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## **BETWEEN THE IMMANENCE AND COGNITION: ALEXANDER ARCHIPENKO'S CREATIVE EXPERIENCES**

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The article explores the creative experience of Alexander Archipenko (1887–1964), a prominent innovative sculptor of the 20th century, compared with well-known representatives of Modernism. A number of the sculptor's artistic experiments have been identified. Alexander Archipenko paved the way for subsequent generations, including Henry Moore, Pablo Gargallo, Giacomo Manzù, Alberto Giacometti, Ossip Zadkine, Alexander Calder, Antoine Pevsner, Katarzyna Kobro, Marthe Donas, David Smith, Jean Arp, Barbara Hepworth, and a plethora of 21st-century artists. The influence of the ideological concepts of the 20th-century artistic process on the formation of Archipenko's artistic paradigm has been proven.

A parallel between Cubist explorations in the paintings of Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, and Albert Gleizes and the sculpture of Alexander Archipenko has been traced. As a result of analyzing the circle of mutual influences, standard features between Alexander Archipenko's works and key figures of Modernism have been identified. The controversial nature of the sculptor's work, which accumulated cultural and national components as well as a universal mode of thinking, has been examined. The typical nature of the artist's works with the artifacts of the culture of his native land has been outlined. The shared visual features and internal content have been identified. Shape, line, color, and texture were the primary means of expression that exhibited similarities. This set of fundamental concepts, developed by Archipenko, holds a significant place in the contemporary artistic process.

He was among the first sculptors to reduce plastic forms to integral, concise objects. Alexander Archipenko influenced the development of many famous artists of the 20th century. Researching the figurative and semantic range of Alexander Archipenko's work, it was concluded that his creative approach followed a structured and systematic process. The artist absorbed the multicultural experiences of humanity while asserting his individuality. At the initial stages of visual realization, the sculptor relied on intuition, which served as a driving force to create a cohesive, logically structured plastic image. In his ideological beliefs, Alexander Archipenko turned to the concept of Universalism. By internalizing the fundamental principles of universal intelligence, he developed his methodological approach to thinking. Alexander Archipenko's active fascination with experimental practices contributed to the discovery of his key innovations. The artist often engaged in meditative

practices that contributed to forming his inner creative content – both as an individual and as an artist – while manifesting in the plastic visualization of his thoughts.

*Keywords:* Alexander Archipenko's art, sculptor, 20th century, Modernism, plastic art.

**Introduction.** There are controversial opinions about the impacts on the development of Archipenko's art (1887–1964) paradigm. Many art historians take the position of the sculptor's formation by synthesis of the universal cultural experiments. The important argument for this is the sculptor's leaving for Paris in 1908 [11, p. 183] and never returning to Kyiv, his entering the polycultural space of the city and getting acquainted with many museum artifacts. Archipenko's contradictory statements about his equal Ukrainian and Chinese affiliation [12, p. 36] were important in proving the transnational character of his art. There is no doubt that Universalism formed the background of his art. "Fundamentally, it consists of the apprehension and use of the rudimentary constructive forces of nature: by continuing nature's process of perpetual transformations from one thing into another; by rearranging its fundamental elements in a new order evolving into a new aspect" [7, p. 27].

**Analysis of studies and publications.** The research was primarily based on the publication "Archipenko: Fifty Creative Years 1908–1958" (1960) [7] by Alexander Archipenko and fifty art historians. The sculptor's conceptual framework encompasses a broad spectrum of reflections on the Universe, metaphysics, the philosophy of art, symbolism, shape, style, sculpto-painting, polychromy, space, line, etc. The ideological and philosophical content of the analyzed topics allows for constructing a comprehensive understanding of the fullness of Archipenko's creative work. Attention is drawn to Synko's work "The Creativity of Alexander Archipenko in the First Quarter of the 20th Century" (1996) [5]. The author emphasizes the significance of the most productive period of the sculptor's life during the 1910 s–1920 s. Through a series of examples – namely, reminiscences of primitive forms from his childhood, Baroque, color, and the symbolism of the Ukrainian philosophy of Modernism – the researcher confirms the inspirational sources of the sculptor. During the research, the exhibition catalogue "Alexander Archipenko: Vision and Continuity" (2005) [6] by Leshko was considered. Leshko served as the curator of the exhibition, which was organized to mark the opening of the new Ukrainian Museum building in New York. The exhibition was organized in collaboration with the sculptor's widow, Frances Archipenko Gray, and the curator of the Archipenko Foundation, Alexandra Keiser.

**The research aims** to determine whether the work of Alexander Archipenko belongs to cultural and national identity or universal experiences. The research employs the methods of comparative analysis, synthesis, and generalization.

**Main part.** What differs the sculptor from the other artists who expressed themselves through the prism of the universal natural forms or the collective unconscious, among whom were Constantin Brancusi, Alberto Giacometti, Alexander Calder, Piet Mondrian, Henry Moore, Jackson Pollock, and David Smith? What creates this individualism in Archipenko's art? American art historian Katharine Kuh wrote that from beginning to end, Archipenko was the Ukrainian who

seemed to be closer to the East, not to the West. Byzantine's golden ornament and linearity are so manifested in his art that sometimes even overshadow its energy [13, p. 8]. However, there were Archipenko's opposite words: "Who knows if I would think in that way if the Ukrainians did not light the feeling of grief for something, which I do not know myself" [2, p. 8, 9]. The background of the artistic plastic code accumulated the basis of the archetype, peculiar to different world cultures and traditions. Alexander Archipenko absorbed the impacts of the ancient art of Assyria, Egypt, Hinduism, early Byzantium, Gothic, and archaic Greece [16, p. 18]. The Cubism ideas in painting, developed by Paul Cézanne, Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, and Albert Gleizes, were reflected in Archipenko's sculptural objects. The conglomerate of the Paris artistic ideas profoundly influenced Archipenko. The common feature of the figurative-plastic language is evident in Raymond Duchamp-Villon's *Football Players* (1905) and Archipenko's *Head on Knee* (1909). Similar forms of the figure unite Henri Matisse's *Dance* (1910) and Archipenko's sculptural objects *Salomé* (1910), *Dancers* (1912–1913), and *Blue Dancer* (1913–1918) [II. 3–4]. A parallel can be drawn between *Gondolier* (1914), *Bather* (1915), and the metaphysical space of Giorgio de Chirico [16, p. 18]. The principle of moving parts, being in the background of Futurism theory, had accumulated in the conception of Archipentura. The sculptor used monumental forms in seeking visual image objects; among them were *Woman (Head on Knee)* (1909), *Woman with Cat* (1911), and *Bather* (1912). Heavy generalized masses, the art of archaic origin, were dominant in Paul Gauguin, André Derain, Pablo Picasso, Constantin Brancusi's *The Kiss* (1907), and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's sculptures.

However, Archipenko also recalled the idol in the yard of Saint Vladimir Royal University, where the artist had grown up [15, p. 18]. He and Ukrainian sculptor Ivan Kavaleridze participated in Mazaraki's archaeological expeditions [5, p. 74]. The artist's figurative-plastic thinking was formed based on integrity, which achieved maximum expressiveness of the work. Sviatoslav Hordynsky, in *Archipenko: Fifty Creative Years, 1908–1958*, wrote about the archaic nature of the sculptor's art, that Archipenko came from the territory of Ukraine. One of the artistic forms – meander, carved on a mammoth tusk – appeared there. There was a new Trypillia culture with its ceramic ornament, based on the play of rounded and turned away lines, creating cycles of famous dynamic abstractions found there in Archipenko's youth [10, p. 1]. Archipenko's work *Queen of Sheba* (1961) [II. 5, 6] proves ornamental texture. The head of the sculpture has a common foundation with the figures of Trypillia. Such plastic solutions can be found in Archipenko's *Vase Woman* (1918–1919), *Vertical* (1947), *Dualism* (1954), *The Ray* (1956), *Revolving Figure* (1956), *Flying* (1957), and others. The smooth line was the distinctive feature of ancient primitive figures. Does the curving silhouette of the *Linear Oriental* (1961) sculpture have a common nature with forms of Trypillia or Yves Klein's *Anthropometry* (1960)? The sculpture material of Trypillia's small forms was terracotta. Archipenko, being in California, created a series of works in this technique. Wasn't it the subconscious impulse of his early years' memory? It is known that Pablo Picasso used terracotta as a material for his plastic seeking [14]. Umberto Boccioni's composition *Development of a Bottle in Space* (1913) could be a powerful inspirational source using Archipenko's space elements.

Alternatively, was it the influence of the young vision of the “iconostasis in the Cathedral of St. Sophia, the Pecherska Lavra (Monastery of the Caves), and other churches in Kyiv? The icons are surrounded by elaborately carved eighteenth-century enframements, with gilded surfaces and deep voids which create an interplay of volume and void and convex/concave shapes that would become Archipenko’s central concern [6, p. 26]. Archipenko could express concisely a metaphysical idea. Sviatoslav Hordynsky, in his *Alexander Archipenko and His Place in Ukrainian Art*, wrote, “I remember, a year after Povstenko’s book appearing about St. Sophia of Kyiv, I met him in his studio and the mentioned book on the shelf beside him. Incredible, incredible book”, he said, “it reminds me so much! How often I ran to the Cathedral and just at the door I wondered how and why mosaics are seen well from a distance.” He took the book and opened at the marked page, “Look at this St. Gabriel, the whole figure is divided into rhombuses, triangles, a ball, and ovals. These forms are set up to show the moment forward. There is a human figure, but there is also a geometric construction with the rhythmic movement, and this rhythm harmonizes with concave bows of architecture” [3, p. 45]. The principle of order, operated by the sculptor within his creative process, had a common nature with the sacred works of his childhood [9, p. 7].

Alexander Archipenko used smalt and mosaics of mother-of-pearl in his *Rose Torso* (1928), *Venus* (1954), *Revolving Figure* (1956), and *Oceanic Madonna* (1957). Frederick S. Wight asked a series of rhetorical questions: “The elongated figure that is Archipenko’s own, is she not essentially Byzantine? Is not the characteristic oval head her Byzantine head from now on, and her drapery, which is part of her physical and spiritual anatomy, in its series of planes and cones (oftentimes later ribbed or grained), the essence of Byzantine drapery?” [16, p. 18]. The artist used the aesthetic selection that is the background of the compositional structure of iconography. Using Plexiglass in transparent sculptures illuminated inside confirms Archipenko’s sacred affinity. The image-thematic line is formed by such compositions as *Vertical* (1947), *Religious Motif* (1948), *Ascension* (1950), and *Spirit* (1957). László Moholy-Nagy created the *Inverted Curve* (1946) composition, the transparent, abstract form with the standard figurative-plastic features found in Archipenko’s works. The sculptor used bronze for his rounded forms *Flat Torso* (1914), *Spring Torso* (1925), *The Ray* (1956), and others. Aren’t these the reminiscences of golden domes from his childhood? Although Brancusi’s *Bird in Space* (II. 7) contains the standard features of figurative-plastic language and techniques found in Archipenko’s series of objects. The influence of ethnic traditions on a subconscious level is an important factor in the formation of the artist’s individualism. The valuable comparison of the nature of the sculptor’s creative work was made in Jaroslaw Leshko’s *Alexander Archipenko: Vision and Continuity* (1950) catalogue: “Indeed, Ukraine’s vibrant, colorful tradition of folk art – its native costumes, embroideries, Easter egg designs, and other crafts, often resolved in startling abstract patterns – left a lasting impression on artists as diverse as Kasimir Malevich and Igor Stravinsky” [6, p. 24].

Alexander Archipenko widely used polychrome in sculpture. Color, which was actively practiced by German Expressionists and Robert Delaunay, František Kupka [8, p. 82], and Fernand Léger, was not stayed away from in the sculptor’s

visual experience. Jean Arp's polychrome compositions, in which curved forms were superimposed, draw a parallel to Archipenko's sculpto-painting. Are these the collage variants [1, p. 2] used by Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, and Juan Gris? The emotional character of Archipenko's inner world made for an unceasing search for plastic and technical solutions. Archipenko mentioned, "I believe in metaphysical forces myself, which we, the Ukrainians, see in such real forms as the Ukrainian sun, the Ukrainian black earth, and above all, the Ukrainian bread. They, these forces, satiate us with creative vigor. Who has eaten the Ukrainian bread that one has drawn from the inexhaustible treasure of the Ukrainian spirit? I carried this metaphysical Ukrainian force around the world to America. These forces, which I use in my creative work, I draw from Ukrainian spirituality, which is a source in Ukrainian land, Ukrainian history, and tradition" [4].

The subconscious connection that joins the artist with his ethnic background is a powerful impulse in the pursuit of creative individualism. "Wherever we are and in what circumstances we live, we have to keep the Ukrainian spirituality not only traditionally but creatively. One of the reporters emphasized that I am interested in the universal creative process. It is true. We have to try to catch and get all the best from the spirituality of other peoples, but meanwhile, at any price, we have to keep our Ukrainian spirituality because only it can be the main source of art" [4]. The examination of Archipenko's phenomenon needs specific points of view on the deep roots of the spiritual tradition in the cultural-anthropological dimension. Throughout their artistic years, the sculptor retained his individualism, that "another one", which set him apart from other famous figures of the 20th century and, at that time, created that uniqueness because of which Alexander Archipenko differs by his methodology.

**Conclusions.** The paradigm of Archipenko's art had been formed by the synthesis of the world's polycultural practices and it had accumulated his ethnic background on a spiritual level. The advantage of the subconscious factors gained from universal cultural experiences informing Archipenko's individualism has a controversial character. Hence, the formation of the integrity of the author's art methodology of the sculptor was determined by the interaction of the following factors:

- The experience of the sculptor's early creative years of symbolism was embodied by using polished bronze, illuminated transparent Plexiglass, mosaic planes, and curved silhouettes in his artistic process.

- The admiration of the concept of ritualism in the cultural practices of ancient Ukraine and other world primitive cultures influenced the character of shaping and techniques, expressed in the mechanics of the art image creation, particularly in the artist's series of terracotta.

- Cubism in the paintings of Paul Cézanne, Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, and Albert Gleizes was the stimulus of geometry in figurative-plastic solutions in sculpture.

- The experience of polychrome of German Expressionism as well as a reminiscence of color in folk art.

- The principle of movement, which was the main Manifesto of Futurism theory, was embodied in his early sculptures, particularly Médrano I (1912–1914) and the invention of Archipentura.

- Archipenko's art experiences were determined through the interaction of the immanent understanding of the plastic form and gained past and present cultural influences.

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## МІЖ ІМАНЕНТНІСТЮ ТА ПІЗНАННЯМ: ТВОРЧІ ДОСВІДИ ОЛЕКСАНДРА АРХИПЕНКА

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Досліджено творчий досвід Олександра Архипенка (1887–1964) – видатного скульптора-новатора ХХ ст. – у контексті із відомими представниками епохи модернізму. Проаналізовано низку ряд мистецьких експериментів майстра, що визначали його унікальний внесок у розвиток світової скульптури. Олександр Архипенко прокладав шлях наступним поколінням, серед яких – плеяда мистців ХХІ ст., зокрема Генрі Мур, Пабло Гаргальо, Джакомо Манцу, Альберто Джакометті, Осип Цадкін, Олександр Колдер, Антуан Певзнер, Катажина Кобро, Марта Донас, Девід Сміт, Жан Арп, Барбара Хепворт. Доведено вплив ідейних думок художнього процесу ХХ ст. на становлення мистецької парадигми Олександра Архипенка. Відстежено паралель кубістичних пошуків у живописі Жоржа Брака, Пабло Пікассо, Альберта Глеза та скульптура Олександра Архипенка. Визначено спільні риси в творах Олександра Архипенка й відомих представників епохи модернізму. Проаналізовано контрверсійну основу творчості скульптора, яка акумулювала в собі як культурно-національну складову, так і універсальну площину мислення. Окреслено спільну природу творів мистця із артефактами культури його рідної землі. Показано чимало їх візуальних рис та внутрішнього змісту. Головними засобами виразності були форма, лінія, колір та фактура. Сукупність базових концептів Олександра Архипенка є помітною у сучасному художньому процесі. Він був одним із перших скульпторів, хто зводив свої пластичні форми до цілісних, лаконічних об'єктів, вплинув на становлення плеяди мистців ХХ ст. У процесі дослідження образно-сміслового діапазону творчості Олександра Архипенка дійшли висновку, що його діяльність – упорядкований системний процес. Мистець увібрав полікультурні досвіди людства, водночас утверджуючи свій власний індивідуальний стиль. На початках реалізації візуального втілення скульптор вдавався до інтуїтивної складової. Вона відігравала роль рушійного фактора із подальшою метою створення цілісного логічно-структурованого пластичного образу. У своїх ідейних переконаннях Олександр Архипенко звертався до концепції універсалізму. Осягнувши основні засади всесвітнього розуму, скульптор вибудовував авторську методологію мислення. Активне захоплення експериментальними досвідами сприяло його головним відкриттям. Мистець часто використовував медитативні практики, завдяки яким сформувався внутрішній контент його особистості, а також відображено у пластичній візуалізації його думок.

*Ключові слова:* творчість Олександра Архипенка, скульптор, ХХ ст., модернізм, пластичне мистецтво.

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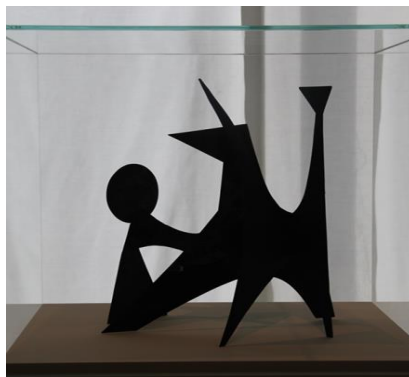
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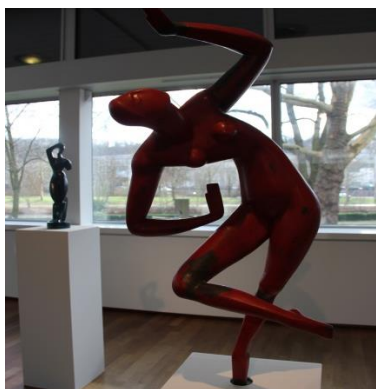
## Додатки



Il. 1. Alberto Giacometti, *Femme, épaule cassée* (Frau, gebrochene Schulter), Woman, Broken Shoulder, 1958/59, Bronze, Acquired in 1987, Inv.-Nr. SGP 216, Kunsthalle Mannheim, Germany.  
Photo: Mariya Klymenko



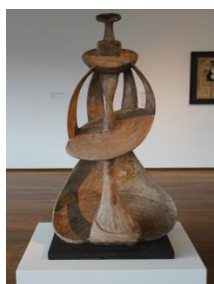
Il. 2. Alexander Calder, *Le Bougnat* (Der Kohlenhändler), 1959, sheet metal, black framed. Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.  
Photo: Mariya Klymenko



Il. 3. Alexander Archipenko, *Blauer Tanz, Danse bleue*, Blue Dancer, 1913, Plaster. Moderne Galerie - Saarlandmuseum Saarbrücken, Germany.  
Photo: Mariya Klymenko



Il. 4. Exhibition of Alexander Archipenko's Sculptures in Moderne Galerie - Saarlandmuseum Saarbrücken, Germany.  
Photo: Mariya Klymenko



Il. 5. Alexander Archipenko, *Königin von Saba (Queen of Sheba)*, 1961, plaster, 168 x 78,5 x 47, 5 cm. Inv.-Nr. NI 5018. Moderne Galerie Saarlandmuseum Saarbrücken, Germany. Photo: Mariya Klymenko



Il. 6. Alexander Archipenko, *Königin von Saba (Queen of Sheba)*. Fragment.  
Photo: Mariya Klymenko



Il. 7. Constantin Brancusi, *Bird in Space*, 1927/1999. The Simon Spierer Collection. A Forest of Sculptures. Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt, Germany.  
Photo: Mariya Klymenko