

Compositional and coloristic experiments of Simon Hollosy in landscape painting du creative period in Tiachiv

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Annotation. *In the article an attempt is made to define by means of formal analysis the peculiarities of coloristic and compositional experiments in landscape works of Simon Hollosy created in the second half of his creative period in Tiachiv. In this context ways for implementing of the artist's creative method into artistic and educational environment are considered. Works of art which were painted by the artist on the plein-air and are the dominating direction of artist's activity in the mentioned period are taken into consideration.*

Keywords. *Composition, coloristics, creative period, experiment.*

Композиційні та колористичні експерименти Ш. Голлоші в пейзажному жанрі періоду творчості в м. Тячів.

Анотація. *У статті проводиться спроба засобом формального аналізу означити особливості колористичного та композиційного експериментів у живописних творах Ш. Голлоші, створених у другій половині періоду роботи в м. Тячеві. В цьому контексті розглядаються шляхи впровадження творчого методу митця у мистецько-освітнє середовище. До уваги беруться твори живопису, які виконувалися художником у пленері, що став домінантою мистецької діяльності зазначеного періоду.*

Ключові слова. *Композиція, колористика, творчість, експеримент.*

In the creations of visual arts of the last centuries there is the most significant and important feature which characterizes innovation field and overall gains in art – an experiment. It is worth to provide an example of creative and methodological gains of the Barbizon painters, impressionists, or the first novators of art synthesis – modernists, who gave the dynamic impulse to experiment in visual art culture in XIX and XX centuries. Innovation and tradition is mostly a consequence of creative search (experiment) and are considered in study of art as immensely close and tangent categories for principles and ways of analyzing phenomena of visual arts.

Approaching to the problems of plein-air in investigation it should be mentioned that ideas of the Barbizon painters get popular in artistic circles of Europe and they are used by Hungarian painters as well. In 1873 Lasló Pal, the follower of Mihály Munkácsy, have settled in Barbizon. In his first works ideas of romanticism prevail “Fontainebleau Forest” (1876), what is specific to many other Hungarian artists. The evidence of it is also the work of Mihály Munkácsy “Kolpasi park” (1886). In French creative settlement there also worked other artists – Lajos Deak Ebner, Laszlo Mednianszky and others [2, 21]. Barbizon school and its ideas of plein-air gain wide methodological meaning and

ideological content in the art of XX century. In the art of Hungary on the cusp of centuries active movement for creating of art colonies (Nagybánya, Kecskemét, Szolnok, Gödöllő and Tiachiv) is being formed. Turning to works of Mihály Munkácsy as one of the representatives of Hungarian national romanticism principles of innovation are visible on the basis of which phenomenon of creative person appears. In this meaning the artist forms the whole epoch of traditions for Hungarian painting on which a generation of artists is bred, among them Imre Révész, Simon Hollosy and many other authors.

The most significant investigations of this historical period belong to Hungarian and Soviet (including the students of Simon Hollosy) analytics and art critics Lyka Károly [9], Németh Lajos [11], Réti István [12], Szabó Julia [5], Szöllősy Tibor [13], Alyoshina [1], Tihomirov [7], Ostrovskiy [10], Pavlov [4]. Separate investigations belong to Romanian investigators Murádin Jenő, Tiberiu Alexa, Traian Moldovan, Mihai Muscă. From the historical and culturological aspect Hollosy staying in Tiachiv is highlighted in publications of Szöllősy and partially in memoirs of Ternovets [6]. Notwithstanding sufficient number of investigations involved problem was not taken into account or was considered indirectly what proves its topicality.

In this investigation a goal is set to generalize phenomenon of the artist's painting in his last creative period and separate out specific principles of compositional and coloristic motivations, as well as the artist's ways to introduce creative method into artistic and educational environment.

Considering artistic heritage of Hollosy in diachronic context it should be mentioned that his staying in Tiachiv cardinaly changes the ways of the artist's creative method. While the first two periods in painting creations (Munich and Nagybánya) include romantic nostalgia inspired by national romanticism ("Good wine" (1884), "In tavern" (1888), "Woes of Fatherland" (1893), the period in Tiachiv colony is marked by the artist's cognitive perception of nature as way to improve painting mastery.

Tiachiv period is mostly characterized by ways of organizing plane of painting. The artist actively apostrophizes to landscape as means of necessity to investigate color in nature. In 1910 in his letter to his student the artist highlights: "Now I think about Tiachiv. Until now I painted only landscapes, it was necessary for learning color. But the main treasure is hidden in people who live there" [11, 106]. Through such ways of investigating nature the artists tries to approach to compositional decision in the work "Rakotsi march", which remained in numerous draft variants. This work does become dominating theme of the last artist's years of life. In the drafts the artist does not separate out the figure of count Ferents Rakoci II as the leader of liberation revolt but those who supported it – Ruthenian peasants. Taking into consideration analysis of painting heritage of Simon Hollosy during his staying in the artistic colony in Tiachiv as the final phase of his artistic studies it should be mentioned about active creative experiment of the artist. There he demarcates searching for characters (archetypes) for creating "Rakotsi march" which he finds among local peasants. The draft variants are executed by the artist in expressive

technique of plein-air painting [5, 56]. From the other side Simon Hollosy searches for spatial, compositional and coloristic decision for this work, experimenting in painting environment. When analyzing painting works created in Tiachiv colony, perfection of painting genre can be observed where compositional and coloristic decisions sound controversially.

As fine art experts affirm nearly 1910 in painting of Hollosy one can find distinctive changes of visual language. He actively works in landscape painting, continues his work on the drafts of "Rakotsi march" and creates two self-portraits. On this stage of creative improvement in his works one can find monumentality and generalization which the artist tried to convey by means of colorful spot [11, 122]. Such an approach gives him an opportunity to focus on coloristic tasks and building space of picture. One of the characteristic peculiarities which appear especially in landscape is compositional experiment. The artist turns away from traditional ways of filling painting area (rules of academic tradition); he utilizes compositional means for depicting image of nature in his idea of selected motive as the result of investigation. He forms compositional background of a picture in some cases, created relative misbalance of activities on surface, moving tonally dynamic elements and thus freeing tonal spot in other sector of a picture, the so called "calmness zone". Such tendency is vividly seen in the following works: "Landscape near Tiachiv" (1910), "Peasant landscape" (1912), "Spring over the river" (1916). Considering ways of composing the works, both compositional and coloristic, it is necessary to focus on the most significant. The mentioned works allow to find from the point of view of formal analysis regularities and principles which an artist uses and which are different by their structure from academic tasks and principles. Mostly he uses plane as zone of visual calmness. The most characteristically this tendency is seen in the above mentioned works. In the work "Landscape near Tiachiv" (1910) Simon Hollosy applies compositional scheme which is not compliant with canons of academic studying. The master conditionally segments the plane of painted picture to four parts. Active tonal, contrast structure goes diagonally from lower left segment to upper right one. In this case an artist frees a calm background in upper left and lower right segments.

Trying to separate dynamic and passive sectors of work's space Simon Hollosy paints his "Landscape near Tiachiv" (1912). Dominating plane of painting is focused on depiction of celestial background. Urban environment plays supplementing role (occupies not significant lower part of work), in which the artist applies symmetry in its segmenting. Together with this asymmetric plane of sky is interpreted as conclusively volumetric. Except dynamic structural strokes on celestial background a painter pictures clouds which demonstrate the third dimension on plane of painting with realistic depth. Main characteristic of composing work is realistic way of interpreting and transition of corporeity and mood of sunny day. The artist demonstrates similar compositional approach on more than one occasion, turning to the structure of celestial background in other paintings: "Suburb of Tiachiv" (1910), "Tiachiv motive" (?) and "River" (?). Special feature of these landscapes is depicting of summer sky, what possibly became one of ordinary tasks while making drafts to

“Rakotsi march”, because an important element of this environment is reproduction of illusiveness of dimensional dynamics.

The artist uses similar destructive compositional schemes in other landscape works. Similar to Claude Monet Simon Hollosy creates “Stacks” (1912) with different illumination while painting sitting on one place. But difference is not mainly in technical means of performing but in contentive. Painting of Simon Hollosy evolves into “state of soul” differing from “state of seen” in Claude Monet. “Stacks” made by Simon Hollosy are material and written under impression from seen. [11, 112]. In this case turning back to compositional structure makes possible to see segmenting of tonal spots on left edge of the work and accent on the right one. Upper right part is used as a segment of calmness. Applying such unusual treating of compositional environment the artist focuses on reconstruction of color mode of the picture. To such compositional experiment he applies in his work “Peasant’s yard with cart” (1912). His etude perfection is characterized with contentive and compositional dominants. The elements of landscape are built a little bit fragmentally: a part of landscape, a cart in the foreground, the background is supplemented with the element of landscape. Compositional activity of the work is built diagonally, close to square, the format of picture enhances the dynamics of work which is conventionally divided diagonally into two parts. But this task is solved by the author due to color balancing of vibration of celestial background and falling shadow on the house, which is created “airily” due to blue and purple color gradations. Dynamics of tonal contrasts on the depicted cart is balanced with activity of falling shadow and light onto house, in this manner an artist balances space of picture. The level of solving difficult professional tasks which are put by Simon Hollosy, determines him not only as a good pedagogue but also prove about him as about a virtuous practician-painter.

Landscape of Simon Hollosy is characterized with dynamic and strong color structures which are performed using layers of values. Dimensional corporeity, one of characteristic peculiarities of realistic treating, is enriched with impressionist means of combining luxury of reflexes and local color with sufficient quantity of tonal correlations [7, 50]. Trying to solve the problem of coloristics, the artist turns to realists and impressionists, regarding their achievements as means of performing painting tasks. In landscapes of the last artist’s period one can find constant creative experiment, in which composition and color are involved as main elements in composing and creating the idea of work.

Pedagogic activity of the artist takes significant place in his creation. The artist shares his experiments and creative implementations with his students. A lot of artists from Eastern Europe, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Romania comes to the artist for studying. As Dobuzhinskiy writes in his memoirs: “Everything he talked about – with huge passion and sincerity – was significantly thinner than corrections of Ažbe. He always accented on peering into character and individuality of nature. Unlike Ažbe he did not propose ready formulas and with this he was totally alien to “academism” [3,

160]. In this case the subjective point of view is shown which gives possibility to compare advantages of pedagogic systems. The main difference of such pedagogues as Anton Ažbe and Simon Hollosy is contrariety of views on pedagogic theory which consisted in understanding role of nature and laws of picture's plane, principles of understanding and feeling forms of nature 9, 52 ...

Environment of art colony in Tiachiv characteristically formed genre of landscape as one of possible studying ways. This genre in timely European art on the beginning of XX century gradually exhausted itself and was replaced with synthesis of genres and later on - its leveling. Prevailing activity of Hollosy's turning to landscape presents new place and quality of this genre in visual art. The artist uses it as means of creative self-perfection. Artistic environment of the colony in Tiachiv was saturated with ideas which had post-expressionist character. As art critics say in the process of creative perfection Simon Hollosy demonstrates how own evolution passing through the stages of European modernism starting from anti-academic protest and finishing with ways of using subjective existentialism [8, 123]. The artist rejects the rules gained in former years leaving for him a tool of cognition and realizing ideas according to creative concept.

Consequently in the process of formalistic analysis of painting works by Simon Hollosy in his last period in art colony of Tiachiv a genre of landscape appears in renewed form. The way of studying and self-perfection through means of perceiving nature are reproduced by the artist in landscape painting taking into consideration Tiachiv landscapes. In this respect he demonstrates ways to conscious solving tasks in composition and coloristic. Through natural environment the artist selects the creative tool different from sophisticated rules of academic school. Such ways and principles of artistic thinking he realizes in students' environment who work together with their tutor. From other side Simon Hollosy uses experiment as the way of implementing innovation thus forming tradition to which a lot of artists including the artists from Zakarpattia in XX century apply.

Such ways of perception of natural environment in the focus of creative self-perfection or ways of implementing creative concepts are up to date nowadays as well. Interpreting the ways of perceiving the way things are and implementing the ideas of own existentialism are timeless and can be used not regarding directions in art nowadays.

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