

# SYMBOLS AND MYTHOLOGICAL PICTURE OF THE WORLD THROUGH UKRAINIAN FOLK SONGS

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The article is devoted to the cultural analysis of traditional Ukrainian symbols based on the texts of Ukrainian folk songs. This article presents a brief description of Ukrainian folk - song heritage, makes the division into thematic genres and describes specific and stylistic features of each, and then analyses the most traditional mental symbols associated with everyday human life, with activities, feelings, and attempts to understand the meaning of life and to find a way to harmony with the world. In the study, the author draws on numerous research results of philosophers and linguists on the formation of a symbol and linguistic view of the world of a certain nation, uses ancient texts of traditional Ukrainian folk songs of different genres for the cultural analysis.

**Keywords:** linguistic view of the world, mentality, symbol, song genres, traditionalism, metamorphoses.

Cholodova, Uljana. "Symbols And Mythological Picture Of The World Through Ukrainian Folk Songs". *idil* 6.39 (2017): 3035-3058.

Cholodova, U. (2017). Symbols And Mythological Picture Of The World Through Ukrainian Folk Songs. *idil*, 6 (39), s.3035-3058.

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# СИМВОЛЫ И МИФОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ ОБРАЗ МИРА НА ОСНОВЕ УКРАИНСКИХ НАРОДНЫХ ПЕСЕН

## АННОТАЦИЯ

Статья посвящена культурному анализу традиционных украинских символов на основе текстов украинских народных песен. В этой статье представлено краткое описание украинского народно-песенного наследия, деление на тематические жанры и описание конкретных и стилистических особенностей каждого, а затем анализируются самые традиционные ментальные символы, связанные с повседневной человеческой жизнью, с ее действиями, чувствами и попытками понять смысл жизни и найти способ гармонии с миром. В своем исследовании автор опирается на многочисленные результаты исследований философов и лингвистов по формированию символа и лингвистического взгляда на мир определенной нации, использует древние тексты традиционных украинских народных песен разных жанров для культурного анализа.

**Ключевые слова:** лингвистический образ мира мир, менталитет, символ, жанры песни, традиционализм, метаморфозы.

Nowadays, learning about linguistic pictures of the world relating to different types of consciousness, known as ordinary, artistic and scientific (Бикова 1996/1997: 411), is truly reviving. To study all types of consciousness, the scholars apply one of the most commonly used methods – a comparative one. We are talking about finding a certain standard or example. Exemplary or subjective focusing on defined stereotypes has become a general structural principle that unites the processes of perception, cognition, and linguistic pictures of the world (Лякофф 1981: 368).

The peculiarities of linguistic pictures of the world are based on the identity of the empirical and symbolic universes of different people. The concept of the empirical universe includes natural and climatic conditions, typical kinds of economic activity, and the symbolic universe which includes folk traditions, mythology, literature, art, and the so called cultural automatisms. That is why the differences between national pictures of the world involve differences between cultures in the broadest sense of the word. However, the fixation of these cultural differences is largely linked to language signs, the main role in which it is played by steady comparisons and baseline metaphors.

Comparison, as the main method of all kinds of consciousness, of course, most clearly, significantly, and conclusively dictates its principles in the period of a clash of cultures. On the rational level, it isolates understanding of the very national identity that is beyond comparison, lies within the culture, and is unconsciously perceived by its carriers as a double world (Постовалова 1994: 46).

Stable comparisons reflect the historically important landmarks of cultural heritage that become the words of culture, a peculiar feature of which is “historical stability and internal security from the influence of time” (Постовалова 1984: 207). “Culture as such, Vladimir Toporov says, always appeals to comparison... Comparison of this and that, and native and strange work is a part of someone else's work of culture” (Топоров 1989: 8).

In metaphors, as a latent comparison, scholars also have recently seen the key to understanding of specific national features and the universal image of the world simultaneously (Бикова 1996/1997: 415). The scientific investigations of authors such as Yurii Apresian, Nina Arutiunova, Anna Vezhbytska, Vladimir Hak, Heorhiy Hachev, Yuriy Stepanov, Boris Telin, and others can be used as examples (See In the list of used literature).

The universal image of the world or, in other words, the scientific image of the world is always objective and does not refer to any specific language. It is the result of human cognitive activity, which reflects the current knowledge of a society about the world. The linguistic image of the world, in contrast, is always subjective and forms the perception, thinking, and understanding of the world not only by a specific ethnic group at a given stage of its development, but also at the stage of language, that is, at the stage of initial, naive, pre-scientific knowledge of the world.

Thus, the linguistic image of the world is not the desire to achieve universal identity with a scientific image of the world, but a reflection of a changing world, the emergence of new realities. However, the linguistic picture of the world as a whole is stable because its basic essence is to preserve and generate the everyday simplified structure of the surrounding world from generation to generation and to ensure the continuity of the linguistic thinking of the people who carry a certain language through traditionally formed categories (Корнилов 2003: 16 –19).

Among the metaphors and comparisons that provide the linguistic picture of the world in a verbal form, a significant place is occupied by descriptions of a person's appearance, and his or her inner qualities and activities. For example, in oral folklore, which dates back to antiquity, from pagan to Christian belief, we can find well-established expressions such as comparisons of female and male beauty: brown eyes, black eyebrows, a girl's eyes as dark as a night and as clear as a day ... Thus, these expressions create symbols of male and female beauty - the national portrait.

In comparative metaphorical description of a person's appearance and their inner qualities, the expressions in the language that are most suited to expressing a rational truth and an irrational lie are present (Бикова 1996/1997: 419). As the Austrian writer Robert Musil states, "The metaphor holds a truth and a lie ..." (Музиль 1984: 653). It is an interesting fact that the logic of the linguistic picture of the world of community feeling, particularly its appraised fields, is based on the same principles as the artistic and aesthetic aspects of understanding reality. Thus, analysing stable national comparisons (Юрченко 1993: 58), used during everyday communication, we can see the presence of a ludic element in them that combines "truth" and "lie" in the reflection of the objective reality. In this picture of the world the plants, animals, and objects possess qualities that cannot belong to them in accordance with the objective construction of the world, for example: as foolish as a bean; as carefree as a grass; thinking like an adult pig; as interesting as a priest's pig. People say these as if they were playing with their imagination, decorating birds and animals to assess the appearance of people negatively, or mock the absurdity of their

chosen clothing: as nice as a pig in a necklace; acting like a heron in slippers, and others (Бикова 1996/1997: 420).

"False" metaphors and stable comparisons have the property of increasing the degree of the negativity with the help of special amplifiers: as silly as a hundred pounds of smoke; as silly as an aspen stump, and others. The paradox lies in the fact that according to the logic of objective reality neither smoke nor a stump can be either reasonable or stupid, but as amplifiers they are operating in the emotional sphere of human consciousness. So, "the truth" of the subjects of objective reality and "the lie" in the language world are organically intertwined. In addition, native speakers use these categories mainly unconsciously, and they do not even notice "the lie", intuitively combining it with "the truth". The extreme conservative unconsciousness of a person, who creates a linguistic picture of the world that includes sustainable basic metaphors and stable comparisons, should also be noted (Бикова 1996/1997: 420).

During the observation and perception of the surrounding world, the human brain responds not only to direct information coming from visual perception, but also to the information on the so-called past experience (one's own human experience or the experience of distant ancestors). Thus, the natural environment and ancestral experience of the previous generations significantly affect the formation of the national mentality. After all, "... every nation essentially is itself as long as the special climate, seasons, landscape, national cuisine remain unchanged ... because they continually feed and reproduce national being and thinking" (Корнилов 2003:164). The national consciousness, formed under the influence of these factors, creates a vocabulary that does not have an adequate counterpart in other languages (Корнилов 2003:162). Consequently, the collective ethnic consciousness and thus, the national linguistic picture of the world are created. Each national picture of the world has its inherent exceptional features that play a special role in the formation of the national character and the national mentality.

In the Ukrainian national mentality, we usually meet deep traditional symbols related to the world of flora and fauna, and celestial bodies. This symbolic reality accompanied a man in all the rituals from birth to death: no wedding in Ukraine was held without periwinkles and guelder roses, which decorated the loaf and the wreath of the bride. The decorations and symbols included the fruit of the guelder rose, basil, and ears of rye, which decorated the wedding tree. Willow twigs that were consecrated in churches on Palm Sunday a week before Easter Sunday served as whips for family members, most importantly the children, wishing them health and wealth (Бикова 1996/1997: 419). The symbolic actions involving plants meant that

these periods are important milestones in life, and hinted at further developments of events in life: faded, scattered, and trampled rue was associated with lost virginity, a felled poplar or guelder rose with the engagement and marriage of a girl.

So, if the metaphor, which is an iconic background of a symbol's appearance, is attributed to linguistic competence, the symbol is attributed to the cultural one. A symbol does not take a predicative position, but it expresses a general idea of a similar nature, which is why it represents the whole situation; not being attributive, it does not apply to the field of semantics. A symbol is correlated with the reality while a metaphor, by contrast, is masking this reality. The meaning of a symbol cannot be deciphered as a simple effort of the mind; it exists in the collective consciousness of a certain cultural group, including ethnic groups in a ready-made form and is withdrawn when needed. The symbol never belongs to the same synchronic point in culture; it always pierces it vertically, being based on past experience and going forward into the future (Селіванова 2010: 646).

The purpose of this article is to consider some characteristic symbols and images of Ukrainian folk songs, and decode their semantics as the foundation of the national culture, integrated in the global world context of the sacred consciousness and its transition to a stereotype that is in use not only as a factor in the inertia of thinking, but as an important factor in cognition about the world, ideology, and pragmatism. The Ukrainian folk songs, as an integral part of oral folklore, became the broad object of the study. Therefore the subject of our analysis includes just some of the main symbols and their reflection in specific song genres.

People have lived in the world of symbols since ancient times – since the late Paleolithic period. Even then, man gave a certain symbolic value and meaning to the environment: constellations, plants, and animals. In the Neolithic period the symbolism became deeper and wider. Primitive religion and art could not be dealt without symbols. It is believed that symbolism prospered among the hunting and early agricultural tribes inhabiting Southeastern Europe (which is also the territory of modern Ukraine) and Asia Minor during the fifth and fourth millennia B.C.

The problem of the origin and occurrence of a symbol has not yet been sufficiently investigated in the world of theoretical thought. The theories of symbols originate in the period of antiquity. Since then and till the present day the views on the nature of symbols, their functions and role, and their place in the lives of people and society have remained rather contradictory and ambiguous.

Aristotle interpreted the symbol as a sign the meaning of which is a sign of a different origin or language. Plato considered the symbol to be a part of something

higher but not of a sign nature, the value of which cannot always be clearly fixed, but because of this it can serve as a transition from the rational sphere to the world of the irrational in which the essence of the symbol can be discerned through the medium of images that arise intuitively, spontaneously, or on the verge of clairvoyance.

In Neo Platonism, the core category of a symbol has become a central one. It incorporated not only the way from the phenomenon to the essence, but also the possibility of infinite knowledge and interpretation of the symbols through opposites: not verbalized, dark, a mysterious on one hand, and of course, bright on the other.

The period of the middle Ages accentuated the following features: symbols exist to conceal the truth, and also for its detection and cognition. In addition, the knowledge of the higher truth is possible only on the basis of decoding the symbolic images in which the knowledge of fundamental principles of being is placed. The Renaissance period sets the symbol at the centre of the complex cognitive process and emphasizes its aesthetic role.

Classical German philosophy, represented by Immanuel Kant, believed that a symbol was a sensible way of presenting ideas of reason by analogy. The method for how a symbol is recognized is a form of intuitive knowledge of a prototype or an idea, inexhaustible in its entirety and ineffability. Georg Hegel explained a symbol through the sign's nature, meaning, and its expression. The symbol as a mark may only have artistic value when converted into an image. And the image, being a symbolic one, reveals the full range of its properties. Thus, in a symbol, along with the simultaneous imposition of certain properties of the image and the meaning, there are other signs that can be comprehended only in the context of their application. According to Friedrich Schelling, a symbol is where neither the general stands for the specific, nor the specific for the general, but also when they are both absolutely integrated.

In the twentieth century theoretical studies of symbols and symbolism were made by Sigmund Freud, H. Bailey, Carl Jung, Claude Levi - Strauss, Ernst Kasirer, Mircea Eliade, Pavel Florensky, Aleksei Losev, Caren Svasyan, Yerzy Bartminskyi, Olga Gura, and others (See In the list of used literature). In Ukrainian theoretical opinion the original understanding of the symbol begins with the works and treatises of Hryhorii Skovoroda and the works of Mykola Kostomarov and Oleksandr Potebnya. Many interesting observations can be found in the research of Mykhailo Maksymovych, Ivan Sreznevskyi, Osyp Bodyanskyi, Platon Lukashevych, the representatives of the "Rus Trinity" (Yakiv Holovatskyi, Ivan Vahylevych, and Markiy Shashkevych), Ivan Kotliarevskyi, Pavlo Chubinskyi, Ivan Nechui - Levytskyi, Filaret Kolessa, and others (See In the list of used literature).

In recent decades, much attention has been paid to the concepts of a symbol by Svitlana Yermolenko, Vitaliy Kononenko, Ahatanhel Krymskyi, Oleksandr Potapenko, Vitaliy Zhaivoronok, Oleksiy Moisiienko, Nataliya Naumenko, Yaroslav Harasym, and many other scientists (See In the list of used literature). However, the major works on the subject of folklore are not yet sufficient.

Modern theorists of symbols interpret this concept according to O. Potebnya's conception - as an idea that has (or replaces) many meanings: "any sign can have an infinite number of meanings i.e. it can be a symbol" (Ліоцев 1982: 64). To deprive an image of its symbolic meaning, means to release it from the subject the image belongs to (Ліоцев 1976: 144). But the symbol "does not have to be an artistic image" (Ліоцев 1976: 142). Compared to an image, a symbol has a higher semiotic status than the image. The image is a psychological phenomenon, whereas the symbol is a stable functional category of culture.

A symbol performs a strong regulatory and integrative function in a culture. The differentiation of an image and a symbol is difficult because of the extreme ambiguity of the former. This leads to the idea that an image lies in the essence of a symbol. According to Selivanova (Селіванова 2010: 646), it is a rather superficial understanding of this symbol. We can say that some measure of imagery is the basis of the process of symbolisation. In contrast to an image, a symbol is not an image in terms of symbolics. Unlike a sign, a symbol is not just conventional in a lingual and cultural community, but canonized; its semiotic nature is more complicated; it combines different conceptual areas on the basis of the underlying associations; it holds culture in itself.

Addressing Ukrainian song symbols, it should be noted that a great amount of research, including H. Sokil's "Visitationary Calendarian Ritual Songs of Ukrainians: Structural, Semantic and Aesthetic Aspects", T. Kolotylo's "Ukrainian Song Allegory" (2009), Y. Harasym's "National Originality of the Aesthetics of Ukrainian Folk Songs" (2010), M. Dmytrenko's "Symbols of Ukrainian folklore" (2011), and others, has been devoted to this subject. But still there are many symbols that have not been investigated enough, such as dumas (a sung epic poem which originated in Ukraine during the Hetmanate Era), historical, social, housing, humorous, and satirical songs, and kolomyikas (an old Ukrainian folk dance).

Therefore we shall try to orient the research in this insufficiently researched field and analyse separately selected song symbols, defining the range of the ambiguity of symbols found in traditional Ukrainian folk culture.



First of all, a brief description will be given of the present – day Ukrainian folk song heritage. The basis of Ukrainian folk songs includes song lyrics and lyric-epic and epic works (Єфремова 2009: 3). This study will address the review of general symbols, as well as symbols in lyrical, humorous, and ceremonial songs, social lyrics and epics (Cossack songs and ballads, Chumak songs and ballads, and recruiting songs). In addition, the symbols of children's folk songs and ritual songs are described.

One of the most important symbols is undoubtedly water. This symbol as an image is multifaceted, multilevel and polysemantic. According to the original myth, water symbolises the universal, both lower and upper, initial female matter (the land), which in combination with fire (as a representation of the sky) forms the world and becomes the mother of the world and is associated with birth, the source of life, infinity, uncertainty, grace (transparency) and darkness (passivity), relative quiescence (a kind of "sleeping mobility"), subconsciousness, emotions and feelings, a characteristic of a hidden, unrevealed memory, obedience and rebellion, and others (Дмитренко 2011: 89).

Water is a symbol of a woman, a girl, and love. Mykola Kostomarov wrote that "water initially expresses the essence of the matter of a woman, thanks to which fertile and tactile nature of a man all things have happened"; it is a "passive female nature, awakened to fertility by a luminary fire" (Костомаров 1847: 35 – 36).

In Ukraine water symbolised the fatidical and prophetic power. On Ivan Kupala Day the girls did magic on the water, floating wreaths of flowers on rivers, and attempting to gain foresight into their fortunes in relationships from the flowing patterns of the flowers on the river. In Ukrainian folklore the idioms "to bring water", "to want to drink water" and "to water the horse" mean "to love" (Дмитренко 2011: 93):

Галю ж моя Галю, дай води напиться.

Ти ж така хороша, дай хоч подивиться (Written by the author)

Pavlo Chubynskyi also said: "Water is a symbol of health; it is used in spells and entices ... Holy water is used as a cure for all ailments. Such water is taken in the river or in the well at Epiphany. It is usually kept in almost every house" (Чубинський 1992: 10).

According to popular belief, clean water symbolises health, happiness, loyalty and betrayal, while muddy water symbolises sorrow, grief, and greed.

The symbolism of water in established forms has its own specific meaning. For example, the water in the wells often symbolises completeness, an adequacy of something, and inexhaustible love. To pour water means to create obstacles to something, and when the water flows it means the infidelity of a woman or a girl.

Water has many forms: rain, rivers, seas, lakes, ponds, mildew, tears, and others. In all these images the symbolic water appears in oral folklore, particularly in the lyrics of folk songs:

Візьму я коновку,  
Піду я по воду,  
А там хлопці – риболовці  
Козацького роду,  
Візьміть мене у свій човен,  
Перевезіть мене через воду... (Давидюк 2010: 232)

This abstract from a song belongs to the genre of female songs. The girl sits down in a boat in despair because of her unsettled personal life.

Another important element in the structure of the universe and an ancient symbol is fire, which is heaven, earth, or underground (personifying evil spirits). Fire symbolises the sun, light, heat, gold, life, purity (purification), health, love, fertility, hunger, thirst, passion, spiritual power, justice, revenge, wealth, harvest, immortality and death, memory and respect for others, etc. (Дмитренко 2011: 98).

In the "Dictionary of the Symbols of Culture of Ukraine" it is stated: "Fire is a symbol of spiritual energy; transformation and rebirth; the power giving rise to devastating effect; love, fertility; wealth, happiness, family well-being; the sun; connection to the celestial world; family; power; purification from evil; God; other worlds" (Потапенко 1997: 55 –56).

For Ukrainians fire was always like a deity: Svarog, Svarozhych, Dazhbog, Jarylo – the supreme living creature that was worshipped. This primitive cult of fire has been preserved until today. People prayed to fire as well as to the sun and brought offerings (Дмитренко 2011: 98 – 99).

Worshipping fire as a deity was reflected in many rituals, rites, customs, and oral folklore. Funeral bonfires were lit in winter (Christmas), in spring (Easter) and summer (Ivan Kupala – the mythic Slavic character associated the celebration of the summer solstice) and during the autumn weddings. But the Kupala fire (it was jumped

over in pairs) not only symbolised the liberation from malign forces, illnesses, death, and related mythical creatures, but also the beginning of weddings, and the combination of masculine and feminine beginnings (Дмитренко 2011:100). In ancient traditional Ukrainian culture, relics of which have been preserved to the present day, preference was given to images involving the red colour, such as images of fire, family, blood, love, and light (the sun). Towels and shirts had red guarding threads woven into them. Girls wore red skirts, belts, necklaces, and shoes.

In the song domain there are many examples of the embodiment of images of fire – these are songs in various genres, including ceremonial (wedding) and historical songs and ballads.

In the wedding ritual, fire takes a prominent role, specifically the role of the cleansing from all evil, bad habits, ancestral illnesses, and curses. An example of these would be one of the old wedding songs:

Горіла сосна, палала,  
Під нею дівчина стояла,  
Русяву косу чесала,  
Ой коси, коси ви мої,  
Довго служили ви мені,  
Більше служить не будете,  
Під білий вельон підете... (Written by the author)

The symbol of the land in Ukrainian culture embodies several meanings: the astral space symbol, the image of a mother nurse, and the image of the earth – the Fatherland. For Ukrainians the land has always been a means of living and a nurse; moreover, it was "the mother's womb in which not only the physical but also the spiritual human genotype is formed", as well as the spiritual genotype of the society and cultures, nations, and all humanity. Ukraine (ethnicity, language, nation, country, culture, mentality) cannot be understood outside its native land and nature (Дмитренко 2011:105 – 106). Even in the "Annals of Rus" it was stated that the land of Rus was great and rich, generous and beautiful (Кононенко 1994: 105).

In Christian dogma the earth is a place of man's exile from heaven, a symbol of hard work, patience, and repentance, through which the body and the spirit of a man become purified from sin before attaining eternal life in heaven. The comparison of "heaven and earth" is figurative as a measure of not only the spatial dimension but also human spiritual values (Дмитренко 2011:108).

Here we have some examples of the symbolic image of the earth in some song genres. In lyrical and ritual songs we find many descriptions of nature: cherry orchards, oak forests, rivers and streams, forests, native homes, flowers, boundless fields of wheat, rye, oats, flax, and among them blooming cornflowers, poppies, and daisies. The words of lyrical songs convey the atmosphere of idyllic Ukrainian spring and summer evenings full of the twittering of birds, the aroma of different flowers, fresh hay. All these images have become parts of the symbols of Ukraine, the native Ukrainian land which the Cossacks defended for the Christian faith and freedom. For this the Cossacks shed their blood and were ready to die. This patriotic spirit is the basis of the Ukrainian mentality and the image of the land is a holy one. In all the Ukrainian song genres we can find a longing for happiness to live freely on their generous land full of gifts but "the fate of the Ukrainians" tests them under foreign rule in their native land. That is why the most common lyrical theme of Cossack songs, as well as ballads, was a parting of the bride from the groom, the husband from the family, the mother and the son, through work in a foreign land or because of a war:

Ой під калиною трава зелена,  
Там стоїть дівчина та й засмучена.  
Любила милого, любила перший раз,  
Війна проклята та й розлучила нас (Давидюк 2010: 237).

Actually, the situation in Ukraine is the same now and it is also reflected in oral folk art, in poetry. Earlier, Cossacks leaving home and going on the march, said goodbye to their families for ever:

Ой гай, мати, ой гай, мати,  
Ой гай зелененький;  
Виїжджає з України  
Козак молоденький.  
Як виїжджав, шапочку зняв,  
Низенько вклонився:  
Прощай, прощай, громадонько,  
Може з ким сварився (Давидюк 2010: 253).

Among the astral characters, we often meet different images of the moon, the stars, and the sun in song lyrics. For example, the four phases of the moon are symbolic ones: birth, growing (young, full), getting older, and dying. The four seasons of the year supposedly duplicate lunar cycles: in spring everything is born and grows green, in summer everything becomes perfect and reaches its peak, in autumn everything is fading, and it dies in winter. By analogy, man is born, blossoms, gaining strength and health, and then slowly loses it, "withering" with age. People believed in

the healing power of the new moon. They prayed to it as to a deity, asking for health, a good sleep, harvest, and love (Дмитренко 2011:108 – 118).

The moon as a symbol of the creation of the world is often found in carols and New Year songs composed in a triad: the sun, the moon, and the stars. Here it symbolises the man; the sun stands for the woman and the stars for the children: The clear moon is the host; the red sun is the hostess; and the small stars are their children. Later on, the moon began to symbolise the man in songs. In a variety of song genres we can find the rich symbolism of the moon and stars. In the wedding ceremony the moon was compared with the groom and the bride with a star or just the beloved couple as a wonderful parallelism:

Ой ти місяцю, я зіронька ясная.  
Ой ти парубок, я дівчина красная ... (Давидюк 2010: 240).

Among the symbols of flora and fauna, we find the following ones: willow, oak, poplar, cherry, apple-tree and apples, viburnum, periwinkle, crow, dove, cuckoo, falcon, nightingale, horse, and goat.

The symbolic image of the willow exists in the minds of Ukrainians in combination with water images of the river, pond, well, or spring. Willows usually grow near water, in wet river areas. It was considered that a child who planted a willow tree (and it grows even without roots) will have a healthy and happy life, and touching a willow will take away all evil and negative energy.

The motive of love, changing a status (from being single to being married), is connected with images of the willow in folk lyrics. Spring songs, Kupala, and wedding songs are rich in references to the role of a willow tree as a family tree. Thus, the spring song-play "Willow Plate" is a vivid example of the ritual action of the transition to marriage by laying a willow bridge:

Вербовая дощечка, дощечка,  
Там ходила Насточка, Насточка.  
На всі боки леліє, леліє:  
Звідки милий приїде, приїде? (Дмитренко 2011: 130)

Willow Sunday before Easter traditionally remains a great feast. In the churches willow branches are blessed, then they are carried home, and the people whip their relatives with them (especially children and young people) saying: "I'm not

hitting you, the willow is: be as big as a willow tree, as healthy as the water, as funny as spring, and as rich as the earth!" (Дмитренко 2011:131–132).

Cherries and cherry orchards symbolise home, family, and love. Intimacy of the highest form is described in the folk song "In the cherry garden, where the nightingale twittered..." And in the humorous song "Under a cherry, merrily stood the old with the young as with a berry..." a contrastive depiction of youth and old age, and the futility of love relationships are given. The Ukrainian mentality in the cherry wood and in the cherry orchard symbolises the father's home, and the idyll of family comfort and warmth.

The oak tree has long been known as irreligious tree with its protective power guard. The longevity of the oak and its sturdiness reinforce the belief that a god or gods lived in the oak tree, that the oak tree is the centre of the world, combining the world below with the one above, that is, the world of the dead ancestors (the roots) with the living (the trunk) and the gods (the crown reaching the heaven). The diminutive lexeme oakling (dubchuk, dubochok) pointed directly to the young tree, and it symbolically meant a teenager or a boy.

The oak tree also served as a coffin. We have expressions such as дуба врзати, дати дуба, and задубіти. A dry, withered oak symbolises failure in songs, or the Cossack's sorrow; a green one testifies to power, youth, joy, courage, and vitality:

Я ж думала, то дуб зелененький,  
А то стоїть козак молоденький. (Written by the author)

The oak tree symbolises durability, strength in love, or otherwise the oak, from which water flows, symbolises female misfortune:

Ой на горі дуб, дуб, тече вода з дуба;  
Бідна моя голівонька, пішла за нелюба (Written by the author)

Through the image of an oak tree the eternal flow of nature and immediacy of being and the transience of human life are reflected in this recruiting song:

- Дубе, дубе зелений,  
А хто ж тебе рубать буде,  
Дубе, дубе зелений?  
- Хлопче, хлопче, молодий,  
Інший мене рубать буде,  
Хлопче, хлопче, молодий (Written by the author)

In Cossack song themes the oak symbolises strength and courage, and one of the songs calls the dry oak to grow, because the Cossacks are impatient to go on the trek:

Гей, розвивайся, а ти сухий дубе, -  
Завтра мороз буде!...  
Убирайся, молодий козаче, -  
Завтра похід буде.  
Я морозу та й не боюся,  
Зараз розов'юся.  
Я походу та й не боюся, -  
Якраз уберуся!... (Давидюк 2010: 254).

The poplar symbolises Mother Earth, female beauty, harmony, and the mythical transformation of girls, and women into the tree. The image of a poplar is very typical of different love songs; a poplar symbolises the girl in them. Mykhailo Drahomanov (Давидюк 2010: 306) believed that this story and others (heroes' reincarnation into a tree, a bird, or a flower) to be the wandering ones which were borrowed by the Ukrainians from other nations, such as the Greeks (the story of Narcissus). Transformation of daughters-in-law into a poplar tree was presented in one of the Ukrainian ballads:

Ой чиє то сіно, чиї то покоси?  
Ой чиє то сіно, чиї то покоси,  
Чия то дівчина розпустила коси?  
Виряджала мати сина у солдати,  
Виряджала мати сина у солдати,  
Молоду невістку зеленій льон брати.  
- Ой йди, невістко, зелений льон брати,  
Ой йди, невістко, зелений льон брати,  
Не вибереш льону – не вертай до хати.  
Брала льон невістка, брала не добрала,  
Та й посеред поля тополею стала... (Давидюк 2010: 306).

The analogy of a poplar tree with a woman was transformed into the fate of Ukraine, which suffered the evil effects of the enemy's attacks. The poplar, like the willow, became a national symbol of Ukraine.

The apple tree is a symbol of the knowledge of good and evil, of immortality and eternal youth, integrity, purity, earthly desires, simplicity and unpretentiousness, temptation, strife and discord, endurance, and self-sacrifice for the sake of the people of the native land. A ripe apple symbolises the readiness of a girl to get married:

Висит ябко висит, але впасти мусит,  
Котра дівка файна, вийти заміж мусит... (Written by the author)

As far as the viburnum is concerned, it is an ancient and meaningful symbol. Originally, the viburnum symbolised fire and sunlight; later, it acquired other attributes and became a symbol of beauty, health, women, a girl's virginity, love, harmony and fullness of life, motherhood, fertility, family, blood, and sadness. Later, the image of a viburnum was associated with categories such as memory, the native land, homeland, Ukraine, loyalty, struggle, even protests, and Cossacks blood.

In his master's thesis "On some symbols in Slavic folk poetry" (1980) Oleksandr Potebnya wrote:

The viburnum is a symbol of virginity, beauty and love; the qualities of the viburnum – clear, red, hot, refer this word so strongly to the concept of fire that there is no possibility of doubting that it has a common origin with the word to strengthen. Eventually, the symbolic value of the viburnum lessened, and from girls and girls love the name of the tree was transformed into the importance of women in general, that is, any love (Потебня 1860: 45 – 47). The viburnum has many symbolic properties: red berries, white flowers, green leaves, the overall image of the bush in a meadow near the house, etc. Its image is embodied in various song genres: ballads, lyrical (ritual: spring, harvest, wedding songs; non-ritual: about love, family life; social songs: Cossack, Chumak, and recruiting, soldiers' and shooting songs), humorous and satirical ones.

A well-known example of a song with an image of a viburnum is one of the shooting songs, (Давидюк 2010: 291) "A red viburnum in a meadow", the author of which is Stepan Chernetsky:

Ой у лузі червона калина похилилася,  
Чомусь наша слава Україна зажурилася.  
А ми туге червону калину підіймемо,  
А ми нашу славу Україну розвеселимо (Давидюк 2010: 292).

The image of a periwinkle – the plant with evergreen leaves has symbolised youth, immortality, true love, beauty, loyalty, harmonious relationships, home, and others. This multifaceted symbol is widely reflected in songs of different genres: it showed unrestrained feelings and passionate love, or the betrayal of a girl or a boy:

Стелися барвінку, буду поливати,



Вернися Іванку, буду шанувати,  
Скільки не стелився, ти не поливала,  
Скільки не вертався, ти шанувала (Written by the author)

The bird symbolised the human soul, lightning, wind, storms, thunder, light, and the sparkling and hot rays of the sun, spring, the harvest, and goodness. But the Biblical birds are divided into clean (those which can be eaten) and unclean ones (those that are not used as food). The birds of prey were placed among the unclean ones: eagles, vultures, falcons, ravens, owls, hawks, swans, pelicans, storks, herons, and others which ate meat, fish, or carrion. The ancient traditions give still other symbols for some birds, some negative, for example, a crow.

The crow is a harbinger of suffering and death, violence and war, an emblem of folly and vanity, praising, inattentiveness, and laziness.

According to Vitaliy Kononenko, "the crow symbolises stupid, bad, unkind, ugly things, etc., and is often used to describe an ugly woman or sometimes a man..." (Кононенко 2001: 223 – 224).

Ворон кряче в вишині, більше сил немає  
Білосніжня лелека очі затуляє.  
Чи побачу ще колись всю свою родину,  
Чи побачу ще колись вільну Україну? (Голубенко, 2000: 92)

Unlike a crow, a dove is a symbol of the Great Goddess and, the Holy Spirit and in folk songs it is a symbol of true love, harmony, and tenderness (Потапенко, 1997: 73).

Ой там на горі  
Ой там на крутій,  
Ой там сиділа  
Пара голубів.

Сиділи вони,  
Милувалися  
Сивими крильми  
Обнімалися.

Десь взявся стрілець,  
Десь взявсь молодий,  
Узяв розлучив

### Папу голубів (Written by the author)

The next symbol is the symbol of a cuckoo which is represented in the Ukrainian mentality and Ukrainian folk songs as a harbinger of misery, death, orphanhood, widowhood, sadness, and longing for the past. According to the folk beliefs the cuckoo could "cuckoo" for many years, and thus, foresee a human's lifespan. Different regions of Ukraine have different interpretations of the image of a cuckoo. In "The Tale of Igor's Campaign" Yaroslavna wants to turn into a cuckoo and fly to her enslaved husband. In the Ukrainian Cossack songs about the death of a beloved man, the cuckoo flies to his grave. Either a mother or daughter turns into a cuckoo and arrives to help in times of trouble:

Летіла зозуля, та й стала кувати,

А то не зозуля, то рідная мати... (Written by the author)

The symbol of a falcon can often be met in historical songs. It is a symbol of courage and bravery. Nature has endowed the falcon with a proud look, bright flight, keen sight, knowledge, and the gift of foresight. This is confirmed in carols, legends, and dumas. In the duma of the slave, the captured Cossack confidently addresses the falcon as a native brother, asking him:

Соколе мій ясенський, братику мій рідненький!

Ти ж у християнський край полети,

І в мого отця, у матусі коло воріт упади;

І жалібненько проквили (Дмитренко 2009: 242).

And in this historical song we meet the image of a Cossack who misses his past:

Ой літа – літа та соколонько

А по своїх високостях

Плаче козак ще й ридає

А по своїх молодостях (Дмитренко 2010: 200).

The symbol of a falcon also often occurs in ritual lyrics (including carols and wedding songs), social novels, love songs, and songs about family life.

The nightingale symbolises the melodious Ukrainian soul, youthfulness, tenderness, and the sonority of the Ukrainian language. The image of the nightingale is met in many songs ballads, historical and lyrical ones.

Ой у вищневому саду, там соловейко щебетав,

Додому я просилася, а він мене ще не пускав... (Written by the author)  
ог  
Соловейку, рідний брате,  
виклич мені дівча з хати... (Written by the author)

Completing the research on the main symbols in songs, we turn to the symbol of a horse, which we can meet in all song genres. This is an ancient symbol of the sun and at the same time, of the other world; time, movement, night, day, air, fire, unrestrained passions and instincts of masculinity, strength, knowledge, death and resurrection, will and commitment, hard work, and so on (Дмитренко 2010: 233).

In the lyrical genre, in songs about love, the image of "drinking a horse" or "whipping in the stable" has several symbolic associations: at the request (proposal,) of a Cossack to give his horse a drink the girl either refuses him so as to keep her virginity before the wedding, or cannot resist and agrees but it often ends in disappointment:

Козак коня напував,  
Дівча воду брало.  
Козак собі заспівав,  
Дівча заплакало (Шалак 2002: 243).

Very often, the image of a horse may be met in Cossack songs, where you cannot imagine a Cossack without a horse, who accompanied him to war, participated in the battles, and if lucky, then returned home with his master from the war. However, very often the fate of the Cossacks was tragic; they fought heroically and died in battles. A Cossack's death was often treated as a farewell to his horse; for example, the Cossack told the horse to run home and pass the news about the change that had occurred in the life of his master:

Ой біжи ж ти, коню,  
Коню вороненький,  
До мого отця,  
До рідної нььки (Давидюк 2010: 257).

Thus, among the large number of song symbols one can identify specific images that are inherent only to the Ukrainian mentality - the moon and the stars, a viburnum, a poplar, an oak, a periwinkle, a cuckoo, a nightingale, a horse, and many others that cannot be covered in this article.

However, it is also necessary for us to address one of the most original images of Ukrainian folk songs, the image of a Chumak, a salt merchant, a Ukrainian symbol who earns his living with his hard work and is permanently detached from his native home. Concerning the appearance and spread of the Chumak industry in Ukraine, we know only that in the 18th century it embraced all the Dnipro, Central and Left Bank territories of Ukraine. It was apparently in the 16th -18th centuries, in the period of the greatest flowering of the lyrical folk tradition that Chumak songs arose.

The Chumak industry was organised according to a lot of customs, beliefs, and rituals. Each step Chumak took, especially while preparing for a long journey, had to be balanced to the last details:

Задумали чумаки в дорогу,  
Покупили собі нові вози,  
Поробили ярма кленові,  
Поробили занози дубові,  
Покупили вози половії,  
Покупивши, да й попарували,

Попарувавши, да й повиїжджали... (Давидюк 2010: 263).

The preparation for the march was also a kind of ritual, relying on people's understanding of the values of each day of the week:

Гей, ішли чумаки в дорогу,  
Гей, в понеділок ярма парували  
Гей, у вівторок вози підчиняли,  
Гей, в середу воли годували,  
Гей, в четвер воли напували,  
Гей, в п'ятницю з родом попрощались,  
Гей, в суботу молилися Богу,  
Гей, в неділю рушили в дорогу (Давидюк 2010: 263).

Each Chumak sets off on Sunday before the sun rises, so as not to cause troubles for his unfortunate family. The unexpected moment of a Chumak's departure is conveyed in the form of a dialogue between a mother and a daughter:

Чому мене, моя мати, рано не збудила,  
А як тая чумачина з села виїздила?  
Тим я тебе, моя дочко, рано не збудила,  
Що твій милий перед веде, щоб ти не тужила

(Давидюк 2010: 263 - 264).

Mykola Kostomarov (Давидюк 2010: 264) considered Chumak songs to be derived from Cossack ones. The arguments in favour of this idea can easily be found in the songs that relate a Chumak's farewell to his family. Like Cossacks, Chumaks were seen off as if into another world and the image system, artistic devices, and poetic formulae of these songs are almost indistinguishable from those of the Cossack ones.

The symbolism of Ukrainian songs, as we can see, originally coincides with the category of genre; this is illustrated by various works and acquires a diverse concentration and unequal expression.

The symbols and the images create the world; plants and animals reveal the deep genology of the oral traditional culture with its signs of syncretism, ideological symbiosis, and folklore comprehensiveness that make it possible to return to the knowledge of the sources from which symbols were generated as a system of stable harmonious human development and man's ability to live within universal knowledge, coloured by national characteristics.

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