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Japanism and Japanisms: Inspirations of Japanese Printmaking in Ukrainian Art of the Late Nineteenth–First Third of the Twentieth Century

Japonismo e Japonismos: Inspirações da Gravura Japonesa na Arte Ucraniana do Final do Século XIX ao Primeiro Terço do Século XX

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ABSTRACT: The article examines the influence of Japanese printmaking on the work of Ukrainian artists of the late 19th and first third of the 20th centuries. The topic is updated by rethinking Japanism as a transcultural phenomenon and a successful example of intercultural artistic dialogue. The article aims to analyze Ukrainian artistic practices inspired by Japanese printmaking and to identify the main principles and techniques for using the aesthetic experience of Japanese masters.

The scholarly novelty of the presented results lies in expanding the overall picture of Japanism as a transcultural phenomenon; in elucidating the paths and forms of influence of Japanese printmaking on the visual arts of Ukraine; in defining approaches to the creative reinterpretation of the experience of Japanese masters; and in introducing new names and works into scholarly circulation. The dissemination of Japanism in Ukraine is considered against the backdrop of the dramatic processes of the first third of the twentieth century. The works of Japanese, European, and, in particular, Ukrainian artists presented in the article illustrate the migration of artistic ideas and challenge destructive discourses.

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KEYWORDS: artistic dialogue, visual culture, European Japanism, Ukrainian art, Japanese printmaking, architecture, painting, graphic art.

RESUMO: O artigo analisa a influência da gravura japonesa na produção artística de artistas ucranianos do final do século XIX até ao primeiro terço do século XX. O tema é actualizado pela reavaliação do Japonismo enquanto fenómeno transcultural e exemplo bem-sucedido de diálogo artístico intercultural. O objectivo do artigo consiste na análise das práticas artísticas ucranianas inspiradas na gravura japonesa, bem como na identificação dos principais princípios e técnicas de aplicação da experiência estética dos mestres japoneses.

A originalidade científica dos resultados apresentados reside no alargamento do panorama geral do Japonismo enquanto fenómeno transcultural; na clarificação dos percursos e das formas de influência da gravura japonesa nas artes visuais da Ucrânia; na definição de abordagens para a reinterpretação criativa da experiência dos mestres japoneses; e na introdução de novos nomes e obras no âmbito da investigação académica. A difusão do Japonismo na Ucrânia é analisada tendo como pano de fundo os processos dramáticos do primeiro terço do século XX. As obras de artistas japoneses, europeus e, em particular, ucranianos, apresentadas no artigo, ilustram a circulação de ideias artísticas e colocam em causa discursos destrutivos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: diálogo artístico, cultura visual, Japonismo europeu, arte ucraniana, gravura japonesa, arquitectura, pintura, arte gráfica.

Introduction

Contacts between Japan and Europe date back to the sixteenth century (Cattaneo, 2014, p. 12). Owing to the activities of Catholic missionaries and, later, the Dutch East India Company, Japanese artifacts became known in Europe. Folding screens, lacquerware, and porcelain aroused admiration among Europeans and generated not only demand but also imitation. The diversity of manifestations of the influence of Japanese objects on the applied arts of European countries in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries can be traced both at the level of the expansion of the range of objects, their design, and their decorative ornamentation. According to Y. Aoyama, the specified period constituted the first stage of Japanism, which researchers often consider within the framework of Chinoiseries, that is, imitation of Chinese art. The scholar argues that the phenomenon in question was a contemporary but distinct current, separate from Chinoiserie (Aoyama, 2023).

At the same time, in scholarly discourse, the term *Japanism* is used to denote the mass interest in Japan, its artistic heritage, and the corresponding transformations in European visual arts observed

from the second half of the nineteenth century. It is precisely during this period that international trade and cultural exchange with Japan expand[4]. Owing to international trade and World Industrial Exhibitions, fans and kimonos, folding screens and household utensils, porcelain and lacquerware, prints and paintings, and so forth flooded European markets. Everything Japanese became fashionable. This total fascination with Japanese art was termed *Japanism* by Philippe Burty[5] in 1873.

At the initial stage of this second wave of Japanism, fascination with exoticism predominated. Artists depicted women dressed in silk kimonos and placed images of Japanese objects—prints, fans, folding screens, vases—within their paintings. For several generations of European artists, Japanese woodblock prints became objects of collecting and careful study. Among the European leaders of Japanism were such figures as Whistler, Claude Monet, Gustav Klimt, Vincent van Gogh, and many others. The flexible contour line of Japanese prints became one of the leading elements of a new style known as Art Nouveau. The national variants of the name of this style invariably emphasize its novelty.

In the scholarly community, debates regarding the meaning and usage of this term continue to this day. Alongside the term *Japonisme*, there also exist *Japonaiserie*, *Japanism*, and *Japonismus*, which reflect different levels and forms of perception of Japanese culture. Some researchers believe that *Japonaiserie* refers to superficial, decorative imitation of Japanese motifs, whereas *Japanism* denotes a deeper artistic reinterpretation of Japanese aesthetics—composition, the role of line, flatness, asymmetry, and specific framing (Roskill, 1970; Mitchell, n.d.)

An important role in the contemporary understanding of the term is played by the position of the British orientalist Toshio Watanabe, who emphasizes that Japanism is not a purely French phenomenon. In his view, it is appropriate to use national variants of the term (*Japonism*), since each European country perceived Japanese artistic experience in its own way, in accordance with its specific historical and cultural conditions. Thus, Japanism is considered not as a single style, but as a multifaceted process of cultural interaction (Watanabe, 2012, pp. 215–218). Today, French, British, Polish, Czech, Serbian, Spanish, and other forms of Japanism are regarded as fully legitimate phenomena.

Thus, Japanism is a cultural and artistic phenomenon that signifies the influence of Japanese culture, primarily visual art, on European artistic traditions. All of the above testifies to the broad scope

[4] Before the mid-19th century, Japan had earlier contacts with Portugal (as its primary early European trading partner) and, to a lesser extent, Spain, and later maintained limited trade with the Netherlands and China, as well as diplomatic relations with Korea under its isolation policy. However, in the second half of the 19th century, international trade expanded rapidly due to the opening of ports, unequal treaties, and Meiji-era reforms promoting modernization and global integration. According to M. Chucklin, Japan's participation in world exhibitions and international expositions served to promote commercial interests and to demonstrate national pride (Chaiklin, 2010, 71).

[5] Philippe Burty (1830–1890) – French critic, writer, collector, and inspector of the Academy of Arts.

of the term “Japanism,” which encompasses not only fascination with Japan, its culture, and its subjects, but also the incorporation of specific artistic techniques into the artistic system of Western art.

The study of Japanism, and in particular the influence of Japanese prints on the work of Western artists, spans more than one and a half centuries and has a well-developed scholarly tradition. Characterizing the state of scholarly research on the problem by French colleagues as a whole, it should be noted that its conceptualization has evolved from the introduction of the term “Japanism” by P. Burty in his eponymous article of 1872, in which he described the fashion for Japanese prints and other works of Japanese art and their influence on Impressionists and masters of decorative art in France, to an analysis of Japanism in terms of intercultural “exchange” rather than mere “fashion” (Weisberg et al., 1975), and to an understanding of how Japanese aesthetics became part of the French cultural environment (Basch, 2023).

Among the few studies that outline the presence of certain pictorial techniques borrowed from Japanese prints in the works of individual Ukrainian masters of the first third of the twentieth century, mention should be made of the works of I. Pavelchuk (Pavelchuk, 2019; 2021). Certain observations are also expressed in the works of L. Sokoliuk (Sokoliuk, 2002). In particular, the scholar notes the flexibility of line characteristic of Japanese prints in the works of Boychukist artists[6]. Similar views are expressed by I. Teslenko in her article (Teslenko, 2005). Publications by A. Ozhoha-Maslovska are devoted to the issues of Japanism of the late twentieth to early twenty-first century and to questions of terminology (Ozhoha-Maslovska, 2015; 2016; 2017). At the same time, the well-founded observations of the aforementioned scholars address only individual aspects of Japanism in Ukraine in the first third of the twentieth century.

The authors of the proposed study, in their understanding of Ukrainian Japanism and, in particular, of the influence of Japanese printmaking as the most widespread art form that transmitted Japanese aesthetics, align themselves with the approaches of S. Basch and G. Weisberg in interpreting this subject. The work also takes into account the ideas and observations of scholars concerning national forms of Japanism, since certain techniques inspired by Japanese printmaking were transmitted within the Ukrainian artistic milieu not only directly through prints, but also in artistically reinterpreted forms through diverse artistic contacts of Ukrainian artists. In particular, this includes the works of S. Wichmann (Wichmann, 1999), A. Lambourne (Lambourne, 2007), and T. Watanabe (Watanabe, 2012a–b) concerning the English and French versions of the phenomenon under study, as

[6] Boychukists – students and followers of the Ukrainian avant-garde artist Mykhailo Boychuk.

well as those of I. Malinowski (Malinowski, 2012), L. Kossowski (Kossowski, 2012), and P. Splawski (Splawski, 2012) regarding the Polish context, and the work of R. Bru on the influence of Japanese erotic prints on the oeuvre of Pablo Picasso and artists of his circle (Bru, 2009).

Thus, let us consider the role of Japanese printmaking in the Ukrainian version of Japanism of the late 19th to the first third of the 20th century. Such a localization of the problem does not imply the absence of other sources of acquaintance with Japanese aesthetics. However, printmaking, as the most mobile art form, has always been a powerful means of artistic exchange. Just as in Europe, prints reproducing the artistic achievements of leading masters spread widely, and the compositional schemes invented by them, typologies, and pictorial elements crossed borders and manifested themselves in the works of artists separated not only geographically but also temporally, so too did Japanese printmaking become a principal carrier of new aesthetic ideas. Moreover, even within Japan itself, printmaking played an important role in the development of art. Artists not only borrowed compositional elements or "quoted" them within images, but also published illustrated books that could be used by masters of textiles, metalwork, carving, and other crafts.

1. Methods and Sources of Research

This study employs an art-historical methodology based on interpretative, comparative, and contextual analysis of visual sources. The research examines the reception of Japanese printmaking in Ukrainian art of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a historically conditioned and culturally mediated process. The methodological approach proceeds from the premise that artistic influence is not linear or direct, but is shaped by institutional frameworks, transnational exchanges, and local artistic traditions, in line with theories of reception and cultural transfer (Jauss, 1982).

The core method of the research is formal and stylistic analysis of artworks, following the tradition of formalist art history (Wölfflin, 1950; Riegl, 1992). This involves close examination of compositional structures and visual elements associated with Japanese printmaking, including planarity, local color, the use of contour line, asymmetrical composition, fragmentation, and the active role of empty space—features widely identified in the scholarship on Japanism (Basch, 2023; Weisberg et al., 1975; Wichmann, 1999; Ozhoha-Maslovska, 2015 etc). Such analysis enables the identification of transformations in pictorial language and provides a basis for distinguishing between inherited academic conventions and newly adopted visual strategies.

In conjunction with formal analysis, the study applies a comparative method, which allows for the correlation of Ukrainian artworks with both Japanese prints and examples of European Japanism. This approach, consistent with comparative art-historical methodology (Wölfflin, 1950; Panofsky,

1955), makes it possible to identify patterns of reinterpretation and adaptation, as well as to distinguish between direct visual references and more generalized stylistic affinities.

A significant component of the methodology is iconographic analysis, particularly with regard to elements derived from the kachōga genre ("flowers and birds"). The research focuses on recurring motifs such as intertwined branches, isolated trees, and close-up representations of plants. These motifs are analyzed as structural and semantic units that undergo transformation within a different cultural and artistic environment. Their study provides insight into how visual elements are recontextualized and integrated into new compositional systems.

The research also incorporates historical and contextual analysis, situating artistic practices within broader socio-cultural conditions, in accordance with approaches in social art history. This includes consideration of the geopolitical situation of Ukraine at the turn of the twentieth century, the role of artistic education in European centers, and the circulation of artworks, publications, and collections. Special attention is given to institutional and ideological factors that influenced artistic production, including the availability of Japanese prints and the dissemination of knowledge about Japanese art through periodicals and exhibitions.

The source base of the study consists of both visual and textual materials. Visual sources include paintings, graphic works, and architectural or decorative elements that exhibit features associated with Japanism. Textual sources comprise early art-historical publications, artists' writings, memoirs, and periodicals that document the reception of Japanese art and provide evidence of its dissemination. These materials are analyzed to reconstruct the conditions under which Japanese printmaking became accessible to Ukrainian artists and to identify the channels of its influence.

Limitations. The study acknowledges several limitations. The loss or dispersal of artworks and collections, particularly due to war and political upheaval, the fragmentary nature of archival documentation, the frequent indirectness of influence mediated through European artistic environments. These constraints necessitate a methodological reliance on interpretative reconstruction and comparative inference.

2. Results

Among the diversity of works of art brought to Europe by numerous dealers and later by large trading companies, Japanese printmaking occupied a special place. Color prints were one of the principal sources of visual information about Japan and its artistic heritage. However, mass interest in Japanese printmaking was triggered by the World Industrial Exhibition of 1867, where works by Japanese masters were exhibited. As noted by researcher M. Chaiklin regarding the 1867 exhibition, "…it was the first time a major exhibition of Japanese art had been held in France, and the modest

exhibitions of prints and decorative arts provided by the Japanese government set off an explosion of Japanese influenced design known as Japonisme" (Chaiklin, 2010, 72).

The enthusiasm for Japanese printmaking was driven not only by the exoticism of its subjects. The European artistic system was experiencing a crisis, and therefore, unfamiliar graphic art constructed on different principles was perceived as a source of renewal of artistic language. The works of masters of Japanese printmaking exerted a decisive influence on the further development of European art of the second half of the nineteenth to the early twentieth century.

Ukraine did not remain outside these processes. Japanism in Ukraine possessed both features common to European Japanism and specific characteristics, which can be explained by the particular political and cultural situation of the country. At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Ukraine was divided between two empires—the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian—and was struggling for independence and the creation of a national state. Artists, writers, and musicians were active participants in this process. All of them received their initial education in art schools and studios of Ukraine (Kharkiv, Kyiv, Odesa, Lviv) and continued it in art academies and studios in Kraków, Warsaw, Paris, Vienna, Munich, and Saint Petersburg. From these recognized European centers of art, talented youth brought back not only knowledge and skills, but also books and collections of Japanese prints.

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, collections of Japanese printmaking already existed in various regions of Ukraine, with examples arriving through different routes—from Japan, Manchuria, and European countries. Among the most well-known collections of Japanese printmaking was that of the Kyiv collector and patron Bohdan Khanenko[7], which, together with other works, was donated to the city and formed the foundation of the museum now known as the Bohdan and Varvara Khanenko National Museum of Art. Prints from this collection were exhibited (and continue to be exhibited) throughout the twentieth and into the early twenty-first century. The first surveys of this collection were prepared and published by the art historian P. Hudalova-Kulzhenko (Hudalova-Kulzhenko, 1927; 1928). The author reports 232 examples of Japanese printmaking.

In eastern Ukraine, the presence of individual prints in private collections is attested by artists' memoirs. In particular, in Kharkiv during the 1910s, Japanese prints were frequently examined and discussed in the studio of the well-known artist Yevhen Ahafonov[8]. This interest in the work of

[7] Bohdan Khanenko (1849–1917) – Ukrainian collector of antiques and artworks, philanthropist, and industrialist. Member of the Kyiv Society of Antiquities and Arts.

[8] Yevhen Ahafonov (1879–1955) – Ukrainian painter. He began his artistic career as an academic realist and later moved to the avant-garde. In Kharkiv, he organized the first avant-garde studio, "Blue Lily." He was friends with many avant-garde artists of Ukrainian origin. Refusing to recognize the Communist regime, he emigrated in 1920 and from 1923 lived and worked in the United States.

Japanese masters was evidently conditioned by the students' inclination toward Impressionism and graphic techniques (Lowack, 2023).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were many private collections in Kharkiv with a significant proportion of Eastern art. On their basis, the collections of Kharkiv University and later the city art museum were formed. Unfortunately, today there is no reliable information regarding the contents of the Japanese print collection. In an article by A. Ozhoha-Maslovska, evidence is provided of a collection lost during the Second World War from the cabinet of graphic art, where drawings and prints by Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Persian masters were kept (Ozhoha-Maslovska, 2017, p. 92).

In western Ukraine, in Lviv, one of the well-known collectors was Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky. His collection also included Japanese woodblock prints. However, Andrey Sheptytsky acquired high-quality examples of Japanese printmaking for resale to local admirers of Japanese art in order to use the proceeds to send gifted Ukrainians abroad for study. Several sheets have survived to the present day and are held in the collection of the Andrii Sheptytsky[9] National Museum in Lviv.

Artists were able to familiarize themselves with examples of Japanese printmaking not only through exhibitions, but also thanks to publications in specialized journals and newspapers. Artists subscribed to the journals *Le Japon Artistique*, *Mir Iskusstva,* and *Zolotoye Runo*[10]. The journal Artystychnyi Visnyk[11], edited by the artist and cultural activist Ivan Trush[12] and devoted to art, contained articles on Japanese art illustrated with fragments of works by Katsushika Hokusai[13], Kitagawa Utamaro[14], and others.

Thus, in the leading artistic centers, appropriate conditions emerged for the development of pan-European tendencies on a local, national basis. By localizing the study exclusively to works that correlate with Japanese printmaking, it is possible to identify certain objects and artworks.

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[9] Andrii Sheptytsky (1865–1944) – monastic name of Count Roman Maria Alexander Sheptytsky (Polish: Roman Aleksander Maria Szeptycki), head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, spiritual leader, Doctor of Law and Theology, and philanthropist.

[10] Le Japan Artistique – a journal dedicated to Japanese art (publisher: Z. Bing), published in three languages from 1888 to 1891.
Mir Iskusstva (World of Art) – an arts and literary journal published in St. Petersburg from 1898 to 1904; it promoted Art Nouveau and Symbolism.
Zolotoe Runo (Golden Fleece) – published in Moscow from 1906 to 1909, it served as a secondary center of attraction for Art Nouveau artists after *Mir Iskusstva*.

[11] Artistic Bulletin – a monthly magazine devoted to music and art, the first art journal in Western Ukraine, published in Lviv in 1905. Editors: Ivan Trush, Stanislav Ludkevych.

[12] Ivan Trush (1869–1941) – Ukrainian impressionist painter, master of landscape and portrait painting, art critic, and organizer of artistic life in Galicia.

[13] Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) – Japanese painter and printmaker in the ukiyo-e tradition; one of the most famous masters of landscape art.

[14] Kitagawa Utamaro (1753–1806) – prominent Japanese artist working in several ukiyo-e genres. His works had a strong impact on European artists.

According to documentary evidence, there were numerous palaces and residences in Ukraine with high-quality examples of interiors of the so-called "Japanese rooms and cabinets." All of them were destroyed or looted during the Bolshevik coup of 1917 and the Second World War. One of the few preserved monuments of early Japanism is the provincial estate of Petro Chechel in the village of Samchyky[15]. One of the rooms of this estate, known as the "Japanese cabinet," has been examined and illustrated in an article devoted to Ukrainian Chinoiserie (Korniev et al., 2025), since the monument contains both Chinese and Japanese stylistic elements. Therefore, without resorting to excessive detail, its main artistic features should be noted. The walls and ceiling of the room are entirely covered with paintings by an unknown author. The plafond contains an image of a bird on a branch framed by Chinese ornament. The source of this image may have been albums of drawings by Japanese artists that were sold in Europe, in the *kachōga* genre (flowers and birds).

The principal motif of the cabinet's wall paintings (flowers in a vase) is also Chinese. A Japanese accent within the system of paintings is introduced by the images of a "Japanese woman" under a parasol and a samurai dressed in *kamishimo* (ceremonial attire of a Japanese aristocrat). The visual sources for these fashionable subjects could have been both prints and photographs (for the male figure), as well as paintings of European Japanism (for the female figure). The absence of clear semantic connections between the images, the conventionality of the figures, and the combination of Chinese and Japanese motifs are all typical manifestations of early Japanism, a kind of "play at Japan."

Elements of Japanism on the façades of urban buildings in the Art Nouveau style, erected at the turn of the centuries in Kharkiv, Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, and other major cities of Ukraine, have been preserved far better. Within the diversity of manifestations of this style (in Ukraine, French, German, Austrian, as well as Northern and national variants are present), a share of typically Japanese motifs can be traced—images of irises and camellias, or the plastic interpretation of flowers in the spirit of Japanese printmaking.

It would not be an exaggeration to state that the floristic motifs of Japanese printmaking proved to be close to Ukrainians not only due to their universality, but also owing to a nationwide love of nature. In the decorative design of façades and interiors of residential buildings in Lviv, Kharkiv, Kyiv, and Odesa, plant motifs occupied a leading place (Ivashko, 2009; Chepelyk, 2000; Yasievych, 1988; Teslenko, 2012). Flexible, silhouette-expressive lines of stems, leaves, and blossoming flowers were

[15] Petro Chechel Estate – located in the village of Samchyky, Khmelnytskyi region. Unfortunately, barbaric Soviet-era renovations erased the original artistic style. The number of such buildings is rapidly decreasing today due to bombings.

executed in a variety of techniques and materials: sculptural relief, majolica, mosaic, stained glass, wrought metal, and painting.

An attraction to nature, the landscape orientation of Ukrainian lyric poetry, and the significant role of plant ornamentation in folk art also determined the particular attention of Ukrainian artists to landscape genres of Japanese printmaking. At that time, the works of Katsushika Hokusai and Ando Hiroshige were widely known. Their works significantly transformed artistic approaches to landscape.

In the Japanese tradition, it is represented both as a panoramic landscape (*fūkeiga*: mountains and waters), observed by the viewer as if from a distance, and as a fragment maximally close to the viewer (*kachōga*: flowers and birds). European, and subsequently Ukrainian, artists were attracted by these approaches to landscape solutions, among which was the isolation of a group of trees with seemingly intertwined branches, a single tree, or a group of branches.

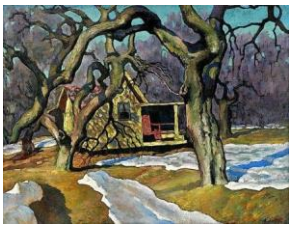
Characterizing this stage of Ukrainian Japanism as a whole, it should be noted that it was inspired both by direct impressions of Japanese printmaking and indirectly, through European artistic practices. Artists in whose work the aforementioned versions of landscape can be observed usually studied or undertook internships in France and Poland. In particular, the researcher I. Pavelchuk, analyzing the motif of intersecting branches in the landscapes of M. Burachek[16], emphasizes his studies at the Kraków Academy of Fine Arts. She notes that most instructors assembled their own collections of Japanese prints and actively promoted their techniques (Pavelchuk, 2021, pp.123). In particular, as reported by the Polish art historian L. Kossowski, the technique of *pars pro toto* (the isolation of a fragment) was borrowed from *ukiyo-e* prints and gradually spread into the practice of Kraków artists (Kossowski, 2016, p. 161). It should be emphasized that fascination with such techniques was not exclusive to Polish artists: a similar approach can be observed almost everywhere where Japonism spread. As an example, one may cite a landscape with trees by the Spanish artist Santiago Rusiñol [17](Fig. 1: 3).

[16] Mykola Burachek (1871–1942) – Ukrainian artist, teacher, and theorist. Studied at Mykola Murashko's Kyiv Drawing School and the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków; during a trip to France, visited the studios of A. Matisse and M. Denis. After the establishment of Communist rule in Ukraine, actively promoted avant-garde art in various educational institutions in Kharkiv. With the destruction of the avant-garde in the 1930s, he worked as an art historian.

[17] Santiago Rusiñol (1861–1931) – Spanish Catalan modernist painter, writer, and playwright. Influenced the young Pablo Picasso and was a prominent figure in Barcelona's artistic life.

Fig. 1

1. Katsushika Hokusai. Sheet from the series "36 Views of Fuji". 1826-1833



2. Yevhen Ahafonov Winter landscape/ 1915 (?)

3.Santiago Rusiñol. The Hill. 1892

4. Abram Manevich. Spring in Kurenivka. Between 1914-1915

5. Mykola Burachek. March. 1917

6. David Burliuk. Oshima. 1920s.

7. Ivan Trush. Lonely Pine. 1919;

8. Pine on a Crimean Rock. 1920s;

9. Pine. Triptych. 1925–1941

It should be noted that in the work of Ukrainian artists, all three approaches to adapting the aforementioned motif can be traced. The first is a rhythmized depiction of a group of trees forming a distinctive pattern of intertwined branches. A vivid example of this approach is found in the works of

A. Manevich[18] and the already mentioned M. Burachek and Y. Ahafonov (Fig. 1: 2, 4, 5). It is noteworthy that despite differences in artistic manner, these artists allow the distant plane to be seen through the contours of the trees. A similar approach can be traced in a print by Katsushika Hokusai (Fig. 1: 1), but unlike the Japanese predecessor, the compositions of Ukrainian masters are complicated by a double pattern—of branches and the shadows they cast.

Among the compositions of this group, the landscape painted by David Burliuk[19] during his stay in Japan on the island of Ōshima is closest to Hokusai's print. It is noteworthy that, while depicting the landscape from nature, he chooses Hokusai's compositional scheme (Fig. 1: 6), whose work he himself acknowledged knowing very well. The second approach (the isolation of a single tree as a self-sufficient motif) is most vividly observed in the oeuvre of Ivan Trush. In his article devoted to Japanese art, he notes that the Japanese are capable of admiring a single flower or tree, that "the Japanese peasant tries to build his house, if possible, in a romantic place by a stream, makes himself a waterfall from stones, and near the house likes to plant a cherry tree, just as our Ukrainian peasant does." It is precisely this motif of a solitary plant that can be seen in several Trush's works. One of them is the motif of a solitary pine. A pine with a broken branch or a trunk bent by the winds appears as a capacious metaphor of human life, strength of spirit, and resistance to adversity. This cycle culminates in a triptych depicting a solitary pine, bent by winds but not broken (Fig. 1: 7–9).

The third approach (a close-up depiction of a group of branches) also refers to the works of Katsushika Hokusai and Utagawa Hiroshige[20]. Echoes of this motif can be seen in the work of the French artist Vincent van Gogh, whose painting *Almond Blossom* has become almost an emblem of Japanism (Fig. 2: 1–2). In Ukrainian art, this motif is also present; however, the place of blossoming cherry or plum trees in Ukrainian painting is occupied by the apple tree—the principal fruit tree of Ukrainian orchards. A representative example is a work by M. Berkos,[21] a painter of academic training, who employs an atypical, narrowed format and constructs the composition asymmetrically, leaving

[18] Abram Manevich (1881–1942) was a Belarusian Jewish artist and a representative of the Kyiv School of Art. He received his initial artistic training at the Kyiv Art School and was among the founders of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts. In 1922, he emigrated first to London and subsequently to the United States.

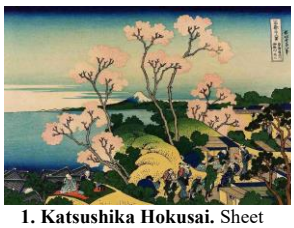
[19] David Burliuk (1882–1967) was one of the founders and leading figures of Futurism among Ukrainian and Russian artists, renowned as a painter, writer, and art critic. He received his basic artistic education in Ukraine, Russia, Germany, and France. In 1920, he emigrated and spent two years in Japan, where he produced an entire "Japanese cycle" of works. In 1922, he relocated to the United States, where he continued his artistic and publishing activities.

[20] Utagawa Hiroshige or Ando Hiroshige (1797-1858) was a famous Japanese printmaker of the Edo period.

[21] Mykhailo Berkos (1861–1919) was an Odesa- and Kharkiv-based painter, best known as a landscape artist. Following his professional training and study trips to France, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, and Italy (1890–1893), his artistic practice gravitated toward Impressionism.

much space for sunlight and air (Fig. 2:3). The artist crops the trunk and the crown, as if bringing the blossoming apple branches closer to the viewer.

Fig. 2



1. Katsushika Hokusai. Sheet from the series "36 Views of Fuji".1826-1833

2. Van Gogh. Almond Blossom. 1890.

3. Mikhail Berkos. Apple tree blossoms. 1919.

4. Katsushika Hokusai. Chrysanthemums and a Bee. 1834

5. Ivan Trush. Chrysanthemum, 1920s.

6. Mykhailo Zhuk. Chrysanthemums. 1919.

7. Irises. 1918

8. Sketch of a vase, 1913.

The genre of “flowers and birds” changed the perception of the place of flowers in art among European and Ukrainian artists. Close-ups of blossoming chrysanthemums and irises in the compositions of Katsushika Hokusai convinced painters that flowers are not merely components of still lives or decorative elements, but also independent objects of attention (Fig. 2: 4–7). Ivan Trush wrote: “The Japanese love flowers most of all. Japan is called the country of irises and chrysanthemums. In the feeling for the beauty of nature, and especially of flowers, the Japanese differ by an unheard-of, I would even say feminine, sensitivity” (Trush, 1905, p. 72). Like Claude Monet, he purchased a house and arranged a garden where, among other things, he planted chrysanthemums, irises, and cherry trees. The garden has not survived to the present day; however, several canvases testify to his personal “Japan” (Fig. 2: 5).

The value of the fragment, of the plant depicted in close-up, became one of the favorite motifs of Ukrainian artists. This motif was adopted not only by Impressionists who sought to “capture the moment” but also by masters of the academic school.

Reminiscences of the most famous works of Japanese masters can also be traced in the oeuvre of other Ukrainian artists. However, none of them resorted to attempts to reproduce a favored graphic composition in oil paint, as Vincent van Gogh did[22]. Even where parallels with specific works are evident, the borrowings are not direct and rather serve as an impulse for the development of an individual pictorial or graphic language. For example, in the works of Vsevolod Maksymovych[23], particularly in the decorative treatment of the background, one cannot fail to notice echoes of prints by Katsushika Hokusai (Fig. 4:4; Fig. 3: 1–4).

A creative reinterpretation and enrichment of expressive means through the implementation of compositional and graphic techniques of Utagawa Hiroshige can be traced in the early works of H. Narbut[24], a renowned Ukrainian graphic artist and professor of the first National Academy of Arts, established in the Ukrainian People's Republic. As is known, the artist was well acquainted with Japanese printmaking, which had interested him since his gymnasium years (Vykhovanets, 2020); moreover, he had a vivid example of creative interpretation of Japanese experience in the work of his teacher I. Bilibin[25]. Among the most representative examples is the illustration for the fairy tale *The Wooden Eagle*, in which the master chooses a viewpoint from above, as if from beneath the wing of an eagle, thus recalling a corresponding print by Utagawa Hiroshige (Fig. 3: 7, 9). In the illustration for the fairy tale *The Bear*, the artist employs such techniques of the Japanese master as color gradation in the depiction of the sky, the silhouetted treatment of trees, and oblique hatching in conveying rain. All of this together refers to a well-known composition from the series *The Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō* (Fig. 3: 5, 6).

Narbut worked extensively and successfully with silhouette imagery, using it both as a primary device and as a supplementary one. It should be noted that the silhouette was familiar to Ukrainian artists both as a tradition of folk paper cutting, the so-called *vytynanka*, and as part of the experience of European graphic art. However, acquaintance with Japanese printmaking expanded the range of applications of this device. Subsequently, H. Narbut, like an entire cohort of Ukrainian artists inspired by the proclamation of the Ukrainian People's Republic, became involved in creative experiments aimed at developing a national style. He was responsible for the design of the Ukrainian typeface, the

[22] Notably, this influence is evident in two works by Vincent van Gogh from 1877, housed in the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, which are painted copies of woodblock prints by Utagawa Hiroshige: *Flowering Plum Orchard (Plum Trees) in Kameido* (1857) and *Sudden Shower over Shin-Ōhashi Bridge and Atake* (1857).
[23] Vsevolod Maksymovych (1894–1914) was a Ukrainian representative of Art Nouveau.
[24] Heorhii Narbut (1886–1920) was a Ukrainian graphic artist. He studied under the renowned Russian illustrator Ivan Bilibin in Saint Petersburg and later in Munich. In 1917, he returned to Ukraine, where he developed visual symbols for the newly established state, including the coat of arms of the Ukrainian People's Republic. He served as the head of the newly founded Ukrainian Academy of Arts, which proclaimed independence in 1918.
[25] Reference is made to *Illustration to "The Tale of Tsar Saltan"* (1905), conceived as an homage to *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* by Katsushika Hokusai.

state coat of arms, and the first banknotes of the independent Republic. In these works, as well as in his later illustrations, the leading means of expression became the flexible, resilient line of Japanese printmaking, which organizes the compositional space (Fig. 3: 8).

Japanese printmaking, and especially the works of Hokusai, influenced the renewal of linear hatching in compositional treatment. As can be seen in the works of H. Narbut and other artists, the monotony of academic hatching is overcome through the diversity of thin and thick lines, short and long strokes.

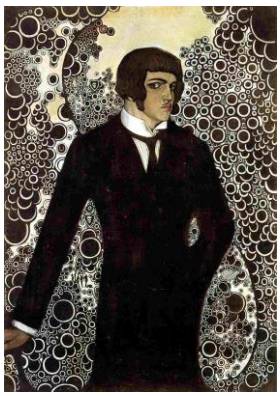
Another artist who employed the silhouette as a means of expression was the Ukrainian painter M. Zhuk[26], one of the most prominent representatives of Lviv Secession. The artist juxtaposes silhouette and full-color, meticulously elaborated imagery within a single compositional space, thereby creating tension in the relationship between spot and plane. He applies this device both in portrait cycles and in depictions of flowers. His numerous irises and chrysanthemums were incorporated into the stained-glass compositions he developed.

The influence of Japanese printmaking on the emergence of new themes in Ukrainian art should also be noted. As mentioned above, the experience of Japanese artists demonstrated the value of the fleeting moment and of emotions that constitute life. For perhaps the first time in Ukrainian art, images of embraces, kisses, and gentle touches appear (Fig. 4: 3–4). One cannot fail to notice certain affinities between *The Kiss* by Gustav Klimt and *Love* by F. Krychevskyi[27]. However, the planar treatment of form and the role of contour in the work of the Ukrainian artist also testify to the study of Japanese printmaking.

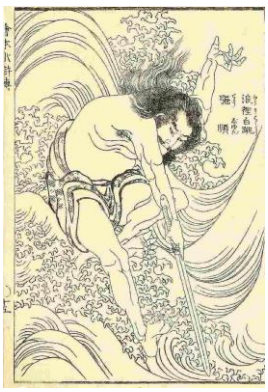
[26] Mykhailo Zhuk (1883–1964) was a Ukrainian graphic artist, painter, ceramist, and writer. He studied in Kyiv, Moscow, and Kraków. His early work is associated with Secession and Modernist art; in the 1930s, he turned primarily to decorative arts, including ceramics, porcelain, and faience.

[27] Fedir Krychevskyi (1879–1947) was a Ukrainian artist and one of the founders of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts (1918). He received his artistic education at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture and at the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts. The painting *Love*, mentioned here, forms part of the triptych *Life*, created between 1925 and 1927, which represented Ukrainian art at the 1928 Venice Biennale.

Fig. 3



1. Vsevolod Maksymovich. Self portrait. 1913



2. Katsushika Hokusai. Chugi Suikoden Ehon.1829

3. Vsevolod Maksymovich. Male portrait. 1913 (?)

4. Katsushika Hokusai. The Great Wave off Kanagawa. 1831.

5. Heorhiy Narbut, Fairy Tales: Teremok. Mizgir. 1910

6. Utagawa Hiroshige. 53 Stations on the Tokaido Way.1833

7. Heorhiy Narbut. Illustration for the fairy tale «The Wooden Eagle». 1909.

8. Heorhiy Narbut. Drawing for the «Poetry» section in the magazine «Art». 1919.

9. Utagawa Hiroshige. Fukagawa Susaki and Jūmantsubo. 1857

It should be emphasized that the qualities enumerated above—planarity, local color, and decorativeness—can be observed both in the tradition of Ukrainian icon painting and in the works of

Gustav Klimt, which F. Krychevskyi knew well and appreciated. However, unlike the icon, groups of figures are presented together as a single spot, as can often be seen in prints by Kitagawa Utamaro and his followers. Unlike Klimt, ornament remains within the boundaries of form and never extends into the background. And, of course, the contour line, which is entirely absent in Klimt's work, in Krychevskyi's art (as in that of Japanese masters) delineates faces, hands, and folds of clothing.Such pictorial techniques of Japanese printmaking as planar treatment of form and local color, adopted by Ukrainian and European artists, determined the development of modernist movements in art (Fig. 4: 2-3). This is particularly clearly traced in the oeuvre of Fedir Krychevskyi, the first rector of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts. A delicate drawing contour, local color, the absence of chiaroscuro modeling, and fragmentary composition recall Japanese prints in the *bijinga* genre (depictions of beauties). Fragmentation of composition, planarity, and the use of contour line are characteristic of certain works by F. Krychevskyi, and his postcard depicting a girl in a red headscarf resembles Kitagawa Utamaro's series *Large Heads* (Fig. 4: 6).

Subsequently, in Ukrainian art, as in other European countries, the techniques of Japanese printmaking became embedded in artistic practice. Thus, for example, asymmetry and unfilled space in the painting of M. Murashko[28], O. Novakivskyi[29], and others, as elsewhere in Europe, are those techniques of Japanese printmaking that not only shaped the artistic language of Art Nouveau, but were also successfully employed by Impressionist and Post-Impressionist artists.

I.Trush, characterizing the features of Japanese art, remarked that "the Japanese are an example of how to borrow foreign experience and create national art" (Trush, 1905, p. 103). In our view, this statement by the artist also defines the essence of Ukrainian Japanism of the first third of the twentieth century. Individual techniques of composition, form-making, and color organization in the works of Ukrainian artists are combined with local motifs, traditions of Ukrainian folk art, icon painting, and Impressionism already assimilated in the process of education.

Unfortunately, in the 1930s, experiments in art were brought to a halt. In 1932, the government issued the Resolution "On the Reorganization of Literary and Artistic Organizations," which liquidated all independent associations and placed artists' creativity under control. In 1934, at the First Congress of Soviet Writers, so-called "Socialist Realism" was proclaimed as the sole method of Soviet literature and art, becoming an instrument of ideology and a basis for censorship[30]. Socialist Realism demanded

[28] Oleksandr Murashko (1875–1919) was a Ukrainian painter, educator, and public figure, a representative of the Kyiv School of Art and one of the founders of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts.

[29] Oleksa Novakivskyi (1872–1935) was a Ukrainian painter and educator. He received his artistic training in Odesa and Kraków.

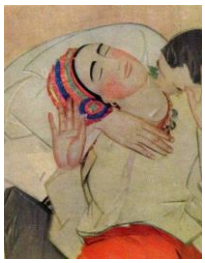
[30] Socialist Realism (often abbreviated as *Socrealism*) is a term established in Soviet art history to denote the artistic method and style that dominated in the USSR from the 1930s to the 1980s, as well as in countries that came under Soviet influence

a “truthful depiction of reality in its revolutionary development,” a positive hero-builder of socialism, optimism, party-mindedness, and ideological loyalty.

Fig. 4

1.Torii Kiyonaga. Sleeve Scroll. Fragment. Color woodcut. Circa 1785.

2. Gustav Klimt. The Kiss. 1908-1909.



3. Fedir Krichevsky. Love. Triptych «Life».1925-1927.

4. Vsevolod Maksimovich. The Kiss. 1913.

5. Syuncho. The Courtesan Hinazuru of Choji. 1780–1795

6. Fedir Krichevsky. Girl in red. Postcard. 1923-1924.;

7. Oleksa Novakivsky. Portrait of his wife. 1911.

after the Second World War. This method imposed strict limits on artistic expression, prioritizing ideology and propaganda above all else. Initially emerging in literature, it later spread to painting, sculpture, drama, and cinema.

8. Oleksa Novakivskyi. In thought (portrait of his wife). 1911.

9. Oleksandr Murashko. Laundress. 1914.

For Ukraine, this meant the end of artistic pluralism and the suppression of all avant-garde movements, with an orientation toward the traditions of academicism of the second half of the nineteenth century. The ominous label of "formalist" was applied to masters whose works contained signs of creative experiment or an alternative artistic language. Fragmentation and asymmetry of composition, planarity, decorativeness—that is, everything assimilated in European practice from Japanese printmaking—were declared hostile and unacceptable. The consequences of such accusations were not limited to the disappearance of the artist from the public sphere. As a rule, accusations of formalism constituted the first stage of repression, soon followed by dismissal from positions, arrests, and executions.

3. Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research

Summarizing the above, it should be emphasized that Japanism in Ukraine developed with a delay, under the influence of artistic centers of other countries where Ukrainians received their education. At the early stage (the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century), it manifested itself primarily in decorative elements of architecture. In painting and graphic art, Japanism is distinctly traced in the first third of the twentieth century. Artists reinterpreted both examples of Japanese printmaking and techniques of European Japanism, proposing new paths and pictorial approaches. During the period under study, artists paid attention to works by various Japanese masters; however, among those that became sources of the greatest number of artistic inspirations were Katsushika Hokusai, Andō Hiroshige, and Kitagawa Utamaro. Among the leading motifs borrowed from Japanese printmaking were various adaptations of the *kachōga* genre, manifested in motifs of intertwined branches, a plant fragment, or a solitary tree. The alphabet of local floristic motifs, in addition to graphic reinterpretations of traditional ones, was enriched by depictions of magnolia, lotus, irises, and chrysanthemums. Graphic techniques were renewed: creative use of silhouette imagery and strokes,

and a departure from shading the entire pictorial space in favor of a concise, flexible line within free space.

Unlike French Japanism, the works of Ukrainian artists do not contain copies or direct "quotations" of Japanese works; instead, they present interpretations of certain compositional schemes and their elements. Moreover, unlike other European countries, Ukrainian Japanism of the 1910s–1920s served not only as a means of overcoming academic conservatism, but also as a search for a modern artistic language capable of integrating national and global experience. This is why the works of Ukrainian artists of this period reveal a synthesis of techniques of icon painting, Ukrainian Baroque, folk painting, European painting, and Japanese printmaking. Accordingly, the Ukrainian model of Japanism is distinguished by a high degree of interactivity.

Prospects for further research lie in expanding the temporal amplitude of the materials under study: Japanism behind the "Iron Curtain," and Japanism in contemporary design and art.

Conflict of Interest: None declared

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Comentado [A1]: No date

Comentado [A2]: Not mentioned in text

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