ELEMENTS OF ART STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL RESEARCH OF PETER BIZZILLI

Kateryna Gamaliia

DSc in Art Studies, Associate Professor,
ORCID: 0000-0002-8982-2005, gamaleya@ukr.net,
National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture of Ukraine,
20, Voznesenskyi Uzviz, Kyiv, 04053, Ukraine

The purpose of the article is to consider the Professor's contribution at Odesa University, P. Bizzilli, to the domestic medieval studies formation. The reconstruction of the people's spiritual universe of the past epoch, initiated by P. Bizzilli, is one of the important components of the methodology of humanitarian research, characteristic of many representatives in modern medieval studies. After the romantics of the nineteenth century, interest in the Middle Ages gained new development in the early twentieth century, which contributed to his research at European universities. During the century, M. Bloch (1973), J. Huizinga (1988), M. Barg (1987), J. Le Goff (2005, 2008), U. Eco (2003, 2004) addressed this topic, exploring in detail the features of medieval culture. L. Karsavin (1995), O. Dobiash-Rozhdestvenska (1987) and P. Bizzilli (1916, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1995) should be singled out as active figures in the formation of medieval studies centres in Ukraine. Scientific novelty. For the first time, the medieval works of P. Bizzilli from the standpoint of art history were analysed. Conclusions. P. Bizzilli, considering the main elements that make up the medieval picture of the world, comes to conclusions that coincided with and preceded the creative discoveries of his contemporaries (I. Greaves, L. Karsavin, O. Dobiash-Rozhdestvenska). In particular, it applies to the features of medieval art, the nature of which P. Bizzilli associated with the characteristic of medieval man's life concept. He considered universalism, symbolism and hierarchy to be the defining features of the medieval worldview, envisaging the formulation of relevant problems by the following authors. A comparative analysis of the medieval works of P. Bizzilli, his contemporaries and researchers in the next years allows us to conclude that among the fields of humanities in which his ideas remain relevant should be called art history. One of the important conclusions of P. Bizzilli was the statement that the formula of medieval culture was symbolism and hierarchy. Medieval fine art, rich in complex and finely designed symbolism, is reduced to understanding and revealing the symbolic meaning of the surrounding reality.

Keywords: medieval art; Peter Bizzilli; universe; symbolics; gothic cathedral; colour and light; hierarchy

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Introduction

The relatively straightforward etymology of the term "medium aevum", which marked this period in the late seventeenth century, speaks of the abyss, the dark ages between the invasion of barbarians and the Renaissance, and according to humanists, more than a millennium break in cultural history. The modern English medievalist historian Robert Bartlett (2010) explains the negative assessment of the Middle Ages, which remained with him for more than three hundred years, by saying that it did not meet the standards of the humanist era. According to Le Goff (2008), the Middle Ages were a turning point in the history of Europe, embodying its birth, childhood and adolescence. Only in the twentieth century the achievements of medieval culture were able to be realistically assessed, gradually entering the minds of civilised man as an important part of modern culture. The personal contribution to discovering the essence of the medieval culture by P. Bizzilli, a Ukrainian medievalist researcher, remains out of the domestic scientific community's attention, especially art critics.

Analysis of research and publications. Romantic medieval culture became the first wave of spread in European literature and art of the late 18th and mid 19th centuries. Architecture continued to admire the mysterious Age of the Middle Ages, embodying Romanesque and Gothic features in historicism buildings. William Morris (1973), a representative of the Pre-Raphaelites and the founder of English design, was a supporter and researcher of medieval culture. Medieval grotesques reinterpreted by his work did not play a minor role in forming the decorative line of Art Nouveau.

In the twentieth century, interest in the Middle Ages gained new momentum, began his research at universities. In the second half of the twentieth century, J. Le Goff (2005, 2008), M. Bloch (1973), J. Huizinga (1988), M. Barg (1987), and U. Eco (2003, 2004) addressed this topic by exploring the features of medieval culture. L. P. Karsavin (1995), O. A. Dobiash-Rozhdestvenska (1987) and P. M. Bizzilli (1916, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1995) should be singled out among the active figures of the contemporary medieval studies centres in Ukraine.

Peter Bizzilli's activity is covered by T. N. Galcheva (1993), with a description of his stay in Bulgaria presentation of his achievements as a historian, literary and linguist, and cultural researcher. Bizzilli's contribution to the problems of medieval culture development by scientists of Novorossiysk University was considered by a researcher of the same university, historian I. V. Niemchenko (2005). K. Gamaliia (2018) is the first who raises the question of the feasibility of analysing the medieval works by P. Bizzilli from the standpoint of art history in the materials of the scientific-practical conference. This article continues the study of the outlined issues.

Purpose of the article

The purpose of the article is to consider the contribution of Professor of Odesa University P. Bizzilli in the formation of domestic medieval studies, focusing on the art aspect of his research.

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Main research material

Petro Mikhailovich Bitsilly was born in 1879 in Odesa, graduated from the Faculty of History and Philology of Novorossiysk University, defended his master's thesis at Petrograd University, and returned to his alma mater. While teaching at his home university, Professor Bizzilli wrote a number of works on Greek and Roman history. Interested in the Middle Ages, he chose it as the main topic of his research. Not accepting the innovations of the October Revolution, Peter Bizzilli emigrated to Bulgaria, where in 1924, he became a professor of modern and contemporary history at Sofia University. Political cataclysms befell him in Bulgaria as well: in 1948, after the establishment of the communist regime in this country, he was fired without the right to a pension, declaring himself a "bourgeois teacher". Peter Bizzilli died in Sofia in 1953 (Galcheva, 1993).

Peter Bizzilli left behind a considerable creative legacy in various fields of humanities. If in Odesa, he distinguished himself mainly as a medieval historian, he delved into cultural issues and later into literary studies in exile. It should be noted that the synthesis is inherent in the legacy of the researcher, which is evident from a wide range of his interests in a single discourse of literary, historical and cultural problems. The historical and artistic works by Peter Bizzilli still remain without proper attention from fellow scientists. Moreover, it did not receive any research in art history.

The aesthetics of the Middle Ages were radically different from the works of classical antiquity, which were considered ideal, and for some time, this hampered its understanding by researchers. However, a hundred years ago, Odesa professor Peter Bizzilli in one of his books, sought to understand the beauty of medieval art and the origins of its originality. "Didn't anyone at that time, he wrote, see the blatant nonsense in the picture, the perspective in these paintings, the nonsense that strikes us?" Didn't they know even such an elementary truth that a person is smaller than a house?... What exactly does this incompetence mean, and what is it? Lack of technical skills? Hand incompetence? How to reconcile this with the high calligraphic perfection of miniature screensavers or the architectural embodiment of giant cathedrals? If it's not at the level of "technology", then what's the matter? Perhaps their image of the world was utterly adequate to his perception? How did they see the world? And how did they think of him? "This book is the best answer to this question" (Bitsilli, 1995, p. 9). According to him, the idea of this work was to highlight the relationship of the main elements of medieval culture in the context of the formation of artistic space, the manifestations of which reflect the medieval man's inner world.

P. Bizzilli considered absolute monocentrism to be the defining idea of the Middle Ages. "The guiding trend of the Middle Ages as a cultural period", he writes, "can be recognised as the tendency to universality, by which we mean the aspirations that are manifested in everything; in science, in fine writing, in the fine arts to embrace the world as a whole, to understand it as a certain complete omnipresence and in poetic images, lines and colours, in scientific concepts are to express this understanding" (Bitsilli, 1995, p. 12). At the same time, he shows that the absolutist worldview leads to unsolvable antinomies, the separatism and atomisation of society in all its manifestations: in land ownership and urban communes, in government and church dogmatism, in contrast between movement and peace. L. P. Karsavin (1995) wrote about the antino-

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my of medieval culture, emphasising that the greatness and tragedy of the Middle Ages is the impossibility of achieving a comprehensive unity, which hinders the antinomies of its existence, manifested in binary oppositions: the struggle of empire and papacy, scholasticism and profanity, etc. Robert Bartlett presents a modern reproduction of the antinomic nature of the medieval worldview through the image of Christ — a central figure in the life and art of this era. If in the twelfth century, the image of the crucified Christ created a calm, almost abstract impression, later it embodied the universal agony expressed in his tense, cruelly suffering body. Antinomy was inherent in other elements of medieval culture, including science (Gamaliia, 2014).

In architecture, according to P. M. Bizzilli, the medieval man felt freer: they created a variety and coordinated them with each other at will. Altogether, in the impressive completion of the Gothic cathedral, grew out of the ground, going to heaven, and at the same time each detail, taken separately, acquired a distinct finality. A similar relationship between the continuity of the object and its division into particles stemmed from the general idea of the world's origin, the whole creation of God. However, taken by itself, it breaks down into separate objects, the place and significance of each of which is determined by the degree of its dependence on the Creator. Hence, according to Bizzilli, and follows the "inconsistency" in medieval works of art, emphasised by the external schematism of construction. It should be noted that the planning and spatial solution of the Gothic cathedral in its design corresponded to the cosmic order. Reproduction in the planning of religious buildings ideas about the cosmic order, we meet much earlier, for example, in the Brahmanical temples of ancient India.

Ernst Gombrich (1998) saw a much deeper embodiment of church doctrine in the Gothic cathedral than in the Romanesque. Like many other researchers, Professor Bizzilli saw in the "encyclopedic" of the Gothic cathedral the law for all creativity in the Middle Ages. Thus, the living life and history of mankind presented in the cathedral's decoration, from the Fall to the Last Judgment, played a didactic role. Umberto Eco (2004) proposes considering the cathedral as a synthetic human vision of its history, it is both a book and a picture.

One of the important conclusions of P. M. Bizzilli (1995), made by him in the research process, was that the formula of medieval culture was symbolism and hierarchy. "Everything that medieval man sees, he tries to interpret for himself symbolically. Everything that is its symbols, they are symbols, and the task of the subject who knows them is to reveal their meaning. The Middle Ages created fine symbolic arts and symbolic poetry, created a religious cult and philosophy rich in extremely complex and finely designed symbols, which is reduced to understanding and revealing the symbolic meaning of the surrounding reality" (p. 15).

Medieval man transferred the hierarchical scheme of natural and supernatural phenomena to real life, creating a hierarchical society: a hierarchy of spiritual and secular ranks, unions, corporations, and universities. The hierarchical principle permeates the entire social system of the Middle Ages, its entire culture. According to its structure, the whole life of medieval man and his culture was a number of concentric spheres on the type of universe. The spheres to which each person belonged were family, clan, state, city, state, and church were included in each other, the smaller in, the larger, but in such a way that each smaller was similar to all the following (Bitsilli, 1993c). On the creation of such a world, "a world of hierarchically grouped, ideal, invariably repeat-

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ed symbols, a world of "ready", timeless, unyielding time, unshakable in its desire for God, frozen in its objectivity; the realm of unshakable harmony, eternally existing full consonance" dreamed of a medieval man (Bizzilli, 1995, p. 93). However, realising the unattainability of her goal in this world full of sinfulness and unrighteousness, she pinned all her hopes on the realisation of absolute good in the afterlife (Bizzilli, 1993b).

The idea of the important role of hierarchy in the life of medieval man is confirmed by M. A. Barg (1987), a world-famous historian of Ukrainian origin, a graduate of Kharkiv University, according to whom hierarchy is the flip side of symbolism. According to J. Huizinga (1988), symbolism created a hierarchical subordination, embracing nature, history and human society. According to Bizzilli, the importance of the person, it was emphasised by the scale ratio in the image, corresponding to the hierarchical nature of the medieval rule, tween pix (two tops), which consisted of the emperor and the pope. He also noted that in the picture of the medieval master, there was no coherence between the parts of the same object: the building was depicted in perspective, and its stairs — front. The founder of the Berlin Egyptological School, Adolf Hermann, wrote about such inconsistency of certain parts of the body in the masters' works of Ancient Egypt: "The style that prevails in Egyptian painting, we are primarily struck by the strange interpretation of the human figure. In an effort to show every part of the body from the most characteristic point of view, Egyptian artists paint a body whose strange twists completely contradict reality (Erman & Ranke, 1923, p. 531). This manner does not indicate the inability of the Egyptians to depict a man on a plane; they only sought to reflect the three dimensions with the help of the two most characteristic. Rather, such an image should be perceived gradually, "reading" it just as we read a letter.

In the various stages of world history, the masters of the Middle Ages tended to reflect as a whole. In his master's dissertation, P. Bizzilli (1916) noted that the Middle Ages were a "non-historical" time, because man did not perceive life as a stream of interdependent phenomena. He developed this idea in "Elements of Medieval Culture": "Long stories are enclosed within the same frame; events separated from each other by whole epochs unfold here in one plan, the artist forces us to look at the past, present and future, to contemplate the bourgeois everyday life of urban life, the tragic buffoonery of hell with its ridiculous horrors and ecstasy of the blessed in ecstasy" (Bitsilli, 1995, p. 8).

According to Mark Bloch (1973), the imperfection of the people of the Middle Ages in the measurement of time can be seen as one of the many symptoms of their deep indifference to the passage of time. According to K. Woermann (2000), the Reflection of events of different times in a single picture was found in the fine arts of ancient Egypt: the upper rows of figures separated from the lower, replacing the effect of planning. Measurement of time in this country was important mostly for the compilation of the temple calendar or chronicle of the pharaohs' reigns.

The slow flow of life in the Middle Ages, as P. M. Bizzilli wrote, "made a person insensitive to the perception of the rhythm of life… If for us the world is a process, then for a medieval man the world is a ready result" (Bitsilli, 1995, p. 138). This attitude to the feeling of movement and peace is reflected in the paintings and sculptures of that era. And although in the works of medieval artists, we see long processions of people, storming city walls, the ascension of the righteous to heaven and the torment of sinners in hell, all this remains unshakable and dead. It seems that a jumping horse will

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never lower its feet to the ground, and a warrior's sword appears to be frozen in motion and will never fall on the head of the enemy. The movement decomposes into a number of moments of rest with empty spaces between them. Even the figures of Giotto, the best of the old artists, devoid of the curiosity of previous primitives and full of rhythm, represent the rhythm of inviolable bodies. The secret of the charm of Giotto's frescoes lies in their architecture, in the convergence of the system of straight and curved lines, in the perfect coordination of plans. The motif of the contrast between movement and calm, the completion of the movement at a certain point, creates the impression of peace and quiet that these frescoes create for us. By presenting an excellent, detailed analysis of Giotto's paintings, Bizzilli contrasts his creative style with Renaissance art: In "Night", Michelangelo sleeps soundly, but in its inviolability, there are many opportunities for movement, and in its body, you can feel all the richness of life. Le Goff also noted the temporality of life inherent in the Middle Ages, which led to a lack of reflection of movement in art. Medieval man, he wrote, did not feel in time, perceiving his existence as being, not becoming. She was not interested in what was moving, but in what remained unshakable, she needed peace (guides), and everything restless seemed vain and even diabolical (Le Goff, 2005).

The attitude of medieval artists to colour and light was filled with characteristic symbols. These qualities, they believed, are inherent in certain things, but they also exist in themselves. Yes, light things borrow light from the sun, and in hell, they lose that opportunity because hellfire burns but does not shine. In his multi-volume History of All Times and Nations (1904–1911), Karl Woermann (2000) wrote: "The art of the mature Middle Ages is depicted against an eventful background of strong political and ecclesiastical struggle, painted in the colors of blood and iron, but revived by silver flowers and gold threads" (p. 110). Michel Pastoureau (2012), who has been researching colour for decades, insisted on the importance of change in its historically fixed aspects: 1) lack of the idea of the spectral sequence, unknown until the 17th century; 2) a peculiar concept of warm and cold colours (blue was considered warm); 3) contrast of colours (combination of red and green in an aristocratic suit was perceived as a weak contrast). The artists transferred their "barbaric taste" to everyday life, to the creation of clothing, jewellery, and weapons. The fine arts of the medieval era did not know colour, wrote Umberto Eco (2004), it used simple, well-defined colours, without any nuances. The idea of God as a luminary came from ancient traditions — from the Semitic Baal, the ancient Egyptian Ra. Note that in the colours of ancient Egyptian art, there was no transmission of light and shadow, each paint was applied in an equal layer.

At the beginning of his research on the history of the Middle Ages, P. M. Bizzilli (1995) formulated an answer to the origins of his unique culture. This culture, he wrote, grew out of Rome, but each of its features was reborn beyond recognition.

Conclusions

Reconstruction of the people's spiritual universe in the past era, started by P. M. Bizzilli, is now one of the important components of the methodology of humanitarian research, characteristic of subsequent works of medievalists Jacques Le Goff, Marc Block and a number of other contemporary authors.

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ЕЛЕМЕНТИ МИСТЕЦТВОЗНАВСТВА У МЕДІЄВІСТИЧНИХ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯХ ПЕТРА БІЦИЛЛІ

Гамалія Катерина Миколаївна

Доктор мистецтвознавства, доцент,
ORCID: 0000-0002-8982-2005, gamaleya@ukr.net,
Національна академія образотворчого мистецтва та архітектури України,
Київ, Україна

Мета статті — розглянути внесок професора Одеського університету П. Біциллі у становлення вітчизняної медієвістики. Реконструкція духовного універсуму людей минулої епохи, започаткована П. Біциллі, є однією з важливих складових методології гуманітарного дослідження, характерною для низки представників сучасної медієвістики. Інтерес до епохи Середньовіччя, після романтиків XIX ст., набув нового розвою з початком XX ст., що сприяло його науковому дослідженню в європейських університетах. Протягом століття до цієї тематики звертались М. Блок, Й. Гейзінга, М. Барг, Ж. Ле Гофф, У. Еко, докладно

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досліджуючи особливості середньовічної культури. Серед активних діячів формування осередків медієвістики на теренах України слід виокремити Л. Карсавіна, О. Добіаш-Рождественську та П. Біцилли. Наукова новизна. Вперше проаналізовано медієвістичні праці П. Біцилли з позицій мистецтвознавства. Висновки. П. Біцилли, розглянувши основні елементи, що складають середньовічну картину світу, доходить висновків, які не лише збігалися, а й випереджали творчі знахідки його сучасників (І. Гревса, Л. Карсавіна, О. Добіаш-Рождественської). Зокрема, це стосується особливостей середньовічного мистецтва, природу яких П. Біцилли пов'язував з характерною для середньовічної людини концепцією життя. Визначальними рисами середньовічного світогляду він вважав універсалізм, символізм та ієрархізм, передбачаючи постановку відповідних проблем вже наступними авторами. Порівняльний аналіз медієвістичних праць П. Біцилли, його сучасників та дослідників наступних років дає змогу зробити висновок, що серед галузей гуманітарного знання, в яких його ідеї залишаються актуальними, слід назвати й мистецтвознавство. Один із важливих висновків П. Біцилли — твердження про те, що формулою середньовічної культури були символізм та ієрархізм. Середньовічне образотворче мистецтво, багате складною і тонко розробленою символікою, зводиться до осягнення і розкриття символічного значення навколишньої дійсності.

Ключові слова: середньовічне мистецтво; Петро Біцилли; універсум; символіка; готичний собор; колір та світло; ієрархізм