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MASONIC SYMBOLISM IN THE CONTEXT OF PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY SEARCHES

The article is dedicated to the Masonic ideas influence on a symbolism interpretation in anthropology, vision of the Masonic symbolism in Masonic ideas influence on a modern philosophical discourse. The symbolic codes investigation was opening space for a philosophical discourse, human identity and self-equivalence searches. Masons and philosophers of the 20th century had been working on a same cultural and semantic field, with the same cultural, historical and epistemological universals, considering symbols as a priori language and a priori form of learning. The existence archetypes, sense-creating codes search led Masons to the vision that symbols did not contain the final content, but gave a wide field of the interpretation possibilities, were a gnoseological key, a tool for a self-learning and a "super-reality" learning, for the adept's gnoseological qualities forming. Masonic ideology was based on "ascribing" to the certain objects some special symbolic meaning, on conviction that by means of symbols it was possible to teach laymen the basics of the independent and free learning process. Masonic convictions say that symbol is marking the space-time relations, performing the communicative processes. Philosophers of the 20th century (C. Levi-Strauss, E. Cassirer, N. Berdyaev and others) gave to the symbols meanings of the objective character and of the values, they opened the reality levels, for which a non-symbolic language did not fit. They considered a person to perceive the symbols of the object and not the object itself. Walking a "Masonic path", these philosophers supposed that symbols were forming the goal-setting senses which could be conceived by civilizations, values, tastes, fashion. So, for people of Modernity, "society" became a symbol of the people's uniting in the name of the progress and the democracy. Philosophers began looking at the society as at the historical self-realization process, as at the knowledge and self-knowing tool. It can be assumed that "Masonic phenomenon" in European philosophy influenced the scientific search directions forming. The classified masonic discourses gave birth to the thoughts which later transformed into philosophical concepts of the 20th century.

Key words: *freemasonry; symbol; society; anthropology; universals; modernist style; culture.*

Introduction

Study of the concept of "symbol", which became a part of the philosophical lexicon, creates a new space for philosophical discourse. Symbolic codes are directly related to the problematics of search for human identity, self-identity, transcendental foundations of being. The symbol helps to reveal the phenomenon of human nature, to clarify the problem of anthropogenesis, hidden codes of man's sensual world. Relevance of the work is connected with growing interest in spiritual foundations of Freemasonry, on the one hand, and with the lack of serious special studies on this subject in the post-Soviet space, on the other.

Considering the contemporary literature on the subject, it should be noted that in Ukrainian philosophical science the problem of "Masonic influences" has not been fully covered yet. At the same time, some Russian and Western social philosophers and culturologists - S.V. Arzhanukhin (1995), A.A. Fedorov (1998), Yu.L. Khalturin (2020), R. Lomas (2011; 2013), A. de Hoyos (2019), P. Granziera (2003) - demonstrate an interest in masonic subjects, proposing to consider Masonic symbolism as a civilizational cultural and philosophical paradigm. Without regarding the problem of the influence of Masonic ideas on the philosophy of

the 20th century, these researchers substantiate the idea of decisive role of Freemasonry in the process of modernization of society in the 18th-19th centuries. On the other hand, Russian philosopher K.A. Svasyan (2010), investigating the "symbol" in contemporary philosophical interpretation, concludes that this concept has been rooted in the socio-philosophical discourse of the 20th century. In Ukrainian modern humanitaristics, an interest in the theoretical reception of the phenomenon of Freemasonry is being spread. A significant event in this regard is the release of a special thematic issue of the "Independent Culturological Almanac 'I' " in 2009 under the title "Free Masons. Freemasonry" ("Вільні муляри. Масони"). The most meaningful for now are the theoretical reconstruction of the history of Freemasonry in our country (publications by S. Yefremov, M. Khodorovskyy, O. Krigzhanovska, T. Kravtsov and others), an analysis of current state of development and transformations of the Ukrainian Masonic movement of today in the context of world political, cultural and civilizational tendencies (scientific intelligences by V. Savchenko, V. Yeshkilev). Ukrainian political scientist T. Reva raises the question of "political Freemasonry" as a special subject of study (Reva, 2015). However, the reception of "philosophical Freemasonry" or "philosophy of Freema-

sonry" in Ukrainian science is just beginning. The initiators of the above mentioned "Independent Culturological Almanac 'I'" translated the "Letters to Konstant" (unfortunately, without any comment and introduction) (Fichte, 2009), important for understanding the philosophy of Freemasonry by Fichte, as well as the work of the famous French philosopher, representative of modern traditionalism René Guénon, "Lost Word and Substituted Words" (Henon, 2009). Philosophers T. Wozniak (2009) and D. Shevchuk (2009) presented their first philosophical visions of the phenomenon of Freemasonry. T. Wozniak considers the essential Masonic metaphor-concept-guideline of "construction" (construction of a perfect person, creation of structural conditions for such person's reproduction - perfect cities, all social architectonics) in comparison with the spiritual tradition of the Sufi monks and mystics: Bektashi, Qadir, Kubra, Mevlevi, Naqshband, Nimatullah, Rifa'i, Senussi, Suhrawardi, Tijani, Chishti, Shadhili, Yasawi. This defines the field of philosophical intercultural comparative studies. D. Shevchuk's article offers a different context: Masons and conspiracy theories in historical genesis and in the contemporary cultural space. He emphasizes that conspiracy constructions regarding the Freemasons, the Masonic conspiracy, are a powerful social, political and ideological factor. A preliminary critical review of contemporary theoretical sources suggests an urgent request for the creation of a comprehensive philosophical reception of the phenomenon of Freemasonry taking into account the ideas and concepts of philosophy of the 20th-21st centuries (See also publication of K. Bondarenko (2009).

We continue the line of philosophical comparative studies proposed by T. Wozniak and try to consider Masonic symbolism against the background of ideas of symbol philosophy in the Western tradition, to show some aspects of the possible influence of Masonic doctrine on the development of philosophy of the 17th-20th centuries. Therein lies a certain scientific novelty of our research. Contemporary philosophical science, regarding the problem of the nature of symbols and symbolic worldview, is not interested enough in European symbolic systems that served as a melting pot for the theory and practice of Freemasonry as a product and "great work" of philosophy of Modern.

The purpose of the proposed article is to show the closeness of the Masonic interpretation of the symbol and symbolics to contemporary theoretical visions in the area of social philosophy and human philosophy, the insights of the leaders of philosophical anthropology. The task of the study is to establish the continuity of philosophical schools, which knowingly or unknowingly "retransmitted" ideas formed among Masons.

Methods

The key methods for us are cultural-historical method, which involves the identification of the cultural-historical meaningfulness of the symbol, and the method of comparative analysis, which allows comparing the ideological complex of Freemasonry, a kind of "non-academic" philosophical system, with the concepts of philosophical classics.

Considering that in the article we have chosen a particular perspective of the vision of Masonic symbolism in the view of contemporary social philosophy and human philosophy, we assume that there is a certain influence of Masonic ideas on contemporary philosophical discourse.

We have proceeded from the Masonic conceptions of the symbol, formed at the beginning of the 18th century, to the concept of "symbol" in the philosophy of the first half of the 20th century. In this we rely on the "pillars" of Freemasonry: A. Pike (2006), A. Mackey, O. Pozdeev, K. Claudi (2000) and works of philosophers and anthropologists: C. Levi-Strauss (1983), E. Cassirer (2002), N. Berdyaev (1994; 1996), P. Florensky (1986) and others.

Results and discussion

For Masons, the function of representation is symbolic, symbols act as universals, as the unity of the sensual and the ideal. They are not a reflection of reality, but act as a priori language, according to M. Moramarko (1989: 4-15). Over time, philosophers spoke of such a language, namely E. Cassirer positioned the "symbol" as a priori form of cognition (Cassirer, 2002). The Freemasons and members of the professional community worked on the same cultural and semantic background, with same cultural, historical and epistemological universals, their views inevitably intersected. At the same time, Freemasonry theorists believe that Masonic ideas had developed earlier.

According to the modern philosopher A. Fedorov, "Mysticism is a particular specific means of self-knowing in existence as the unity of knower and knowable" (Fedorov, 1998: 19). The search for universals, the archetypes of being, pushed the Freemasons, and, later, the anthropologists, to the general discourse in which they interpreted the symbol as the main meaning-making code. That is why Freemasonry is called "symbolic" because it operates in the field of cognition using the language of symbols, according to the contemporary British historian R. Lomas, who systematized key Masonic symbols and analyzed them through the lens of "Understanding of Human Symbolism" (Lomas, 2011; 2013).

Philosophers have not always noticed the affinity of their ideas with the Masonic that were "in the wind" due to the numerous Masonic practices and influences. Philosophers of the 18th - early 19th centuries: J.-G. Fichte, J.-W. Goethe, G. Novalis, K. Eckartshausen, T. Jefferson either shared the Masonic ideas or were their carriers.

Masonic symbolism is a complex of ontological, axiological and gnoseological ideas, which was formed in the Masonic environment in the 17th-18th centuries based on Christian Kabbalistic and Gnostic teachings. Thanks to a clear and consistent cognition of the system of symbols, an understanding of allegorical rituals, the Freemason who participates in these rituals seeks to include not so much rational as sensory sensors of cognition: "Symbolism permeates Freemasonry from top to bottom, entering all its rituals, rites, ceremonies as an organic part and affecting both external work, whether it is the erection of the stone temple or social activity, or internal one - the erection of the inner temple of Beauty or moral self-improvement", V. Sparov emphasizes (2010: 290).

One of the leading authorities of Freemasonry, K. Claudi, stated: "Freemasonry is a moral and ethical system, hidden in allegories and illustrated by symbols" (Claudi, 2000: 4). In publication "Leaves from Georgia Masonry", published under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of Georgia (USA), the following is stated: "Symbolism is the key to all mysteries, to all ancient and modern religions, to any esoteric knowledge. Without understanding the meaning of symbols, it is impossible to appreciate the beauty of life and to understand what a particular religion teaches" (Grand Lodge Of Georgia, 2011).

The philosophical understanding of the symbol by anonymous Masonic philosophers was the beginning of understanding of a human as a special being. Facing the symbols, the Masons sought to know their different meanings, believing that the symbols do not contain the final meaning, but provide a wide range of possibilities for interpretation, act as an epistemological key to the knowledge of the world. Freemasonry offered its followers a symbol as a tool for self-knowing and knowledge of "super-reality". The study of symbols was related to the Masonic search for the transcendental foundations of being.

Masonic ideologist O. Pozdeev in the early 19th century defined the concept of the symbol: nature itself as a hieroglyph (symbol), hieroglyph is the language for describing the natural and divine worlds. Hieroglyphs (symbols) are not the units of being, but the possibilities of cognition and its transmission within the tradition. Symbolic language, from the point of view of the Freemasons, is most appropriate to the main task of philosophy - the comprehension of God in nature and human, understanding the relationship between the sensual and supersensual world (*Quote: Berdyaev, 1996: 52-53*). Philosopher of the first half of the 19th century, who was known as "Russian Faust" for his interest in mysticism, V.F. Odojevsky, close to the Masonic conspiracy, believed that nature is symbolic, and each thing is a "metaphor" of other things (*Sakulin, 1913: 214-219*).

For philosophers, as for Masons, symbols are endowed with objectivity and value, revealing levels of reality for which non-symbolic language is not appropriate. Sensual-emotional perception of the world plays an important role in the formation of symbolism. Masonic work is nothing but providing Freemasonry adherent with new epistemological characteristics.

The Masonic leaders called for a symbolic perception of the world, believing that everything visible is a symbol of the invisible, material is a symbol of spiritual, that the symbols of religion bring a person to a transcendental level, beyond the boundaries of empirical reality, to an immanent level that manifests itself within the boundaries of the contest with reality. Not entirely clear definition of the symbol leads to the fact that scientists declare the impossibility of its adequate interpretation. However, the Masons, using symbols to describe the structure of the world, establish relationships between members of society, provide cultural continuity, educating their adherents as "travelers-seekers" in the study of interpretations of the world picture.

Masonic ideology was based on the "attribution" of special symbolic meaning to certain objects, the conviction that by means of symbols it is possible to teach the profane the beginnings of independent and free knowledge. Mason Albert Pike stated: "if Freemasonry is indeed a science hidden to views of laymen, as it declares, then in this case our signs and symbols, our ceremonies and legends mean more than a mere subject and reason for leisured reflections" (*Pike, 2006: 10*). Modern American Freemasonry researcher Arturo de Hoyos points out that: "... symbols, similar to scientific instruments, make it possible to understand the nature of reality that surrounds us from different angles" (*de Hoyos, 2010: 153*).

The symbolic nature of a human is considered by the Freemasons in the spiritual realm - a human is the highest level of God's creation as the image of God. Self-knowing of human was regarded as the knowledge of God. Masons

believed that objects and processes provide causative-functional interactions in an associated-generalized (symbolic) expression, and such interaction may be expressed in the encoding of the properties of certain objects in the properties of other objects in form of quantitative-geometric measurements. It is a Masonic belief that the symbol marks the spatiotemporal relations, carrying out communicative processes.

The Bible Solomon's Temple as a symbol of the spiritual Temple of humanity, erected by the Masonic brothers according to the drawings of the Great Architect of the Universe, is one of the central symbols of Freemasonry: "The Masonic Lodge is a Temple, symbolically laid in a rectangular room, the floor of which is symbolically extended to the center of the Earth, and the ceiling - to the heavenly vault of "nadir". This Temple symbolizes the macrocosm, the Universe, while each member of the lodge is a microcosm, which is also the Universe," the modern researcher of Freemasonry V. Brachev emphasizes (*2002: 62*). The Solomon's Temple is a symbol of the process of eternal construction - the human creativity, the continuation of the Divine Creation, the symbol of the Masonic act, the symbol of the Masonic Lodge, in which the "creation" of the new human takes place - the "edging" of the Masonic adept that will become the brick at the foundation of the Temple. The Solomon's Temple is a symbol of the future perfect society in which truths and limitless possibilities of self-realization will be revealed to people. Society also is one of the main symbols of Freemasonry, is a self-knowing, self-organizing action-process.

For people of Modernity, "society" (in Masonic documents "brotherhood") is a measure - a symbol of people's uniting in the name of the progress and the democracy. This symbol, in its development, has outgrown its meaning and become meaning-making in philosophical and socio-political contexts. Society became an instrument of cognition and self-knowing, regarded as a process of historical self-realization (*Levi-Strauss, 1983: 175-177*). Freemasonry can be considered as a kind of "first Facebook" in which a person collected "likes" of his or her like-minded brothers for certain spiritual and social achievements.

Philosophy of the 20th century considered different images of human, defined by metaphors: "animal rationale" of analytical philosophy (D. Davidson), "homo ludens" (J. Huizinga), "homo pictus" (H. Jonas), "homo viator" (G. Marcel) etc. Since the philosophy of Freemasonry is enshrined in a clear system of symbols, it is justified to use the method of structural anthropology relatively the Masonic doctrine. The definition of a symbol given by the German philosopher E. Cassirer looks very "Masonic": "A symbol is not just an image that replaces another image, but always an a priori form that organizes our knowledge" (*Cassirer, 2002: 304*).

Philosophical anthropology uses the concept of "symbol" to consider the question of anthropogenesis, modes of human existence, qualitative characteristics of culture, connection between symbol and transcendental feeling. The doctrine of a human, the meaning of human existence served as a complex of anthropological concepts of contemporary philosophy, which emerged as a result of "socio-anthropological turn". Philosophers consider culture through its symbolic essence, and symbolism as one of the foundations of the system of knowledge, which represents conceptual meaning in a generalized form.

In our view, the symbol represents something that it is

not, in the sense of which it participates, some reality meaningful for human, reveals the conditional contours of the super-reality, which cannot be interpreted otherwise. Symbols were studied in philosophical field in the system of aesthetic and socio-cultural knowledge, which corresponds to the old Masonic doctrine, in which the symbol plays a fundamental and meaning-making role, serving as a universal tool for the ethical and philosophical codification of Freemasonry.

E. Cassirer pointed out that culture is symbolic by its nature, that it finds its significance through symbols, that symbol is synonymous with culture and that human existence is happening in symbolic forms and has a symbolic character. The scientist proclaimed all achievements of culture not realistic but symbolic, all manifestations of culture were proclaimed only a hierarchy of "symbolic forms". Based on the concept of E. Cassirer, human problem is solved in parallel with the problem of symbolic form (Cassirer, 2002).

N. Berdyaev (his philosophy was adopted by the Masons), emphasized that in the cultural space spiritual life is expressed symbolically, not realistic, that the symbol is the mediator between metaphysical existence and reality (Berdyaev, 1994). N. Berdyaev distinguished the world of symbols and signs, calling an objectifying attitude to the world "symbolization": "all events of history that take place in the objectified natural world are only symbolic realities, only a reflection of the spiritual world - the life of Alexander of Macedon and Napoleon, resettlement of peoples and the French Revolution are also only symbolic realities and are only of a reflective nature ... Everything external is only a sign of the internal. Matter itself is only a symbol of the inner states of the spiritual world ..." (*Ibid*, 1994: 13).

N. Berdyaev wrote: "The source of symbolization is that only preimages of future realization are given, signs of another world ... In a deep sense, words and cult, and culture are symbolic ... Symbolization always gives signs of another, it does not remain closed in this world. But symbolization is not a true realization... it has the reflections of another world, there are preimages of the transformation of this world" (Berdyaev, 1996: 10). The N. Berdyaev' contemporary - P. Florensky postulated the "ontologicness" of the symbol, believing that the symbol indicates a hidden meaning, which allows distinguishing "a deeper meaning enclosed in it" (Florensky, 1986: 115). At the same time, Carl Jung considered the symbol as the product of the collective unconscious, an expression of spiritual experience (Jung, 1991; 2006). Similar philosophical ideas are shared by contemporary American anthropologist C. Geertz, who believed that culture is a system of symbols that have emerged historically (Geertz, 2004).

Philosophy of human tries to solve a complex of issues that cannot be considered without resorting to the concept of sign-symbolic codes, symbols. In the aspect of cognition of the world, the symbol finds an ontological essence, acts as a significant epistemological tool. In the book "Structural Anthropology" C. Levi-Strauss introduced an original philosophical concept, revealing the mechanisms and effectiveness of the influence of symbols on the organic and mental processes of a human. C. Levi-Strauss believed that reality was not like people perceived it. Sense organs tend to search and mark physical objects in the process of their interpretation, but at the same time they cannot grasp the true structure of reality. The scientist suggested that a person always perceives only the symbols of an object or phenomenon, but not the object

itself. In seeking to perceive, understand and use the world around, humanity encoded it with symbols (Levi-Strauss, 1983).

E. Cassirer considered human as a "symbolic animal", a creature that creates symbols, believing that the symbol is "the key to human nature". He argued that only by deciphering the meaning of symbols, comparing various symbolic pictures of the world, human can understand the meaning of life: "Only through them and only in them we see and have what we call "reality", because the highest objective truth, which reveals to the spirit, it is, after all, a form of his own action" (Cassirer, 2002: 26-29). E. Cassirer's concepts were formed around the philosophy of symbolic forms, the symbol in which acted as the main structure of psychological adaptation of a human to changes in the environment, a priori form of cognition. Modern philosopher K.A. Svasyan, following E. Cassirer, argues that the symbol is not only reduced to its form, but has "depths of meaning" (Svasyan, 2010: 88).

The emergence of symbols is a dynamic process of cognition and reality formation by humanity. The entire system of symbols arises in interactive processes, but the system of symbols is intersubjective. The symbol brings the person to general ideas and beliefs, its special feature is the formation of real and perfect planes of being. At the same time, the symbol is not equally perceived by people who are in different social strata and have different cultural levels, because it has several levels of interpretation. The symbol has stability, plurality, depth of meaning, it is trans-historical. The semantic (informative) saturation of the symbolic system exceeds the possibilities of language. A symbol is capable of transmitting many associations and generates the contextuality that is required to interpret it.

At the same time, its incompleteness, inexhaustibility makes it possible for idealistic systems to convey the "irrational". Symbol includes significate and what it means, imaginative and ideational components. A multi-valued symbolic image requires the identification of meaning by decrypting.

Symbols refer to the hidden meaning, "attributing" the value not of the idea itself, but of the process of its cognition. Symbols convey communicative meanings, squeezing, "canning" them, transferring the information encoded in them, offering the recipient to unfold them by oneself.

Symbols, therefore, make it possible to structure the stages of a personal biography by performing a system of initiation rituals, legitimizing the milestones of the biography. They structure our history, consolidating the past, present and future, creating a collective and personal "memory" and a special reference system for the future, for planning human activity. They serve as the basis of civilization, creating a cause-effect connection of events in which an individual finds his or her place. The famous philosopher A. Pyatigorskiy wrote: "Why did I want to understand Freemasonry - regardless of my knowledge of the subject? First of all, because of my interest in religious symbolism, because Freemasonry is the most symbolic religion of our time" (Pyatigorskiy, 2009: 5).

Conclusions

Based on the consideration of the comparative aspect of Masonic symbolism and the concepts of symbol in contemporary human philosophy and philosophical discourse, we can assert that thoughts that later intersected with the philosophical concepts of the 20th century were born in

Masonic theoretical constructions. It can be argued that Masons and philosophers of the 20th century, worked on the same cultural and semantic background, with same cultural, historical and epistemological universals, considering symbols as a priori language and a priori form of cognition. The search for the archetypes of being, meaning-forming codes led Masons and representatives of the philosophy of the symbol of the 20th century to the vision that symbols do not constitute definitive content, but provide a wide field of possibilities for interpretation, act as a certain ideological, epistemological, anthropological key, a tool for self-knowing and knowledge of "super-reality". Prospective of this study is the search for the real, fixed in the tests influence of "non-academic" Masonic symbolism on the formation of basic positions of symbol philosophy in the professional academic community. And an even more ambitious prospect for us is to participate in the formation of a domestic professional interdisciplinary circle of researchers of the phenomenon of Ukrainian Freemasonry and its philosophical foundations.

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МАСОНСЬКИЙ СИМВОЛІЗМ В КОНТЕКСТІ ПОШУКІВ СУЧАСНОЇ ФІЛОСОФІЇ ЛЮДИНИ

У статті розглядається у порівняльному аспекті масонський символізм та трактування символу в сучасній філософії людини та філософському дискурсі. Сьогодні, коли в науковій спільноті присутні контроверсійні оцінки масонства, коли масонська філософія тільки виривається зі стану штучної маргіналізації, а в суспільстві з'явився інтерес до "альтернативної" філософії, актуальним є висвітлення взаємовпливу масонського символічного дискурсу і нових шкіл філософії ХХ ст. Наукова новизна полягає у зламі стереотипних підходів до дослідження процесу формування філософської думки ХІХ-ХХ ст., у виявленні особливого масонського впливу на процеси появи нових філософських сенсів. Вперше масонська символіка, як певна система світосприйняття, розглядається в контексті одного з першоджерел філософських систем ХХ ст. Дослідження символічних кодів відкривало простір для філософського дискурсу, пошуків людської ідентичності, самототожності. Масонська ідеологія базувалася на "приписуванні" певним об'єктам особливого символічного значення, на переконаності, що за допомогою символів можливо навчити навернених основам самостійного і вільного процесу пізнання. Масонським є переконання, що символ маркує просторово-часові відносини, здійснюючи комунікативні процеси. Філософи ХХ ст. (К. Леві-Стросс, Е. Кассирер, М. Бердяєв та ін.) наділяють символи властивостями об'єктивності та цінності, розкривають рівні реальності, для опису яких несимволічна мова не підходить. Йдучи "масонською стежкою", ці філософи обґрунтовують, що людина сприймає символи об'єкта, але не сам об'єкт і що саме символи формують цілепокладання сенсів, покладених в основу цінностей, смаків, моди. Результатом дослідження стало відкриття своєрідного "масонського феномену" у європейській філософії ХХ ст. У масонських дискурсах народжувалися думки, які згодом перетинались з філософськими концепціями ХХ ст. Можна твердити, що масони та філософи ХХ ст. працювали на одному культурному та семантичному тлі, з одними культурно-історичними та епістемологічними універсалами, розглядаючи символи як апіорну мову та апіорну форму пізнання. Пошук архетипів буття, сенсотвірних кодів привів масонів до бачення того, що символи не містять в собі остаточного змісту, а надають широке поле можливостей для інтерпретацій, виступають гносеологічним ключем, інструментом до самопізнання та пізнання "надреальності".

Ключові слова: масонство; символ; суспільство; філософія людини; універсали; модерн; культура.

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