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## **DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON THE SAME ISSUE**

### **ABSTRACT**

The limit of perception and understanding of the artistic problems of the postwar period should be considered the seventies, or rather their second half. It is hard to say why it was this period that entered the history of the country and the history of art as a time of brutal repression of free thought, a time marked by numerous criminal cases opened against nationally conscientious artists – painters, writers, journalists, composers. It was a turning point for a changed public perception of artistic processes in general and the leading artistic method at the time – socialist realism – in particular. Weak manifestations of the new understanding and, most importantly, the first attempts to publish facts from the national history of art, which seemed to have been forever hidden in the basements of Soviet power, became the first bricks in the wall of subsequent art and cultural studies. Despite the fact that science still remained entirely Soviet, the democratic component declared itself.

**Keywords:** socialist realism, art critics, Soviet painting, political artistic method.

**The purpose** of the article is an attempt to throw light on the processes taking place in Soviet Ukraine during the postwar period.

**Research methods.** The author applied a general philosophical dialectic method in conjunction with a general scientific system and structure method to support his vision. Cultural abstraction of data complemented the art comparative method of systematizing individual knowledge in this highly specialized field of culture.

**The scientific novelty** of the research outcomes lies in the substantiation of the analysis by involving the conclusions of art studies of 1960-1990s of foreign and domestic authors, who studied the problems of the cultural field.

**Analysis of studies and publications** on the topic in question. Apparently, it was the Kyiv art critic Vasyl Andriyovych Afanasyev (1921–2002), who focused his attention on the study of the processes of origin, formation, consolidation and complete victory of the leading method of Soviet art – socialist realism. For the first time he tried to theoretically comprehend the inevitable victory of the party political artistic method back in 1962 in the book “Ukrainian Soviet Painting”<sup>1</sup>. It was followed by another detailed work “The Establishment of Socialist Realism in the Ukrainian Fine Art” (1967)<sup>2</sup>.

In these studies, the art critic cautiously attempted to reveal the little-known information about the destruction of national culture. Between the extensive quotations of the heads of state and party documents, V. Afanasyev mentions M. Boychuk’s circle, although not a single word was written about the teacher himself. Five years later, he completed the work “Features of Modernity”<sup>3</sup>.

The year 1973 was relatively calm in the political life of the Ukrainian SSR. The main detentions and imprisonments of “enemies of authorities” took place a year earlier, but the feeling of anxiety was very strong. In the “Socialist realism – a reliable basis for further development and growth of the Ukrainian art” section the author writes: “The dialectical complexity of the interrelationship between the creative method and the artistic practice is that, while remaining a reliable basis and a driving force for the development of Ukrainian Soviet art, the method of socialist realism develops and enriches itself.” “Fidelity to the principles of socialist realism does not mean strict adherence to a certain range of traditions, techniques and artistic means of expression, although they once served the development of Soviet art”<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Afanasyev V.A. Ukrainian Soviet painting / V.A. Afanasyev; USSR Academy of Sciences. – Kyiv : Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1962. – 63 p.: illustrated. – (Scientists of Ukraine to Universities of culture)

<sup>2</sup> Afanasyev V. The Establishment of Socialist Realism in the Ukrainian Fine Art / V. Afanasyev. – Kyiv : Mystetstvo, 1967. – 173 p.

<sup>3</sup> Afanasyev V. Features of modernity / V. Afanasyev. – Kyiv : Mystetstvo, 1973. – 179 p.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

In domestic art criticism, this is almost the first revelation, when the scientist emphasizes that “fidelity to the principles of socialist realism does not mean strict adherence to a certain range of traditions, techniques and artistic means of expression”. That is, quoting V. Afanasyev of the 1973 period, it is possible to draw a logical conclusion that strict observance of state artistic dogmas is not obligatory at all. This is, so to speak, at the discretion of the author, but there will be no fee for non-socialist realism. In the vast majority of cases, the struggle with the system ended in an instant even without starting. The desire to survive overcame most other feelings. The totalitarian system, pretending to be democratic, in fact left virtually no choice in official creativity.

The early 1990s will be marked by the beginning of perestroika and the practical end of the Soviet-era totalitarianism. The opportunity to export works of art abroad intensifies attention to the works (mostly paintings) of the 1930s and 1980s. Igor Golomstock, a former Soviet scholar who emigrated abroad, will write “Totalitarian Art.” He will analyze in detail the ways of development of socialist art, linking it and comparing with the political paths of development of the state. The model of his analysis is still one of the most realistic and truthful and is readily used by foreign scientists in explaining the problems of cultural development of the USSR<sup>5</sup>.

It’s probable that the “Social Realist Canon” project has been and still remains the biggest and most significant study of totalitarian Soviet art in general and its component part, Soviet Ukraine. The longstanding work came out at the beginning of the new millennium. The general editorial board was headed by Yevhen Dobrenko. Almost all the world’s renowned cultural scientists and art critics took part in the project. Studies by B. Groys, H. Günther, V. Paperny, and many others were published. The year 2000, thanks to the publication of this powerful 1048-page edition, became the starting point for a new understanding of a seemingly long-known problem. The author investigated the problem of totalitarian art not only from the point of view of classical art criticism, but also from the historical, political, economic, and sociocultural plane. This is not the first time that a study of the dual, interconnected situation in the dialogue

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<sup>5</sup> Golomstock I. *Totalitarian Art* / I. Golomstock. – Moscow: Galart, 1994. – 296 p.

between government + society on the one hand and the artist on the other has been made.

The late XX – early XXI century was marked by a large number of materials that studied the postwar period in the art of Ukraine. In addition to the usual descriptive genre of works of art, there are analytical explorations of domestic and foreign scientists, who are quite close to understanding the leading problem. It is about a non-free society and about the pressure of overt and covert pressure of the authorities on the artist. This is facilitated by the use of declassified archives of the Committee for State Security and creative unions. The new data provide in-depth analytical analyses and a broader base of sources. In addition to traditional stories about the creative path of individual artists, art research has opened up entire layers of hidden history. For the first time, an analysis is made of the characteristic changes in the relationship of the cultural field with socio-political practice. The explanation of the nature of the public policy influence on the fine arts helps to understand and, most importantly, explain the actions of the creative personality in a totalitarian Ukrainian society. These are culturological materials by O. Avramenko, S. Bilokon, M. Vavrukh, V. Danylenko, M. Danileiko, O. Holubets, B. Horyn, B. Lobanovsky, V. Manin, Yu. Markin, O. Morozov, O. Ripko, V. Ruban, O. Rohotchenko, I. Smyrnova, L. Smyrna, G. Skliarenko, M. Protas, O. Lahutenko, O. Fedoruk, Ye. Shymchuk, R. Yatsiv et al.

**Connection of research with curriculum.** This study is written in the context of a course of lectures “Socialist Realism and Totalitarianism” which the author gives according to the state curriculum to graduate students of the Modern Art Research Institute of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine. As a result of communication with graduate students, the author concludes that the weak awareness of the young generation of culturologists-and-art critics regarding the history of Ukrainian fine arts in 1930-1980s leads to incorrect interpretation of many problems that occurred during this period. The failure of teachers to explain artistic problems from the point of view of social policy has shown the need to explain both known and unknown to the public facts from the history of national art. The next global problem was the rejection by postgraduate students of postwar art history as they consider it unnecessary material for today’s culturologist-curator of art projects. Such conclusions were made by students as a result of almost zero knowledge of the history of the period. By contrast, explanation of

the causes and consequences, known and little-known facts from the artistic life of 1930–1980s, the application of formative modification of stylistic strategies and clarification of the harm of the actual application of the method of socialist realism as the correct, followed by the implementation of post-cultural reflexion, gave rise to nonconformism, artistic resistance, encouraged the expression of interest in postgraduate students. Visits to the funds of the Art Exhibition Directorate and the Kyiv Municipal City Gallery were particularly useful, as the students had an opportunity to directly study the works of the period under study. All visitors of field lectures after research of primary sources noted high professionalism of masters. After 18 lectures, students agreed that without knowledge of the history of the totalitarian period, a correct understanding of contemporary art becomes incomplete.

**Statement of basic materials.** In order to properly understand the problems faced by the fine art of the Soviet Ukraine of this period, it is first necessary to study the etymology of socialist realism in its historical dimension. The violent destruction of strong art groups in the early 1930s was a carefully thought-out act on the part of the ruling authorities. The need for a single union of professional artists, composers, and writers enabled the authorities to control the artistic intelligentsia. The use and strengthening of socialist realism as a creative method made it impossible for dissidents to resist. Isolated cases of resistance ended tragically in the pre-war and postwar period. Until the 1960s, there were virtually no disagreements with official cultural doctrine. The fear instilled by the ideology of the time paralyzed society. The situation changed in the early 1970s. One could not hope for an objective assessment of the problems of totalitarian times, but the fact is indisputable that conversations and reflections began in the workshops, editorial offices, kitchens and even lectures at the Art Institute about the events of the turbulent thirties, of heavy military years and frightened forties and fifties.

Powerful services of the KGB, the committee in charge of state security, fought against “dissidents.” The state program of communication between the government and creative unions has developed and approved programs of relations. “Reliable” artists were elected to the high and even middle union leadership, who had to cooperate with the KGB. Today, for the younger generation of scientists, this may seem like a frame from a horror movie, but for the 1970s, the picture was quite real. Creative unions were officially called the front line of ideology and, of course,

the “front liners” received meticulous attention. Political party and Komsomol organizations, whose leaders had to communicate with state security officers, report on the general mood and personally on the members of the organization, had strong state support in the fight against dissenters. They also performed special assignments received from curators. Due to the fact that the number of artists who were not communists or Komsomol members remained meager, almost the entire composition of the organization was under control.

After high-profile cases against dissenting dissident and nationally conscious artists, most of whom ended in prison, in the early 1970s, by the middle of the decade, pressure on the intelligentsia in general and the arts on the whole had somewhat eased, but the truth about the Holodomor, occupation, war and the criminal actions of the authorities, of course, had not yet been discussed. Soviet propaganda was also silent about the unstable Soviet economy and politics. Few people knew about the failures in the international and domestic policy of the state.

Previously banned figures from the cultural life of the state, as well as events that were previously undesirable and sometimes even dangerous, began to be mentioned singly in the art history literature. During 1971–1972s the author of the article worked as a researcher at the Museum of Folk Architecture and Life of the Ukrainian SSR, and from 1971 to 1975 he was a student of the art department of the Kyiv State Art Institute.

Several situations are vividly recollected from those times. Thus, working in the museum, the author saw first-hand the following actions of the authorities in relation to the creative intelligentsia. In the fall of 1971, a researcher, Oles Serhiyenko, was arrested. They worked together in the village of Dorohynka, Fastiv district, Kyiv region on dismantling and transporting the three-domed wooden Cossack Baroque church to the village of Pyrohiv, where the museum was being built. Serhiyenko was accused of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism and subversive actions against the Soviet government, which was expressed in the distribution and production of banned literature. Oles Serhiyenko was put behind bars for 10 years, which he served in the penitentiary institutions of the republic. He did not distribute a single page of banned literature in the museum. At the time of his arrest, L. Serhiyenko had a three-month-old baby. The second mention of the activities of the museum at that time goes back to the disappearance of the head of the museum Kovhar (I do not remember the name). One morning, the silent,

chubby man with a moustache did not appear at work in the funds located on the territory of the Kyiv-Pechersk Historic and Cultural Reserve. At the end of the day, the museum's deputy director, Viktor Shmelev, gathered the staff of the funds and the photo lab where I was printing a photo report after another expedition and explained that Kovhar was a Ukrainian bourgeois nationalist and dissident, connected to the underground resistance movement, and that he would no longer work at the museum. The fate of the Head of the funds was lost in the current affairs of the museum, and many years later came the news that Kovhar was in a specialist hospital. Nobody saw him anymore.

Among the institute student memories of that time I remember the lectures by Peter Hovda, Olexandr Tyshchenko, Serhiy Aseev and Leonid Vladych. These teachers tried to tell students the dosed truth about the white pages of the history of Ukrainian art of the 1920s and 1960s, using the Aesopian language. Leonid Vladych (Ioan Wolf Pinhusovich Rosenberg) told especially "dangerous" information. At his lectures, students learned about the special destruction of folk crafts, the closure of the Mezhyhirya Art and Ceramics College (1923–1928), about production workshops in the village of Mezhyhirya near Kyiv, the terrible fate of Mykhailo Boychuk and his closest associates and students, namely, Sofia Nalepinska Boychuk, Vasyl Sedliar, Ivan Padalka and many other Boychukists executed by the Soviet authorities. He was the first to tell the truth to young art critics that the "Byzantine" way in the case of M. Boychuk was only a fabrication, suggested by the art critics of that time, who were already willing to cooperate with the penal authorities. In fact, the ideologues of the Soviet government were not in the least interested in Giotto's painting. The vast majority of NKVD intelligence officers were poorly educated. L. Vladych, among other things, suggested the name of the magazine, its issue and year, where a scorching editorial about M. Boychuk's school was published.

It is clear that some of the students immediately used their student membership cards and went to the University library and ordered this terrible, fateful material. It was about G. Radionov's "research" entitled "The Defeat of Boychukism and Art Education: A Letter from Ukraine." The material was published in 1938. At that time, some artists of Boychuk's circle had already been executed. On July 13, Mykhaylo Boychuk's wife, Sofia Nalepinska Boychuk, was tortured in the NKVD prison, and Ivan Padalka and Vasyl Sedliar were shot dead. Mykhailo Boychuk was tortured for

another four months. On December 11, 1937, he was shot. G. Radionov's article was probably written during the lifetime of Mykhailo Boychuk. Needless to say, the art critic knew about the fate of the executed artists.<sup>6</sup>

Later this article will be repeatedly quoted. The truth will only be remembered in the next 21st century. Yu. Zaitsev will tell the following words about the secret service, which was the sentence of the contemporaries of that time: "Probably the biggest mistake of this type was the condemnation of "Boychukism" in the forms it took in Ukrainian (and not only in Ukrainian) art criticism of 1933-1937. And the mistake was not that the criticism showed the weaknesses of the creative practice and aesthetic theory of M. Boychuk, pointed to the schematism and period look of some of his wall painting, especially the earlier ones... Maybe there wasn't such an outstanding figure as M. Boychuk, whose criticism would have such a strong resonance, in other republics. But in other republics there were also vulgar sociological errors".<sup>7</sup>

It is not for nothing that we mentioned the art critic L. Vladych, who in the early 1970s was not afraid to tell the truth to students. "Before the War, Leonid Vladych worked as a freelance journalist. The worker correspondent's creative path (as the contributors were then called) began in Dnipropetrovsk in the "Zorya" newspaper. From the beginning of 1936 he found himself in Kyiv and began to actively and fruitfully cooperate with several publishing houses at once. He writes mainly about culture. Interesting materials, written by him, are published in the columns of "Proletarskaja pravda", "Izobrazitel'noje iskusstvo", "Zhivopis i skul'ptura", "Sovetskaja Akademija". In fact, war saves the young critic from prison. 1938 was the last year of total arrests. Of course, the persecution continued, but not with such terrible intensity as it had happened a few years earlier. "We may only suppose that the Ukrainian folk art helped Ioan Berg not to die in the NKVD torture chambers. The vast majority of his materials were devoted to folk art, which contained the least political change. Before the war, brilliant stories about the work of Polina Glushchenko, Natalia Vovk, Anna Derybolot, Paraska Vlasenko, Kateryna Bilokur were published.

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<sup>6</sup> Radionov G. The Defeat of Boychukism and Art Education: A Letter from Ukraine / G. Radionov // *Iskusstvo*, 1938. – No. 5. – P. 23–28.

<sup>7</sup> Zaitsev Yu. Those who didn't keep silent / Yuriy Zaitsev // *Lviv region historical-cultural and regional natural history sketches*. – Lviv : Centr Yevropy, 1998. – P. 325–354.

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L. Vladych himself felt persecution. Together with the Uzhhorod painter Adalbert Erdeli, he was included in the group of fierce enemies – cosmopolitans who opposed the Soviet government in every possible way. “In the following periods, L. Vladych will feel the yoke of a cosmopolitan and a Ukrainian bourgeois nationalist at the same time. In the text of my dissertation paper, I found and fully quoted a disgraceful libelous invited paper about Vladych’s “atrocities.” It turns out that he made his way to the front of the Great Patriotic War in order to promote bourgeois art, namely Impressionism. In one of the conversations, the Teacher will tell me: “The war saved me from imminent doom. In the summer of 1941, the strangulation almost lingered on my neck. I waited for the arrest every day and, and, of course, every night”. Therefore, studying today the art literature of the period from the end of World War II to the victory of democratic society in the early 1990s, we must consider why the author was forced to draw such conclusions about the “single method” in Ukrainian Soviet art.

In today’s democratic society, when from the rostrum of the conference or on the pages of the magazine you can express any opinion without fear of consequences, we must not forget about the social component of past periods. Fear, which became the main emotion in society, forced artists and art critics to correct their works and statements. It is clear that currently we cannot slag off the creativity of past totalitarian periods as it is not fair. Escaping from the physical destruction in the first place, and then from moral and material ones (artist and art critic could earn a salary only in a public institution); the latter had to fulfill the “wishes” of artistic councils. Unequivocally “correct” were only the assessments of the Soviet art critics related to the art of the ruling class. Any analysis of fine arts or architecture, from the temple construction of Kievan Rus to the turn of the twentieth century, acquired primarily a political tint. Soviet-era art history is so accustomed to clichés in the coverage of historical events that rethinking and properly understanding the issue, abstracted from the former Soviet political order, remains impossible for many senior colleagues even today”.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Gohotchenko O. Realistic non-realism of the Nadezhdin family: Spectator’s Notes / Oleksiy Gohotchenko // MIST: Art, history, modernity, theory: [collection of research papers] / Modern Art Research Institute of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine. – Kyiv : Muz. Ukrayina, 2008. – Vol. 4/5. – P. 282–294., p. 122.

During the early sixties and until the second half of the eighties of the last century, quite a lot of art, cultural and historical materials were published. The vast majority were exhibition catalogs and numerous newspaper articles. Catalogs for exhibitions were printed by a special department of the Artists' Union. With regard to newspapers, it should be noted that every Soviet newspaper had a department of culture and therefore articles, essays, character sketches on artists, and information on the opening of regional, republican and all-Union exhibitions was willingly published. Another thing was the content of the article. Criticism was practically absent, as well as in the catalogs for exhibitions. Scientific collections and monographs were published less frequently. In fact, Kyiv publishing house "Mystetstvo" was the monopolist in publishing monographs on artists. On rare occasions monographs were published in the region, but these were isolated cases. Most of the monographs were of a descriptive nature.

Of course, there was no such severe censorship as in the first postwar years, but no printed material was published without the censor's permission. Art history gradually turned into literature of the descriptive genre with a story about artists. At the same time it is necessary to pay tribute to quality of art materials of the described period. The professional training of the departments of art criticism of Kyiv, Moscow, and Leningrad remained quite high. Therefore, articles, monographs, scientific papers have always been written competently. The descriptive genre saved art by giving a covert way of communicating information to the reader, which could not be done officially. The vast majority of material about artists implied subtext.

An in-depth analysis of those days model was replaced by obligatory ideological totalitarian slogans. Art criticism of the 1970s and 1980s was divided into two unequal poles. Official art criticism was the priority, while all the rest of art studies were ranked lower. There were few official contributors who owned the palm of victory. It has become clear nowadays that the development, suggested by the official art criticism didn't benefit either the realm of art criticism, or other forms of fine art.

Multi-page art texts were permeated with declarations and quotations from the works of Soviet leaders. Quotes served as a life jacket, making the material passable. Thus, an artist who glorified non-existent events in fictional history worked in tandem with the same dishonest art critic.

The leading themes of art research were works of domestic artists, made accordingly in compliance with the method of socialist realism.

The main and desirable topics of art texts were studies of works by artists, which were made according to the principles of the leading artistic method – socialist realism.

The vast majority of them described works that received positive feedback from art councils or government orders, the fate of which was clear in advance. Such monumental, sculptural, graphic, and pictorial works were ideologically correct. That is, the study and description of this kind of work did not carry any risks for the art critic.

In most of the cases the contemporary young scientists – culturologists, philosophers, and art critics – have a wrong impression of the artistic life of the postwar period. First of all, a meager amount of truthful information is revealed. The leading line of today's vision of the events from 70 years ago supports the version of total artistic totalitarianism. This vision is only partially true. Of course, the artist was in the grip of power, but artistic life demonstrated its cultural component by constantly evolving.

The Iron Curtain kept the state fenced off from foreign information. However, gaps remained. Information about the artistic life of the foreign world leaked through magazines, postcards and books that entered the territory of the republic from Western Ukraine and the Baltic republics.

Members of the Artists' Union had the right not attend work every day, as the rest of people. The great advantage of this action was that the artist was not considered a freeloader, to whom the authority assigned a precinct policeman to look after an indiscreet individual.

It should be said that the official order, although extremely important for the artist, as the system of private orders was almost non-existent and no one had ever heard of private galleries, was still not central in the lives of most artists. Apart from the work on the orders of the art fund and the orders for the republican or all-Union exhibitions, which were the basis of the artist's income, the workshops were bustling with life. Works of art were produced, the lion's share of which did not get to exhibitions. Such works were not mentioned by art critics in their research.

A large array of works of art that were not identified as official (those that did not get approval of the Artists' Union) remained unnoticed by critics. Art critics

have paid little attention to the other page of the creator, so as not to harm the latter and protect themselves from mandatory criticism.

Of all the union republics of the then USSR, the All-Union leadership paid the most attention to art works of Ukraine.

The sad joke of those times sounded something like this: "If nails are cut in Moscow, fingers are cut off in Kyiv." In fact, the joke was prophetic. In Moscow, Leningrad, and the Baltic republics, art exhibitions without exhibition committees were held in parallel with the official ones. This meant that artists who could not be members of the Artists' Union or artists who worked for their own pleasure without selling their works were exhibited in the houses of culture of large enterprises. And in the Arts Centres in the cities of Dzintari, Mayar, Senezh, where artists from all the union republics worked in creative groups since the late 1960s, creative reports reached the level of European art. Representatives of the official Union did not get involved in such events and did not interfere. Moreover, the "Dekorativnoye Iskusstvo" (Decorative Art) SSSR progressive magazines published sharp materials, being not afraid to tell about the exhibitions and about the artists whose works were represented there. Thus, it should be noted that in Russia the union leadership put less pressure on artists than in Ukraine. Art critics of Moscow and Leningrad studied the fine arts of the informal artistic process, accepted this process and took part in curatorial participation in exhibition activities. With regard to the Baltic republics, it should be noted that formal and informal art were closely intertwined, and many artists, especially in the field of decorative arts, generally worked in the traditions of foreign neighbors and had nothing to do with the creative method of the Soviet country.

In Ukraine, quite a different story was observed. Since late 1960s, creative groups began to work in the holiday house in Sedniv, Chernihiv region. The house belonged to the Union of Artists of Ukraine and served in the summer as a recreation center and pioneer camp, and from September to May it was a place of work for free creative groups of artists. There were cases when artists from other union republics came to Sedniv. Sedniv's exhibition-reports differed from the rest, but took place over several days and, correspondingly, did not attract a large number of visitors.

The period of the 1960s and 1980s in Ukrainian art criticism is described one-sidedly. There are almost no materials that researched and told about art

that existed in parallel with the official. This unfortunate fact led to the future conclusions of a certain group of scientists, mostly not specialists in art criticism that in the Ukrainian SSR the art was limited only to the official one. Speculation about the problem of not studying other art in the largest republic of the empire began to be successfully used by “art critics” who became dealers and sellers. When selling works by Ukrainian artists abroad, they always told the legend of the uniqueness of the product, which did not fall under the sign of the official one. In fact, this was and remains pure fraud and, correspondingly, a faulty judgement. As evidence, one can cite the fact of total interest in domestic parallel art, that is, nonconformism.

In today’s fully democratic society, along with others, there is a mistaken belief that in postwar Ukrainian art artists did not offer any resistance at all. This view can be heard from young scholars and from some representatives of the older generation. With regard to the perception of young art scholars and culturologists, one can draw the disappointing conclusion that there is a lack of awareness that resulted from poor knowledge of their teachers. As for older scientists, the problem is more acute. People who lived in Ukraine in 1960-1980s (i.e. those who were then students of art colleges, or already worked in art factories, or were representatives of the so-called “free agents”) could not help but hear about the Odessa fence exhibitions, about destruction of monumental works by Ivan Marchuk and Olga Rapay, the destruction of the Wall of Memory of Ada Rybachuk and Volodymyr Melnychenko about the creative groups of Olexandr Milovzorov in Sedniv. That is, the assertion that there was no opposition to official art and official style – socialist realism – is an unsuccessful speculation on the events from forty to fifty years ago. It’s a pity. These older people hold high positions in universities and continue to mislead the younger generation of students and graduate students. This explains the resistance to the study of art criticism of the postwar period.

In reality, the struggle against the official doctrine existed not only in the banned self-published materials, for the writing and distribution of which people were imprisoned or got under cultivation of secret services, which left an imprint on their future life and work. The hidden struggle for the disclosure of the truth was waged in official art history. The fifth and sixth volumes of the History of Ukrainian Art can serve as an example. The publication came out in 1967. For the first time in 50 years of Soviet power, the authors of the publication were

able to reveal the previously banned names of artists and even to make their works public. The general public became aware of the artists whose creativity took place in the turbulent years of the early century; but in those times it was dangerous even to mention their names. A curator from the culture department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine was appointed to the publication. One of the employees of this department was art critic Dmytro Yanko. At one of the numerous meetings at the section of criticism and art history of KONUAU (Kyiv organization of the National Union of Artists of Ukraine). D. Yanko told the audience that he had done a lot of awareness-raising activities among the employees of the department – writers, journalists, writers – so that they should vote and approve the printer's dummy. Many researchers worked on the issue. In two volumes are presented the studies of I. Vrona, P. Horbenko, F. Ernest, Ya. Zatenatsky, E. Holostenko, V. Hmuryi. Given the working conditions in a totalitarian environment, the courage of scientists is worthy of respect.

It should be noted that significant changes took place in Ukrainian art history at the turn of the XX – XXI centuries. However, foreign scientists were the first to pave the way for solving the problem. This was especially true of Russian art. Foreign scholars have mentioned Ukrainian art, but much less. A bulky album by the Englishman Matthew Bown<sup>9</sup>, may serve as an example, as it mentioned several Ukrainian names among the thousands of reproductions of Soviet art of the postwar period, namely M. Boychuk, T. Yablonska, V. Puzyrkov, V. Chekanyuk, S. Grigoriev and others. However, the interpretation of the images and comments of the Englishman were in marked contrast to the Russian and Ukrainian researchers. M. Bown saw in Tetyana Yablonska's "Bread" painting not a cheer of patriotic sentiment, but sexual dissatisfaction of the main characters – women collective farmers, because the work told about the 1949 harvest. On the canvas, except for one non-main figure of a man, all the rest of characters are women. Soviet people understood why there were no men at harvest in the fourth postwar year. The answer was quite obvious. Some died on the fronts of the war; others were in the Stalinist camps. It is evident, that Tetyana Yablonskaya wanted to convey a different truth to the audience. The "Bread" painting glorified the courage of a Soviet woman who replaced her husband in hard work, but kept the harvest. The work was very

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<sup>9</sup> Bown M. *Socialists Realist Painting* / M. Bown. – London, 1998. – 506 p.

popular, reproduced in many magazines and textbooks, replicated in hundreds of copies at art plants and initiated similar works in other union republics, where artists depicted women collecting flax, cotton and other agricultural products. The artist was awarded the most prestigious at those times Stalin Prize.

The turn of 1990–2000s was marked by a series of studies by Ukrainian art critics and foreign scholars, who came close to solving the problems that existed in the artistic processes of the postwar USSR and Ukraine. These works used a much broader source base and were certainly more objective. The materials contained analytical analysis and explored not only the work of individual artists, but also traced the characteristic changes in the very nature of the relationship of art with public policy. These are art studies by O. Avramenko, S. Bilokon, M. Vavrukh, V. Danylenko, M. Danyleyko, O. Holubets, B. Horyn, B. Lobanovsky, V. Manin, Yu. Markin, O. Morozov, O. Ripka, V. Ruban, I. Smyrnova, L. Smyrna, G. Skliarenko, M. Protas, O. Lahutenko, O. Fedoruk, E. Shymchuk, R. Yatsiv et al.

In recent years, several thorough Ukrainian monographs have been published, the texts and published illustrations of which radically change the perception of a modern student of culturology or art critic about the events of the totalitarian past.

In 2017, Lesya Smyrna published the “Century of Nonconformism in Ukrainian Visual Art” monograph. Despite a number of publications by other authors relating to artists’ resistance, L. Smyrna explains in detail from a scientific point of view the nature of protononconformism, classical nonconformism, depressurization of classical nonconformism, “mature nonconformism” and postnonconformism. The 459-page art study also explains the nature, dynamics, chronology, and geography of a complex sociocultural process. The scientist defended her doctoral dissertation on the topic of domestic artistic resistance, where she explained in detail the history of the emergence, development and assertion of the processes of struggle of people of artistic professions with the official Soviet system. The author’s numerous interviews with the parties to the process vividly confirm her doctrine.

In 2018, the Modern Art Research Institute of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine with the financial support of the Zenko Foundation published a monograph by Oleksii Rohotchenko “Art History: Reflections and Life.” It is a work that combines articles from previous years and new research on the history

of national art in the 1920s and 2010s. The main goal of the author is to convey to the reader the hidden truth about the real development of Ukrainian fine arts in the context of socio-political influences of the totalitarian state on the artist. The study acquaints the reader with little-known and unknown facts from artistic life, showing the actions of artists from a different angle and, most importantly, explaining the nature of what was drawn or sculpted in times of totalitarian arbitrariness. The author was himself a member of the art society and therefore the memories of the actions that took place around the Art Institute, museums, the Directorate of Art Exhibitions, the Union of Artists of Ukraine and creative groups are true evidence of past history.

The titanic work of the Lviv scientist and researcher Vasyl Kosiv resulted in the completion and defense in 2019 of the doctoral dissertation. In the same year, the world saw the “Ukrainian identity in graphic design in 1945-1989” monograph. The material, analyzed in the study, is unique. It was collected by the author from the original sources, domestic and foreign posters and during interviews with direct participants in the process, which makes the study even more convincing. The social value of such a work is difficult to overestimate. The research proposed by the author dispels the legend planted by special services that there is no resistance, and most importantly about the attempts of postwar artists not to show and apply the Ukrainian national identity in their works. V. Kosiv’s monograph proves the opposite.

The art critic Svitlana Rohotchenko demonstrates a personal creative path of the master on the example of the creative path of one of the Ukrainian artists, painter Kostiantyn Lytvyn. The monographic study “Kostiantyn Lytvyn” is published in Lutsk. This is an art album, issued for the 80th anniversary of the artist. The story of the life and creative path of the artist starting from the first postwar years, when the boy began to paint, study at the Kyiv Art Institute in the early 1960s under the guidance of Volodymyr Kostasnyi, Oleksii Shovkunenko, Sergiy Grigoriev, Tetyana Yablonska, the period of formation and maturation of the artist until his election as Chairman of the Rivne Regional Organization of the National Union of Artists of Ukraine, serves as an honest picture of the life of an extraordinary person, his perception of a realistic method of depicting reality at the beginning of his career, further fascination with the austere style, internal resistance to official doctrine and, finally, the rejection of the principles of socialist realism in the decline of years.

Monographs by Tetiana Myronova “Coordinates of creating an artistic image in Ukrainian art” (2020), Marina Protas “Art of Postculture” (2020), Maryna Yur “Metamodel of Ukrainian painting” (2020) are probably the latest thorough publications that study in detail the problems of development and formation of Ukrainian art from the postwar period to the present day.

**Conclusions.** Problems in the interpretation of cultural paths of development of states have always existed, exist now and probably will exist in future periods. Ukraine is not an exception to this rule, and therefore different visions and interpretations of artistic problems, of course, exist in our country. Different readings of the same facts, different interpretations of events and their consequences is a normal process. Based on this conclusion, we believe it necessary to document and convincingly prove the version of the author’s vision on the issue. Current subdivision of scholars into several groups regarding the perception or non-perception of the problems of development of Ukrainian culture in general and its fine arts in the postwar period in particular, led to a confrontation of views, when the same facts sound fundamentally different. The artificial division of the Arts into culturology and classical art criticism is in fact an act of speculation by a certain group of scientists. Lack of knowledge in the field of art history leads to the declaration of versions of the optional study of the history of national art in the 1920s and 1980s. This period is called the time of totalitarianism and according to a group of scientists does not require in-depth study. From our point of view, this is a total mistake. The problem is much more dangerous than a simple misunderstanding of the socio-cultural component of certain historical periods. From a purely professional issue, when ignorance of the subject gives rise to the following incorrect and inaccurate interpretation of the historical process to a dishonest interpretation of acts and events that took place in the artistic society under the pressure of fear and intimidation of artists, the younger generation of students – future scientists – are offered the versions, which are negligible and not consistent with reality. Ignorance of the true history of postwar art exposes students to a misunderstanding of the processes taking place in contemporary art. Versions that socialist realism, the Soviet style, was the only creative method refute the events of postwar art life in relation to national identity and non-resistance to official state art. In this way, the exploits of a small but powerful group of artists who fought against state structures go unnoticed, and their struggle, which often

ends in imprisonment, is insignificant. The author's own experience in lecturing on the fine arts of the postwar period to graduate students of the Modern Art Research Institute of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine proves that students have little knowledge of the problems of artistic life that took place in the 1930–1980s. At the same time, the students confirmed that “Socialist Realism and Totalitarianism” academic discipline was interesting and necessary. They began to react differently to many artistic problems in today's life. The number of modern professional research published and released, albeit small, but quite sufficient for the study of postwar art, allows the author to draw (to the best of his beliefs) honest professional conclusions.

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