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COMMON TRADITIONS IN CULTURES OF UKRAINE AND JAPAN

***Summary****.* *The article presents the authors’ attempt to distinguish common features in cultural traditions of Ukraine and Japan. The study is based on analysis of literature, theater, embroidery and translation activity of the both countries.*

**Introduction.** The Ukrainians are developing in harmony with other nations and have always been striving to perceive and borrow what is the best from other cultures. The Japanese art is not an exception. This art is being studied by the Ukrainians thoroughly.

**Objectives.** The study is aimed at getting familiar with the Japanese esthetic thought, both ancient and modern, and to lay emphasis on those trends in the Japanese arts which are the brightest and have the much in common with the culture of Ukraine. The problems dealt with in the present study are as follows:

* to demonstrate the ways of mutual penetration of certain genres and the ways of common translation activity;
* to present various forms of their practical realization in the context of the Ukrainian and Japanese cultures;
* to single out the common traditions in the Japanese and Ukrainian arts, painting, embroidery, etc.;
* to point out what is in common and what distinguishes between the Ukrainian and the Japanese puppet theaters.

**Review of Literature.** One can observe that in the recent time more and more researchers refer to the problem of links between Ukraine and Japan. The problem of spiritual development of the Japanese and the Ukrainians is among the ones which attract their attention. The aspect of mutual penetration of cultures of the two peoples can also present certain interest. The problem has been tackled upon by the following Ukrainian authors: M. Zinyakova, T. Katasonova, A. Kizilo, S.Rybalko, A. Kornev, V. Rudnev, T. Grigirieva, V. Molodyakova, E. Pinus and others [10]. M.Zinyakova surveys the mass culture as a whole [1]. T. Katasonova concentrates upon modern arts, such as manga and anime [2]. A. Kizilo goes into details analyzing the genre of kaidans [3]. Classical Japanese art has been described by S.Pybalko, A. Kornev, V.Pudnev, T,Grigorieva, V. Moldovanov,E. Pinus and others [4-10]. In her article M. Zinyakova throws light on development of theatrical art, puppet theater in particular [1].

**Objective.** The Japanese methods of studying arts are being actively borrowed and used by the Ukrainians. Let’s take, for example, such kind of literature art as senkang. It is used as a kind of creative task. Senkangs are short and built according to the following scheme:

1-st row -a noun;

2-nd row – its meaning;

3-d row – its action;

4-th row – a condensed thought in the form of a sentence;

5-th row – conclusion in the form of a noun.

Let’s take some examples of this literary form in the Ukrainian interpretation:

1. To the creation by I. Franko: 2. Rainbow

Ivan Franko Multicolored, bright, wonderful

Courageous, talented Shines, changes, surprises

Studied, translated, wrote Want to touch it with my hand

Doesn‘t leave us indifferent Life

Titan!

3.Winter 4.To the work by I. Karpenko Karyi “Owner”

Cold, snowy, fascinating Greedy, funny, tragic

Frightens, freezes Is cunning, economizes, is lost

It is either sad or funny Calls forth compassion

Dream! Comedy?

5. Tree 6. School

Rampant, green New and big

Grows by my house Invites everyone to study

I take care of it every day Children are happy to go there

Nature Knowledge

1. Willow 8. Spring

High, flexible Warm and wonderful

Grows by a pond Brings happiness

Needs being cared and spared Children can’t wait till it comes

Beauty Beauty

1. Autumn 10. Winter

Sad and funny Covered with snow, funny

Has brought rain Brings happiness to cities and villages

Children like to walk in rain Children like this season

Season Snow

1. Flowers

Red, pink

Bloom near houses

It is so nice to look at them

Fascination

Such genre as sinotsya is quite popular in the Ukrainian literature. This genre is represented by home songs with the same text, improvised songs and songs without melody. These songs are popular among the ains – a population living in the North of Japan. Tanka, a short song, also enjoys popularity among the Japanese. In its structure it is a non-rhymed lyrical poem consisting of five rows. This genre reminds a short story about an event or feeling. A poet who writes tankas is called Kadzin. One of the most prominent masters of this genre is Isikava Takuboku (1889 – 19120. Here are two of his tankas:

1. When one has to serve 2. On the white sandy beach

Naughty, On an island

Impudent petty tyrants In the Eastern Ocean

How dreadful is the whole world! I am playing with a little crab.

Kaidan – a traditional kind of the Japanese art – shouldn’t be left without attention. This is a specific genre of a horrifying story about something supernatural. This genre appeared in the VII-VIII centuries and is still developing in modern art. Demonic and Mythological strata of this genre have found their reflection in the Ukrainian culture with the Christian strata being added to. The first mentioned strata is the deepest one, belonging to the ancient times when the Japanese used to personify both supernatural phenomena and real things of the surrounding world, enduing them with the demonic characteristics. This has had an impact on transformation and the most important monuments of the folk mythology and demonology: the gist of soul, interrelations between spirit and body, life after death.

The second stratum was given rise by emergence of governing social structures, which required proper sanctification. This stratum had in its foundation deification of the natural, mainly heavenly, elements incarnated into the images of gods. The system of their conception of gods represent their hierarchy, distinguishing between the most important gods and less important ones. Let’s concentrate our attention on the third stratum, Christina, being developed exceptionally in the Ukrainian demonology and connected with mermaids. These were considered ethical symbols of the Ukrainian national demonology. Images of mermaids, created by people’s fantasy, are usually divided by researchers into the following groups: kupalka, vodyanytsya, zhartivnytsya, leshachikha, mavka, loskotukha, krynitsya, memodina.

The Japanese word “kaidan” refers to an amazing, mysterious story. This genre is founded on ancient Japanese myths, Chinese and Indian legends and tales, Buddhist parables and the Medieval Chinese novel called chuantsi. Among the most popular kaidans are as follows: “Story of Ghost Yoshuya”, “Peony Luminary” and others. The first was written by Namboku Tsuruya, the second one was written by Sanjutei Entyo. At present a new conception has come into being – “neokaidan”, testifying that the genre enjoys great popularity not only among the Japanese, but in the whole world. Modern Japanese culture is also presented by the genre called manga which spread widely in the 80s of the XX century. The genre is presented by series of short stories published usually in weekly and monthly magazines. But the greatest number of mangas is published in special magazines called manga-magazines. The tendency of devilment of this genre is directly opposite to that of kaidans. The kaidans are usually frightening stories, but mangas are entertaining and comical in their character.

“One of the principal advantages of mangas is their being visually presented. The text has a meaning only in case it is combined with a certain graphic row, creating this way very sophisticated specific hieroglyph, which makes perception of the idea expressed much easier than an ordinary book, and which gives a more detailed and comprehensive information. From the esthetic point of view mangas are more attractive than a mere set of letters.”[1, c. 21].

Translation activity of the both nations can also present certain interest. The following Japanese writers: Tatsuo Kuroda, Setsusi Tanaka, Soouke Kamatsu, Teisuke Cibuya, Tanaoki Murayi, Tanasi Dzioche, Yosigaro Takamura, Takao Khino, Kazuyo Nakhai, Etsuko Fudzi and others studied thoroughly and honored the Ukrainian language. The Ukrainian experts of word are also interested in the Japanese culture. Translation from the Japanese language has been made by the following Ukrainian writers: I. Dzyuba, G. Turkov, M. Fedirishin, I. Bondarenko,

I. Dubinski and others.

One can find a lot in common between Ukrainian and Japanese traditions in such arts as embroidery and painting. For both the Ukrainians and the Japanese every color expresses a certain meaning. For example, in the Japanese culture “The ornaments which can be expressed through the red are as follows: poppy, rose, strawberry, geranium.” [6, c.85]. For the Ukrainians these are: poppy, hollyhock and snowball-tree in combination with the yellow, green and black.

Puppet theater art is quite popular both in Ukraine and in Japan. In the Ukrainian art it is divided into the following: theater of suspended puppets, that of puppets guided from below, the so called mitten puppets, puppets on sticks and theater of shades where puppets ( in most cases these are usually flat figures) are presented in the form of black or colored silhouettes on the background of the brightly lit theater,”[10, c.247].

There are other ways of making puppet performances. Let’s take the traditional Japanese puppet theater as an example. It is called “bunrakudza” or “ puppet of a half of the human height guided by three men at a time, who are covered only to the waist.”[10, c.247]. The Ukrainians have an interesting kind of puppet theater. This is Vertep. The Vertep scene looks like a box turned to the audience by its open side: “in the lower side of the box there are special cuts – chinks, along which one can move small figures, puppets, which are fixed by sticks from below”.[10, c.247]. One should mention in this context the genres of art which exists both in the Ukrainian and Japanese cultures. This is flaneliograph, in which loud speech passes gradually into inner speech. It is also called mono-theater, or theater of cocoons, theater of stampers, theater of pullers. By manipulating the actors create a certain image, which requires great power of imagination. There are also stick theaters and theater of puppets bibabo in the Japanese culture.

In conclusion it’s worth mentioning that the principal aim of modern education is to increase opportunities of educating national identity as a means of self-realization which manifests itself on six levels: intellectual, social, physical, material, esthetical, transcendental and spiritual. They all are based upon artistic, esthetic and cultural dimensions of the environments of counties, Ukraine and Japan, in particular. Achieving the world-wide scopes of formation of spiritual values, we contribute to integral humanitarian orientation in developing human-like qualities on the basis of social culture and through culture as the esthetic dominant, as synthesis of the matters of intellect and beauty, which are esthetic and therapeutic in their nature.

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