sciendo

Art History & Criticism / Meno istorija ir kritika 20
ISSN 1822-4555 (Print), ISSN 1822-4547 (Online)
https://doi.org/10.2478/mik-2024-0001

Andriy LESIV
The Ethnology Institute of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine, Art studies department, Lviv, Ukraine

DEPICTING THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD'S END: ICONOGRAPHY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE "ROLLING UP THE SKY" SCENE IN THE UKRAINIAN ICONS OF "THE LAST JUDGMENT" OF THE 15th–17th CENTURIES

Summary. The article is dedicated to the iconography, development and symbolism of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene – a fragment of the complex multi-scene composition of "The Last Judgment" icons. The study based on selected icons of "The Last Judgment" from the 15th–17th centuries originating from the territory of Halychyna (Galicia) in the West of Ukraine and from the modern territories of Poland and Slovakia. Evolution of the "Rolling up the Sky" motif and traced changes in the compositions of the "Last Judgment" icons from 15th and 16th–17th centuries determine the novelty of the article. The motif's composition in the icons of the 15th century is characterised by its simplicity and minimalism, on the other hand, since the 16th century, the scene has been actively developed, and new elements appear in it. An important new feature of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene from 16th century is depiction of the zodiac symbols: four Ukrainian icons of "The Last Judgment" dated to the 16th century with depictions of the zodiac symbols are analysed. Evolution of the symbolic image of God the Father, or Ancient of Days from the formal symbolic depiction as shining disc to the image of grey-haired old man is traced.

Key words: iconography, Ukrainian icons, Last Judgment, Celestial luminaries, zodiac signs.

INTRODUCTION

"The Last Judgment" is one of the most elaborated compositions in Christian art. The image is unique in its complexity and symbolism. Its iconography is based on the eschatological beliefs of Christians about the afterlife fate of the human soul. It is also based on ideas of the Parousia – the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the Lord's Last Judgment.[1] In most Christian churches, "The Last Judgment" composition was placed on the western wall, so it was the last image that the faithful saw when they left the church after the liturgy. Such an arrangement was supposed to remind the faithful that all their actions and deeds – both good and bad – will have consequences at the end of the world, when Christ will come to judge the living and the dead.

"The Last Judgment" icon include several iconographic motifs. They are characterised by a wide figurative narrative and special Christian didacticism. Each of the motifs deserves the special attention of researchers and a separate study. One of these motifs is the "Rolling up the Sky", to the study of which this article is devoted.

To date, a specific art-historical study of the "Rolling up the Sky" motif has not yet been conducted. Theme-related scientific works relate to "The Last Judgment" icons in general, mostly are focusing rather on the historical aspect of the image. In Ukrainian art history, study of "The Last Judgment" icons begun in the 20th century and coincides with the period of formation of the first museum collections of Ukrainian sacred art. Ukrainian scientists Pavlo Zholtovski[2], Dmytro Krvavych and Volodymyr Ovsiychuk[3] touched on the study of "The Last Judgment" icons in general, but not particularly the "Rolling up the Sky" motif. Zholtovski mentioned "The Last Judgment" compositions in the context of the description of monumental paintings of wooden churches in Western Ukraine and Transcarpathia. Krvavych and Ovsiychuk carry out a historical review of the origin and development

Open Access. © 2024 Andriy LESIV, published by Sciendo. BY-NC-ND This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution alone 3.0 License.

of the "Last Judgment" plot in European art. In recent years, several publications devoted to the study of Ukrainian "The Last Judgment" icons of the 15th–19th centuries have appeared. The studying of the "Last Judgment" icons was professionally handled by Oleg Sydor. The register of icons of the "Last Judgment" included in the collection of the National Museum in Lviv named after Andrey Sheptytskyi, worked out and published by Oleg Sydor in 2001,[4] as well as the exhibition prepared by him, became the first and extremely important steps towards a systematic study of these icons. In the paper "The world of astronomy in the images of Ukrainian art"[5] Sydor studies depiction of astronomical images in monuments of ancient Ukrainian art. In this context, the author mentions depiction of the Celestial Luminaries in the "Rolling up the Sky" motif. Researcher Marta Fedak in her paper "Astronomical motifs in Ukrainian icon painting"[6] also analyses the astronomical motifs in Ukrainian icon painting but focuses on an attempt to systematise astral symbols and to explain their iconographic and theological significance. The author pays special attention to the icons of the Last Judgment, where the idea of the heavenly sphere of that time is most widely revealed. Fedak alternately describes such elements as the mandorla, the celestial sphere, images of the sun, the moon, the stars, as well as astrological symbols. Maria Helytovych systematically refers to individual icons of the "Last Judgment" in her scientific works. The author analyses[7] the "Last Judgment" icon from Mshanets, and based on its stylistic and artistic features, refers it to the group of icons of the second half of the 15th century, which mainly come from churches in the villages of Vanivka and Zdvyzhen in the Lemkivshchyna region. According to the researcher, the master of the Mshanets icon belonged to the milieu of icon painters from Vanivka and Zdvyzhen. In another paper[8] Helytovych focuses on the "Last Judgment" icon of 1662 from Medenychi, which represents a group of icons dating from the 17th century. The icon has not yet been practically described in the literature. Helytovych emphasises the unique features of the icon, including the image of God the Father, placed in the upper part of the composition, the image of the Queen of Sheba – a female figure in a crown with raised hands, the iconography of the Resurrection of the Dead motif, which is significantly different from early Byzantine icons, and other features. However, the author does not stop at the analysis of the "Rolling up the Sky" motif. Over the past twenty years, researcher John-Paul Himka has published several articles and monographs devoted to Ukrainian icons of "The Last Judgment": the most prominent work in the field of study to date is his monograph "Last Judgement Iconography in the Carpathians".[9] In Himka's work, he "examines more than a hundred images of the Last Judgment – on frescoes, icons on boards and canvas, on the walls of wooden churches, in order to reconstruct the communities and cultures that created them."[10] At the same time, the author still focuses on the historical analysis of the iconography of the "Last Judgment", leaving art history issues to specialists, as well as religious studies together with cultural sociology. Professor Himka is a specialist in national studies, and goes into the smallest details to discuss geopolitical and national terminology. The author proposed to call the subject of his research "Carpathian icons" of the Last Judgment, which, however, do not include Bukovyna, and therefore are "Ukrainian Carpathian icons", the specific nature of which the author undertakes to convince the reader through his research, which he does throughout the three main chapters.

However, none of the above-mentioned scholars focused their attention purely on the motif of "The Rolling up the Sky", except for the fragmentary appeal of Marta Fedak and Oleg Sydor in the context of researching the depiction of astronomical motifs in icon painting. The beginning of author's study of "The Rolling up the Sky" scene and some of the ideas were briefly presented in a publication from 2017.[11]

THE OBJECT AND METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The object of research is selected icons of "The Last Judgment" from the 15th–17th centuries

originating from the territory of Halychyna (Galicia) in the West of Ukraine, and from the modern territories of Poland and Slovakia. The geographical area of research is justified by the fact that icons from Halychyna are a unique phenomenon that developed on the border of Eastern and Western Christian iconography, and they constitute an original separate layer in the history of art.[12] The chronological limits of the study are determined by the period from the oldest icons preserved today, which date from the 15th century to the finale acceptance of the baroque principles in Ukrainian sacred art, which brought significant changes in the style of iconography.

"The Rolling up the Sky" scene is a key motif that reveals the entire chronology of the Last Judgement. The purpose of the article is to trace the development of the composition of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene, to analyse its iconographic, stylistic, compositional, and artistic features, and to explore its unique symbolism. Special attention is devoted to the study of non-Christian symbols and images in the plot's iconography, such as zodiac signs, depiction of the planets and celestial bodies, mythological images, etc.

The purpose and objectives of the research led to the use of an integrated approach to the research object. In total 12 selected "The Last Judgment" icons of the 15th and 16th–17th centuries were studied. The basis of the methodological apparatus is systematic comparative analysis of the iconography, iconology, symbolism, formal and stylistic features.

MAIN PART

The hierarchy of the symbolic representation of good and evil in religious art is based on the principle of division into right and left. The entire composition of "The Last Judgment" is built according to the principle of division into two parts: to the right of Christ – good and the righteous, to the Christ's left – evil and sinners. In the same way, the celestial bodies are depicted, according to tradition, with the Sun depicted to the right of Christ and the Moon to the left.

The Sun and the Moon in various cultures have become the personification of the usual course of life, when there is a simple and clear order: the same sky above the head every day and night, cyclicality, and confidence that it will always be like this. Here we can understand the drama of the apocalyptic disruption of this order: the Last Judgment begins with the collapsing of the sky, showing the sign of the ending. This is a violation of the world order, the end of the world.

The scene "Rolling up the Sky" marks a symbolic beginning of the Last Judgment. It is the starting point of all the following events. The plot is based on the biblical fragments of Isaiah's prophecy: "All the stars in the sky will be dissolved and the heavens rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shrivelled figs from the fig tree." (Isaiah 34:4).[13] And the Revelation: "The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place." (Revelation 6:14).[14] Separate mentions of the sky and celestial luminaries, and their disappearance or disruption of the natural order as a symbol of the beginning of important events, can be found in other sacred texts.

The composition of "The Last Judgment" icon is built on the principle of vertical symmetry and the registers of the subjects depicted in order from top to bottom. The scene of "Rolling up the Sky" in the oldest known Ukrainian icons of "The Last Judgment" from the 15th century (from the villages Mshanets, Poliana, Vanivka) is placed in the centre of the highest register and opens the chronology of the Last Judgment.

The scene of "Rolling up the Sky" was brought to Ukrainian icon painting by the Byzantine tradition. However, in the Byzantine examples of "The Last Judgment" icons it is compositionally interpreted in a different way and placed according to a different principle from that of ancient Ukrainian icons.[15] In "The Last Judgment" icon from

the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai from the second half of 12th century (Fig. 1), the scene of "Rolling up the Sky" is placed in the right part of the composition (to the left of Christ) in the third register – after depicted angels (first register), and the Saviour with the composition of "Deisis" and apostles (second register). The "Rolling up the Sky" in the Sinai icon depicts a single angel holding a half-twisted scroll (a symbol of the sky) with the personifications of the Sun, the Moon and the stars depicted on it. The angel is shown in a dynamic position, so the impression of movement is tangibly conveyed. A similar iconography of the scene "Rolling up the Sky" is usual for the Byzantine tradition and can be found also in other examples of "The Last Judgment" composition, for example, in the mosaic of the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta in Torcello (beginning of the 12th century), or in the frescoes of the St. Cyril's Church in Kyiv (12th century).

The fresco of St. Cyril's Church in Kyiv (Fig. 2) is the oldest known depiction of the "Rolling up the Sky" plot on Ukrainian soil. The scene "Angel rolling the Sky" located in the narthex, decorates the pylon of the southern pillar. This dynamic, exquisite scene is a masterpiece of ancient Kyivan Rus' monumental painting. The composition is filled with high spiritual tension and drama: an angel in dynamic motion twists the scroll of heaven, symbolising the end of the world and the Lord's Last Judgment. The movement of the angel is conveyed with great skill, and the pinkish tones of his cloth perfectly harmonise with the dark blue background of the composition.

"Rolling up the Sky" as the central composition of the upper register of "The Last Judgment" appears in the fresco decoration of the Scrovegni chapel, completed by Giotto in 1305. This scene, unlike the Byzantine examples, depicts two angels symmetrically located on two sides. Angels from both sides of the composition are depicted rolling up the "heavenly cloth" into a scroll. On one side (to the right of Christ) the personification of the Sun is depicted, with the Moon on the other. The register below depicts the ranks of angels, and next register lower – the Saviour and the apostles. "Rolling up the Sky" clearly stands out in the composition: firstly, due to the architectural features of the chapel, there is a window with a semi-circular ending in the centre of the wall, on both sides of which are depicted angels that are twisting the sky; secondly, the register of this composition is proportionally larger than the rest of the registers, so the scene becomes visually highlighted. The celestial luminaries are represented in the form of rounded anthropomorphic faces – this tradition goes back to antiquity, from where it passed into Byzantine and Western European art.[16]

The twisting of the sky like a scroll by two angels from two ends is a composition that has become typical of Ukrainian icons of the "The Last



Fig. 1. "Angel rolling the Sky." Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai, the second half of 12th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Image source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Last_Judgement_Sinai_12th_century.jpg



Fig. 2. "Angel rolling the Sky." Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from the St. Cyril's Church in Kyiv, 12th century. Fresco. Image source: https://localhistory.org.ua/rubrics/painting/iangol-suvii-i-chas/

Judgment". In addition to icons from the West of Ukraine, it is also common for Northern Kyivan Rus' art, for example, the Novgorod's "The Last Judgment" icons from the 15th century. However, for this part of Kyivan Rus', the typical placement of the scene "Rolling up the Sky" was the left part of the upper register, next to the image of the scene "The Fall of Angels".[17]

Therefore, the arrangement of the "Rolling up the Sky" image in the centre of the upper register is typical of the Ukrainian icons "The Last Judgment". The oldest icons of "The Last Judgment" known today are three from the 15th century – from the villages Mshanets, Poliana and Vanivka. They depict a similar interpretation of the scene "Rolling up the Sky", although the details of the compositions are not identical.

On the icon from Mshanets (collection of Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, Fig. 3) the scene "Rolling up the Sky" is shown succinctly: a blue scroll, which is symmetrically twisted from two sides by two angels. The Sun, Moon, and stars are depicted on the sky's scroll. On the edges of the blue sky's canvas the inscriptions in white are visible, harmoniously and elegantly framing the composition. Celestial luminaries are depicted in a laconic stylised way – two spheres, red (Sun) and white (Moon), with three parallel rays from both objects pointed towards the composition's centre. There are no faces or other graphic elements on the luminaries that could personify the images of the Sun and the Moon. The stars are graphically stylised: three or four dark lines crossed radially.

The icon from Poliana (collection of the National Museum in Kraków) contains a similar composition "Rolling up the Sky" to the Mshanets' icon – the dark blue sky's scroll is being twisted from two sides by two angels; the Sun, Moon, and stars are depicted on its background. There are stylistic differences in the details' interpretation: the Sun and the Moon are personified, they contain schematic linear images of faces in sideview; the stars are painted as more complex in comparison to the Mshanets' icon: not with a dark outline, but with a golden-ochre colour spot. As in the Mshanets'



Fig. 3. "Rolling up the Sky." Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from Mshanets, 15th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. Inv. No 34505/I-1181. Photo courtesy of The Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, 2019



Fig. 4. "Rolling up the Sky." Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from Vanivka, 15th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. Inv. No 34503/I-1179. Photo courtesy of The Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, 2019

icon, the celestial luminaries have three parallel rays directed towards the centre of the sky scroll. The sky's background has no additional decorative elements, unlike the Mshanets' composition. The sky scroll on the Poliana icon is depicted slightly curved in the form of an arch, while on the icon from Mshanets the sky scroll with its upper edge completely adjoins the edge of the icon, and only the lower edge has a slight curvature.

The third known icon from the 15th century – "The Last Judgment" from Vanivka (collection of Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, Fig. 4) shows the image of "Rolling up the Sky" like the previous two icons in terms of composition, however, it is the most different from an artistic and stylistic point of view. The blue cloth of the sky, slightly curved in an arc (like the composition of the Poliana icon), it is twisted symmetrically from two sides into a scroll by two angels. On the sky scroll the celestial luminaries are depicted – the Sun, the Moon, and the stars. The peculiarity of this composition is the stylistic interpretation of the celestial objects. The stars are shown like crosses with four dots between the arms, such crosses cover the entire sky creating a pattern ornament and are painted not in dark or ochre paint, but in white, creating a shimmering effect. The Sun and the Moon are also painted with certain stylistic differences. They both still have three parallel rays pointed towards the sky's centre, but proportions between the luminary's spheres and its rays are different: here the rays are much shorter, and the spheres are bigger in diameter. The Sun and the Moon are not personified, there are no decorative elements or faces painted on them. An unusual detail is that the placement of the luminaries is not canonical – the Moon is located to the right of Christ, and the Sun is to the left, thus, the traditional luminary's placement is mirrored.

The "Rolling up the Sky" scene on the icon from Vanivka creates the impression of the most artistically sophisticated of the three known icons of the 15th century. Its bold composition shimmers with a pattern of crosses and stars, and the expressive forms of celestial bodies are clearly distinguished against a richly ornamented background.

A significant part of icons of "The Last Judgment" known today are from the 16th and 17th centuries. Their composition in comparison with the icons of the 15th century undergoes certain changes. It expands, becomes more complex, and decorative elements become elaborate. The "Rolling up the Sky" scene is also drastically changed.

"The Last Judgment" icon from Bahnuvate, Turka district (collection of Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, Fig. 5), dating to the middle of the 16th century, survived to our time not completely: one of the three boards of the wooden panel was lost, only the central and left boards of the composition survived. The "Rolling up the Sky" scene survived almost completely, as it is mostly placed on the central board. Traditional composition details of 15th century icons are still visible here: an arched strip of the sky, which is twisted into a scroll by two angels. The angels themselves were painted on the two side boards of the wooden panel, so the image of only one of them survived. But this is the composition's only similarity with previous icons. On the sky scroll in the centre, there is a shining



Fig. 5. "Rolling up the Sky". Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from Bahnuvate, 16th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. Inv. No 36454/I-2122. Photo courtesy of The Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, 2019

golden-ochre disc. A bright red octagonal star is painted on it, formed by two crossed squares with concave sides. On both sides of the central image are two large eight-pointed stars depicted linearly in black paint. Next, symmetrically, from the two edges of the stylised sky, the Sun and the Moon are depicted. Their shapes resemble two Cyrillic capital letters, Є and Э. These two luminaries mirror each other, creating the impression of flying in opposite directions. The images of the luminaries include graphic elements of personified faces.

The motif of a shining disc in the centre of "Rolling up the Sky" scene has appeared in Ukrainian icons of the Last Judgment since the 16th century. This image is a symbol of God the Father, the Ancient of Days. The appearance of this image coincides with the origination of the Holy Trinity depiction in "The Last Judgment" iconography. Previously, on the icons of the 15th century, as in the canonical Byzantine compositions of the Last Judgment, the Saviour in Glory was depicted in the centre of the upper register, that is, Christ surrounded by angels and Mary and John – "The Deisis". There were no images of God the Father and the Holy Spirit on Ukrainian icons of "The Last Judgment" until the 16th century. Only in the 16th century the image of God the Father (the Ancient of Days) appears in the "Rolling up the Sky" scene, in the next register below, the image of the Saviour in Glory, and below it, on the Prepared Throne (The Hetoimasia) appears the image of the Holy Spirit in the symbolic form of a dove. On the icon from Bahnuvate, the image of Ancient of Days is abstract and symbolic, but in later icons it will be developed: first an inscription will appear indicating whose symbol is



Fig. 6. "Rolling up the Sky." Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from Borshchovychi, beginning of the 17th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. Inv. No 4341/I-1376. Photo courtesy of The Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, 2019

depicted, and later the image of God the Father will be transformed into a more familiar personified image of a grey-haired old man.

"The Last Judgment" icon from Borshchovychi in the Lviv region (collection of Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, Fig. 6), dated to the beginning of the 17th century, was conserved as incomplete: only the central board of the wooden panel survived, but the scene of "Rolling up the Sky" was almost fully preserved. As in the icon from Bahnuvate, here the scroll of heaven is completely located on the central board of the base. Two angels previously painted on the two side boards now are lost. In the centre of the sky, there is a large disc – the image of the Ancient of Days, on which the Tetragrammaton (יהוה) and the words "God" in Greek (ΘΕΟΣ) and Latin (DEVS) are written in three rows. The disc has six rays pointed to the right and to the left. The golden stars, painted with noticeable respect to the details, are visible on the sky's background, as well as personifications of the Sun (right) and the Moon (left). The Sun holds noticeable baroque stylistic influences: a golden disc with a face depicted on it, numerous wavy rays that diverge radially from the centre. The image of the Moon is partially lost, but the same baroque stylistic influences can be traced, the luminary is crescent shaped with an anthropomorphic face depicted.

"The Last Judgment" icon by master Dimitry from The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary church in Dolyna, Ivano-Frankivsk region (collection of Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, Fig. 7), dating to the 1560s,[18] shows an unusual iconography of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene. In this icon, we observe several radical innovations at once. The first and most noticeable innovation is the division of the sky into two separate parts. If previously the typical image of the sky was an elongated rectangular shape, which was symmetrically twisted from two sides by two angels, then in the icon from Dolyna, this rectangular canvas of the sky is split in the middle into two separate equal parts. These two parts are twisted separately from both edges, forming two separate scrolls mirroring each other. The central symbolic image of the Ancient of Days in the form of a disc has been moved beyond the sky scrolls: it is in the middle between them, moved down to the second register. On the disc an inscription is placed – "the Ancient of Days" written in old Ukrainian. The scrolls of the sky are coloured in a light greenish blue colour from the front sides, and bright red on the back sides which can be seen along the perimeter and the wrapped edges of the planes. On the Christ's right scroll there is the Sun with expressive anthropomorphic details – carefully drawn eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth, elements of chiaroscuro modelling. The image of the Moon is depicted on the Christ's left scroll. The Moon has a complex multi-faceted shape, with the traditional crescent moon shape in the foreground, a male head in sideview with elaborate facial details in the background, and another horn of the moon in the third background, behind the face. The Moon's face and background horn is depicted with chiaroscuro modelling elements.



Fig. 7. "Rolling up the Sky". Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon by master Dimitry from The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary church in Dolyna, Ivano-Frankivsk region, dated to the 60s of the 16th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. Inv. No 12381/I-1451. Photo courtesy of The Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, 2019

Another unique feature of "Rolling up the Sky" scene from the Dolyna's "Last Judgment" is the zodiac symbols on two sky scrolls – six symbols on each scroll. Zodiac symbols in icon painting are extremely rare. Researcher Marta Fedak notes[19] that knowledge about the sky and celestial bodies in the 16th century was firmly based on astronomical maps of the sky, where, in addition to celestial bodies, the signs of the zodiac were also marked. Zodiacal symbols as an element of the celestial sphere are described in "*An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*" by John of Damascus.[20]

The combination of zodiacal symbolism and the Christian iconographic canon is a rather extraordinary case. Zodiacal symbolism most likely came to Ukrainian iconography from the Balkan countries, where the inclusion of images from astrology or philosophy into Christian iconographic subjects was a rather common phenomenon.[21] As an example, we can cite the Bulgarian icon painting of the 15th–17th centuries. On the western facade of the Saint Paraskevi of Iconium Church in Vukovo (1598), fragments of the composition "The Last Judgment" with the "Rolling up the Sky" scene were preserved, which included the zodiacal symbols. There are quite a lot of references to zodiacal images in the wall paintings of churches and monasteries in Bulgaria in the 15th–17th centuries, for example – the monastery in Boboshevo, or the wall paintings of the Dragalevtsi Monastery (1476), where the "Rolling up the Sky" scene with all twelve zodiacal symbols is included in the monumental composition of "The Last Judgment". In addition to the mentioned zodiacal symbols, the mural in Dragalevtsi contains several more interesting and unconventional motifs. The scene depicts the sky's canvas being rolled up by an angel. Three winged figures floating freely through the sky in boats are depicted on the scroll, and between them are twelve zodiac symbols. The Sun and the Moon are depicted from two opposite sides of the symbolic Sky, with human faces painted with bright red and blue light colours on them. Also, in the composition there are images of the Anemoi: Boreas (north wind), Apeliotes (east wind), Notus (south wind) and Zephiros (west wind). This is a very rare case in Bulgarian art history when the theological essence of icon painting overlapped with cosmological mechanics and pagan symbolism. The depicted winged figures floating through the heavens symbolise Aphrodite, Hermes, and Kronos (Chronos), or, according to Roman mythology, Venus, Mercury, and Saturn, i.e. the planets of the solar system.

In Ukrainian iconography, the zodiac symbols can be found only in "The Last Judgment" icons, in the "Rolling up the Sky" scene. Today, four Ukrainian icons of "The Last Judgment" dated to the 16th century with of the zodiacal symbols are known: from Dolyna (1560s); from Kamianka-Buzka (1587); from Radelychi (last quarter of the 16th century); and from the village of Ruska-Bystra (master Oleksii, mid-16th century). The first three icons belong to the collection of the Andrei Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, and the fourth to the collection of the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Slovakia. The Dolyna icon is the oldest among them. Here the zodiac symbols are depicted graphically, only in black with a light hatched shade. Some of the symbols are interpreted as anthropomorphic images, some as zoomorphic. The signs Leo, Taurus, Capricorn, and Aries are interpreted according to a similar scheme: the head of an animal, with a body having only front legs and ending with a pointed tail. Only certain details indicate which sign is depicted: Leo has a mane; Taurus has no horns; Capricorn and Aries differ only by their horns – Capricorn's are longer and pointed backwards; and Aries' horns are curved and pointed upwards. Sagittarius, Libra, Virgo, Aquarius, and Gemini are presented anthropomorphically, with various attributes that indicate which zodiacal sign is depicted. The signs of Scorpio and Cancer are shown as a fish, just like the sign of Pisces.

"The Last Judgment" icon from Kamianka-Buzka, dated 1587, has a similar depiction of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene to the icon from Dolyna – the same way of dividing the sky canvas into two separate scrolls. The icon has survived only partially; the painting is damaged and partially lost, but it is possible to observe the zodiac signs on the sky scrolls.

On "The Last Judgment" icon from Radelychi, dated by the last quarter of the 16th century, the "sky map" is depicted as one whole canvas, curved like an arc with twisted edges. On the surface of the sky, the Sun, the Moon, and the signs of the zodiac are depicted in a chaotic manner, each of which is placed on stylised clouds. The sign of Libra is depicted in the centre of the sky, and above it on both sides is the inscription "heavenly planets" in old Ukrainian.

The fourth known icon of "The Last Judgment" with a depiction of the zodiac signs is the icon from village of Ruska-Bystra (mid-16th century), probably authored by master Oleksii (collection of the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Slovakia). The "Rolling up the sky" scene survived partially. In the middle of the mandorla, God the Father is depicted. The Sun and the zodiac signs are shown on the right and stylised in a similar way, as on the icon from the Dolyna.[22]

The next step in developing the composition of "The Rolling up the Sky" became a depiction of God the Father in the centre of heavenly cloth as a grey-haired man with long hair and grey beard. Such iconography is presented in the "The Last Judgment" icon from Hankovychi, dated by the beginning of 17th century (collection of the National Museum in Krakow). The sky is presented here as a solid rectangular canvas of a rich cerulean blue shade, being twisted from two edges by two angels. God the Father is depicted in the centre of the sky. The image of God the Father is placed in front of a light blue mandorla with an eight-pointed star on it, formed by crossing two squares of ochre-yellow and red colours. The sides of the mandorla show doors being opened by two angels, revealing the figure of God the Father to the faithful. Next, the Sun and the Moon are placed symmetrically from the two edges of the sky. The interpretation of the celestial bodies is similar to "The Last Judgment" icon from the Dolyna, except here the Moon and the Sun are mirroring each other, and differ only in colour: the Sun is red, the Moon is white.

A similar iconography of the "Rolling up the Sky" and depiction of God the Father is in the icon of "The Last Judgment" from Stanylia (Fig. 8), from the second half of the 16th century (collection of the Andrei Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv). Here, the rectangular scroll of the sky is being rolled up by two angels. In the centre is God the Father, in a circular mandorla in front of an octagonal star. On the sides of the mandorla are two angels symbolically opening the door, revealing the figure of the Ancient of Days. What is different here from the Hankovychi icon is the door image: in the Stanylia icon, angels are holding two semicircles, which, when closed, form a perfect circle and completely close the mandorla. On both edges of the sky are personified the Sun and the Moon, painted symmetrically in the form of two silver crescents with human faces.

A kind of apogee of the development of the "Rolling up the Sky" motif's composition comes in the "The Last Judgment" icon from the village of Mala



Fig. 8. "Rolling up the Sky". Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from Stanylia, the 2nd half of the 16th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. Inv. No 36455/I-2123. Photo courtesy of The Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, 2019

Horozhanna in Lviv Oblast, from the end of the 16th century (collection of Lviv Art Gallery "Olesko Castle" in Olesko, Fig. 9). The "Rolling up the Sky" scene is placed on the entire upper register of the icon and includes, in addition to the already traditional images of celestial bodies and God the Father, the scene of Deisis and hosts of angels and archangels. This is the most multi-figured composition of this motif from the studied icons. In total, it depicts 35 figures of saints. The sky, being twisted from two edges by two angels, serves as a background for numerous depicted angels standing in two rows. Angels surround a mandorla painted in the centre with a full-figured image of God the Father. Deisis is depicted on both sides of the mandorla in the foreground: on the right is the Mother of God; on the left – John the Baptist. This iconography of the scene "Rolling up the Sky" is unique in Ukrainian tradition due to its multi-figure and multi-scene composition.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the studied examples of the icons of "The Last Judgment" in Ukrainian iconography of the 15th–17th centuries, we can draw certain conclusions about the characteristic features of the "Rolling up the Sky" composition and symbolism of this scene.

The motif's composition in the Ukrainian tradition differs from the Byzantine in the twisting of the sky like a scroll by two angels from two ends – this composition has become typical for Ukrainian "The Last Judgment" icons. The location of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene in the centre of the upper register is the unique feature of the Ukrainian icons.

The novelty of this paper lies in tracing the development of the composition of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene and the differences in "The Last Judgment" icons of the 15th and 16th–17th centuries. The motif's composition in the icons of the 15th century is characterised by its conciseness: a blue scroll of heaven, which is symmetrically twisted from two sides by two angels with the Sun, the Moon, and stars painted on it. The "Rolling up the Sky" scene from the 16th and 17th centuries undergoes certain changes: it expands, becomes more complex, and decorative elements become more elaborate. The heavenly cloth now can be split into two separate parts.

The motif of a shining disc has appeared since the 16th century, located in the centre of the "Rolling up the Sky" scene or moved beyond two split sky scrolls and placed in the middle between them. This image is a symbol of God the Father, the Ancient of Days. Dated to the beginning of the 17th century, the figurative depiction of God the Father in the centre of heavenly cloth as a grey-haired man with



Fig. 9. "Rolling up the Sky." Fragment of "The Last Judgment" icon from Mala Horozhanna, end of the 16th century. Tempera painting on wooden panel. Museum-Reserve Olesko Castle, unit of The Borys Voznytskyi Lviv National Art Gallery. Inv. No Zh 4284 (ЖК 4284). Photo by Andriy Lesiv, 2018. Courtesy of The Borys Voznytskyi Lviv National Art Gallery

grey beard marked a next step in the composition's development.

The evolution of the "Rolling up the Sky" plot in the end of the 16th century led to the appearance of a multi-figure composition, which includes, in addition to the image of the Ancient of Days, figures of angels and archangels, the scene of "Deisis", as well as a symbolic image of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove with a nimbus.

An important feature of the "Rolling up the Sky" motif is the depiction of the zodiac symbols on the heavenly cloth. In Ukrainian iconography, the zodiac symbols can be found only in "The Last Judgment" icons, in the "Rolling up the Sky" scene. Combining canonical Christian symbolism with non-traditional and non-canonical symbols like images of zodiac signs and astronomical celestial objects is the unique feature of Ukrainian "The Last Judgment" icons.

References

Bozhkov, Atanas. *The Man and the Art. Part 1.* Sofia: Narodna Prosveta, 1988.

Dysa, Kateryna. "Himka John-Paul. Last Judgment Iconography in the Carpathians. Critique." *Ukraine modern,* (2011): 298–303.

Fedak, Marta. "Astronomical motifs in Ukrainian icon painting." *Ukrainian sky. Studies on the history of astronomy in Ukraine,* (2014): 211–225.

_____. "The Last Judgment in Ukrainian icon painting." *Risu,* 24 02 2012. Date of access: 02 05 2024. https://risu.ua/strashniy-sud-v-ukrajinskomu-ikonopisi_n54735

Helytovych, Maria. "Iconographic features of the icon 'The Last Judgment'of 1662 from the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in the village of Medynychi near Drohobych in the collection of the National Museum in Lviv named after Andrey Shptytskyi." *Apologist. Christian sacred tradition: faith, spirituality, art. Materials of the scientific conference,* Lviv: Lviv Orthodox Theological Academy (2010): 157–161.

_____. *Icons of the Stary Sambir region of the 14th–16th centuries from the collection of the National Museum in Lviv named after Andrei Sheptytskyi.* Lviv: Svichado, 2010.

Himka, John-Paul. *Last Judgment Iconography in the Carpathians*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

Himka, John-Paul, Liliya Berezhnaya. *The World to Come. Ukrainian Images of the Last Judgment*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014.

Klosinska, Janina. *Icones de Pologne*. Warszawa: Arkady, 1987.

Krvavych, Dmytro, Volodymyr Ovsiychuk. *The Story about the Icon*. Lviv: Ethnology Institute of the NAS of Ukraine, 2000.

Lesiv, Andriy. "Iconography and symbolism of the 'Rolling up the Sky' scene in the Ukrainian icons of 'The Last Judgment' of the XV–XVII centuries." *Ethnology Notebooks* 6 (138) (2017): 1450–1458.

Sydor, Oleg. "Register of icons of the Last Judgment in the collection of the NML." *Annals of the National Museum in Lviv named after Andrei Sheptyyskyi*, (2001): 90–96.

_____. "The world of astronomy in the images of Ukrainian art." *Ukrainian sky. Studies on the history of astronomy in Ukraine*, (2014): 226–317.

n. d. *The Holy Bible (New International Version).* Accessed 05 03 2024. https://biblehub.com/

Zlatohlavek, Martin. *Sad Ostateczny. Freski, miniatury, obrazy*. Krakow: WAM, 2002.

Zholtovski, Pavlo. *Monumental Painting in Ukraine in 17th–18th centuries*. Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 1988.

Notes

[1] Marta Fedak, "The Last Judgement in Ukrainian icon painting," *Risu.ua*, accessed 2 May 2024, https://risu.ua/strashniy-sud-v-ukrajinskomu-ikonopisi_n54735

[2] Pavlo Zholtovski, *Monumental Painting in Ukraine in 17th–18th centuries* (Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 1988), 60.

[3] Dmytro Krvavych, Volodymyr Ovsiychuk, *The Story about the Icon* (Lviv: Ethnology Institute of the NAS of Ukraine, 2000).

[4] Oleg Sydor, "Register of icons of the Last Judgment in the collection of the NML," *Annals of the National Museum in Lviv named after Andrei Sheptytskyi*, *Lviv: National Museum named after A. Sheptytskyi* 2 (7) (2001), 90–96.

[5] Oleg Sydor, "The world of astronomy in the images of Ukrainian art," in *Ukrainian sky. Studies on the history of astronomy in Ukraine* (Lviv: Institute of Applied Problems of Mechanics and Mathematics named after Yaroslav Pidstrychach of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2014), 226–317.

[6] Marta Fedak, "Astronomical motifs in Ukrainian icon painting," in *Ukrainian sky. Studies on the history of astronomy in Ukraine* (Lviv: Institute of Applied Problems of Mechanics and Mathematics named after Yaroslav Pidstrychach of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2014), 211–225.

[7] Maria Helytovych, *Icons of the Stary Sambir region of the 14th–16th centuries from the collection of the National Museum in Lviv named after Andrei Sheptytskyi* (Lviv: Svichado, 2010), 11.

[8] Maria Helytovych, "Iconographic features of the icon 'The Last Judgment' of 1662 from the Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in the village of

Medynychi near Drohobych in the collection of the National Museum in Lviv named after Andrey Shptytskyi," *Apologist. Christian sacred tradition: faith, spirituality, art. Materials of the scientific conference* (Lviv: Orthodox Theological Academy, 2010), 157–161.

[9] John-Paul Himka, *Last Judgement Iconography in the Carpathians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

[10] Kateryna Dysa, "Himka John-Paul. Last Judgement Iconography in the Carpathians. Critique," *Ukraine modern* 18 (2011), 298–303.

[11] Andriy Lesiv, "Iconography and symbolism of the 'Rolling up the Sky' scene in the Ukrainian icons of 'The Last Judgment' of the XV–XVII centuries," *Ethnological notebooks* 6 (138) (Lviv: Ethnology Institute of the NAS of Ukraine, 2017), 1450–1458, DOI: https://doi.org/10.15407/nz2017.06.1450 [in Ukrainian]

[12] John-Paul Himka, *Last Judgement Iconography in the Carpathians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 10.

[13] *Bible Hub*, New International Version, accessed 3 May 2024, https://biblehub.com/isaiah/34-4.htm

[14] Ibid., accessed 3 May 2024, https://biblehub.com/revelation/6-14.htm

[15] John-Paul Himka, L. Berezhnaya, *The World To Come. Ukrainian Images Of The Last Judgment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Pres, 2014), 12.

[16] Oleg Sydor, "The world of astronomy in the images of Ukrainian art," in *Ukrainian sky. Studies on the history of astronomy in Ukraine* (Lviv: Institute of Applied Problems of Mechanics and Mathematics named after Yaroslav Pidstrychach of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2014), 231.

[17] John-Paul Himka, L. Berezhnaya, *The World To Come. Ukrainian Images Of The Last Judgment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Pres, 2014), 21.

[18] Ibid., 33.

[19] Marta Fedak, "Astronomical motifs in Ukrainian icon painting," in *Ukrainian sky. Studies on the history of astronomy in Ukraine* (Lviv: Institute of Applied Problems of Mechanics and Mathematics named after Yaroslav Pidstrychach of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2014), 211–225.

[20] Ibid., 218.

[21] Atanas Bozhkov, *The Man and the Art. Part 1* (Sofia: Narodna Prosveta, 1988), 111.

[22] Marta Fedak, "Astronomical motifs in Ukrainian icon painting," in *Ukrainian sky. Studies on the history of astronomy in Ukraine* (Lviv: Institute of Applied Problems of Mechanics and Mathematics named after Yaroslav Pidstrychach of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2014), 220.

Andriy LESIV
Ukrainos nacionalinės mokslų akademijos Etnologijos institutas, Dailės studijų skyrius, Lvivas, Ukraina

PASAULIO PABAIGOS PRADŽIOS VAIZDAVIMAS: IKONOGRAFIJA IR „DANGAUS APSIVERTIMO" SCENA UKRAINIETIŠKOSE XV–XVII A. „PASKUTINIO TEISMO" IKONOSE

Santrauka

Straipsnis skirtas „Dangaus apsivertimo" scenos ikonografijai, raidai ir simbolikai. Tai sudėtingos kelių scenų ikonų kompozicijos „Paskutinio teismo" fragmentas. Tyrimas paremtas pasirinktomis XV–XVII a. „Paskutinio teismo" ikonomis, kilusiomis iš Haličinės (Galicija) teritorijos Ukrainos vakaruose ir šiuolaikinių Lenkijos bei Slovakijos teritorijų.

Straipsnio naujumą lemia „Dangaus apsivertimo" motyvo raida, siekiant atsekti XV ir XVI–XVII a. „Paskutinio teismo" ikonų kompozicijų pokyčius. Motyvo kompozicija XV a. ikonose pasižymi paprastumu ir minimalizmu, kita vertus, nuo XVI a. scena buvo aktyviai plėtojama, joje atsirado naujų elementų. Svarbus naujas XVI a. „Dangaus apsivertimo" scenos bruožas – Zodiako simbolių vaizdavimas: analizuojamos keturios ukrainietiškos „Paskutinio teismo" ikonos, datuotos XVI a., su Zodiako simbolių atvaizdais. Pastebėta simbolinio Dievo Tėvo, arba senolių, atvaizdo raida nuo formalaus simbolinio vaizdavimo kaip spindinčio disko iki žilaplaukio seno žmogaus atvaizdo.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: ikonografija, Ukrainos ikonos, „Paskutinis teismas", dangaus šviesuliai, Zodiako ženklai.

Gauta 2024-03-18
Parengta spaudai 2024-06-05

Andriy LESIV
PhD in art studies, senior researcher, The Ethnology Institute of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine, Art studies department.
Svobody ave. 15, 79000, Lviv, Ukraine.
ORCID: 0000-0002-3408-7496
E-mail: lesivandr@gmail.com