered, the idol was pushed into the background.

Summing up the consideration of this work, it is important to start with the character in the foreground: the girl is opposed to all the elements of the work, which are possible options for attitude to what is happening. The idol represents the hope for the past, in which the people were strong, but which was left behind, which is lifeless and irrevocable; the tree of life, which in this work can be called the linden, left the idol behind. The tree is very flexible, it represents the life path of the people, the motherland throughout its entire length; the image of the girl representing a modern segment of life (a viable tree branch), is very straight, persistent, ready to resist and not bend. The woman on the tree is opposed to the girl by the bend of her body, sorrow and unwillingness to look at what is happening, the desire to hide from it; the girl looks with her eyes wide-open from underneath, her body is straight and tense, she is ready for action at any moment.

In general, in the considered work, several interconnected ideas characterising the situation of the native people and the attitude of A. Mucha to it can be distinguished. The life path of the people, the motherland is very flexible, complicated (a very straight trunk and branches of linden, occupying almost the entire space of the work), now is experiencing not the best days, the motherland is literally on the verge of death (there is not a single leaf on the tree). This situation is understood by everyone, but not everyone is ready not only to fight, but at least just to look and see (the ability and desire (lack of desire) to look and see are presented through the idol that is not able to see, the woman closing her already closed eyes with her hand, and the girl looking straight forward). At the same time, the situation is not seen exclusively in dark light (the colour of the work varies from very dark in the background to light, almost white spots associated with the girl in the foreground): the hope of a revival through the struggle is alive, it is manifested through the image of the girl squeezing her writing utensils. The girl stands straight, like the idol in the background, she is able to take over the functions of the axis from the idol. Moreover, unlike the idol that has frozen in the past, she has room to grow (like a viable tree branch), there is still a lot of space above her head. It is through her, through her fearlessness to look, see and fight that the motherland can be revived, as indicated by the medallion in the form

of a linden leaf. We can assume that the revival is primarily possible through education. This is indicated by the writing utensils, a notebook and a book in the hands of the girl.

The Poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition”, 1928. (Fig. 3)

On a vertical canvas with rounded upper corners (the format is the same as in the previous work), a girl playing a musical instrument is presented against the background of a Slavic idol. The girl is sitting on a stone elevation with her right side turned to the viewer. The girl is wearing a long light skirt with a red belt and a white spacious shirt. Her brown-red hair is split in two braids, she has got a wreath of white circles with yellow centres on her head. The girl’s blue eyes are looking downward, not at the viewer. She is wearing short brown traditional shoes similar to the woman in the previous work.



Fig. 3. Alphonse Mucha. The poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition”, 1928

To the left of the girl, touching her, there is a stringed musical instrument with a semi-circular framework resembling a harp. The girl is touching the strings with the fingers of both hands without looking at them. The frame of the instrument is red; its upper end is crowned by the head of a red cock with a red caruncle and beard; the lower end is a small bird with lowered wings and a wide beak. The bird on the lower end of the musical instrument is represented against the background of four concentric circles of warm colours. It seems that the bird is depicted in the background of the sun, singing to it. Another solar sign from concentric circles is present on the right side of the work at the upper edge. The sector of the huge circle can be seen in the upper left part of the work. Returning to the lower end of the musical instrument, it should be noted that in addition to the bird, there is a female face on it, bordered on all sides by a

garland of fresh flowers, mainly white and red. The long end of the garland hangs almost to the feet of the girl.

The girl with the musical instrument is depicted on the background of a stone idol, represented exactly in the centre of the work. Its main colour is blue with yellow embossed spots. The idol has at least three faces on one neck, covered with a single headdress. The face facing the viewer in full view is rigid, the eyebrows are bent, the corners of the lips are down. Apparently, this is the face of a young man. The face represented by the profile on the right is female, it is calm and unemotional. The face depicted in profile on the left is the face of an elderly man with a nose with a hump and the ends of a long moustache twisted into a tight spiral. The idol has two hands. In the left it holds a horn with several belts of geometric ornament. In its right hand, the idol grips a sword. On the idol's clothes there are several symbols that tighten the ends of the cloak. This is the sun with a human face and rays in the centre of the chest of the idol; a circle with a crossing on the left side of the chest, under the idol's braid; – a circle with a snake curled into a ring under a circle with a crossing.

In front of the girl, in the foreground closest to the viewer, cut off by the lower edge of the work, a stepped, round in plan ritual vessel for incense is depicted. Five upward wisps of smoke are striving out of it. The wisps intersect, then diverge. There are five, then three, then four. The smoke remains fairly dense at the entire height of the work. Dense, wavy, resembling algae in water or another plant stretching up.

The poster for "The Slav Epic Exhibition" is written mainly in warm colours, full of solar signs, as well as flowers at the peak of its bloom. It can be concluded that in front of the viewer, prosperity and at the same time dawn are like life, the climax of which is the stone idol, which occupies a central, axial place in the work. Revitalisation is a property inherent, for example, to smoke from the incense, which becomes like a plant curving upward, like a linden in the lottery poster. Prosperity, dawn and revival fill the work to the limits so that they involve different senses. First of all, vision is involved through the presence of bright colour spots, an abundance of light. Listening is involved through the girl is playing the strings of a musical instrument, the bird is singing against the background of the solar sign. The sense of smelling is engaged through the smoke from the incense presented in the foreground, the viewer has to face it first of all. The central position of the Slavic idol suggests that it is the Slavic pagan culture that represents the dawn, prosperity and revival. That is, the revival that was potentially present in the previous work has already happened, and it has become possible with the help of the girl, whose playing on a musical instrument revives the idol, squeezing the hilt of the sword, ready to attack potential offenders of the girl.

Conclusion

The three art works under consideration have a lot in common, both at the level of individual elements and at the ideological level. In all three works, teenage girls are depicted in the foreground, for which the background is divine powers, whether Madonna and Christ or the Slavic idol. Therefore, at the level of each individual work, we can say that the divine protection is depicted. However, one should pay attention to its aspects.

In the work "Madonna of the Lilies" this is a patronage in its very initial moment, which can be judged by the composition of the Annunciation used as the basis for the work. "Madonna of the Lilies" combines two canonical moments: the Annunciation and the Protection of the Virgin Mary. We should not forget that in this work we are talking not only about divine patronage, but also about its concealment and implicitness. One should believe in it, even if it is not obvious. The originality of the moment presented in this work can be interpreted as the transition of the present historical for homeland stage, emphasised by the presence of the wreath on the girl's lap.

In the lottery poster, divine protection is called into question: the idol is in the very background, outside the branches of the dried linden, the woman hugs it and mourns, the girl in the foreground has no contact with the idol at all. However, the image of the girl removes the

doubts as she practically takes over the axial value of the idol. At present, it is she who is the straight vertical, which also has room to grow. The dried linden, the tree of life will gain rebirth through a new branch, which is the girl. One should not indulge in grief, should not be afraid to look and see, to fight.

The poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition” confirms the idea that rebirth will come, and death, withering and fossilisation are only temporary phenomena. This work is a statement of an accomplished revival, prosperity and dawn at the same time. The same idol that the woman was mourning by in the lottery poster comes to life. Not only does it now occupy the central place, once again becoming the axis of the world; the symbols that were depicted on the chest of the idol in the lottery poster cease to be just images, becoming a real sword and horn in the hands of the statue. The idol is tightly squeezing the sword ready to attack, if necessary, potential offenders of the girl, whose forces (by playing a musical instrument) have revived the idol.

The consideration of the three works can be summarised as follows: in all of them A. Mucha depicted the divine protection of the motherland (homeland, people), its protection by divine powers, which are always there, even when it seems that divine providence left the motherland, when grief is inevitable and inescapable. Persistence, fearlessness and willingness to fight will lead to the prosperity and dawn that await the homeland. Moreover, judging by the chronologically most recent work, the poster for “The Slav Epic Exhibition”, a revival under divine protection has already occurred, the native culture revived from sorrows and tragedy depicted in the lottery poster, which confirmed the ideas of A. Mucha: divine protection remains with the people, even when it seems that dark times have come, the main thing is to continue to believe, be fearless and ready to fight at this time, the transitional nature of which is indicated with the help of wreaths on the heads of the characters.

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