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## THE CONCEPT OF BEAUTY AS A COMPONENT OF THE NATIONAL MENTALITY

*The article highlights the category of «beauty» as an integral component of the national mentality, exploring its profound impact on cultural identity and social values. Through a comprehensive analysis of philosophical, cultural and linguocognitive approaches, the study analyzes how beauty is conceptualized and manifested in different contexts. The key focus is a comparative analysis between Ukrainian, English-speaking (mainly covering Anglo-American influences) and wider European systems, highlighting both convergence and divergence in aesthetic interpretations.*

*In the article, we aim to reveal how the concept of beauty serves as a reflection of the core values, historical experience and general worldview of the nation.*

*Methodologically, the study uses a powerful toolkit that includes in-depth analysis of literary and philosophical texts, comparative analysis to compare cultural artifacts and social norms, and a large literature review that synthesizes scholarly contributions from aesthetics, anthropology, and cognitive linguistics.*

*The main findings emphasize the dual nature of beauty as both a universal human category that evokes innate responses to symmetry, balance, and emotional resonance, and a culturally specific construct shaped by contextual factors. It encompasses several dimensions: aesthetic (visual and sensory appeal), moral (linking beauty to virtue and ethics, as in Aristotelian eudaimonia), sociocultural (reflecting social hierarchies, gender roles, and societal standards), and communicative (serving as a vehicle for interpersonal and intercultural dialogue).*

*In addition, the research shows how national mentality deeply shapes and sustains its own criteria of beauty, acting as a repository of collective memory and aspirations.*

*These criteria not only influence everyday life – from fashion and art to interpersonal relationships – but also evolve in response to socio-political shifts such as migration, technological progress and environmental problems. The article emphasizes that understanding beauty through the prism of national mentality offers valuable insights into cross-cultural communication, identity formation and global aesthetic dialogues, which facilitates further interdisciplinary research to track current evolutions.*

**Key words:** beauty, national mentality, aesthetic, cultural values, linguistic worldview.

### Єлизавета Козирь. ПОНЯТТЯ КРАСИ ЯК СКЛАДНИК НАЦІОНАЛЬНОГО МЕНТАЛІТЕТУ

*У статті висвітлено категорію «краса» як невід'ємний компонент національного менталітету, досліджуючи її глибокий вплив на культурну ідентичність та суспільні цінності. За допомогою комплексного аналізу філософських, культурних та лінгвокогнітивних підходів дослідження аналізує, як краса концептуалізується та виявляється в різних контекстах. Ключовим фокусом є порівняльний аналіз між українською, англійською (переважно охоплюючи англо-американські впливи) та ширшими європейськими системами, висвітлюючи водночас конвергенцію, так і розбіжності в естетичних інтерпретаціях.*

*У статті – ставимо за мету розкрити, в який спосіб концепція краси слугує відображенням основних цінностей, історичного досвіду та загального світогляду нації.*

*Методологічно дослідження використовує потужний інструментарій, що охоплює поглиблений аналіз текстів літературних та філософських творів, порівняльний аналіз для зіставлення культурних артефактів та суспільних норм, а також великий огляд літератури, що синтезує науковий внесок з естетики, антропології та когнітивної лінгвістики.*

*Основні висновки підкреслюють подвійну природу краси як універсальної людської категорії, що викликає вроджені реакції на симетрію, баланс та емоційний резонанс, так і культурно специфічного конструкту, сформованого контекстуальними факторами. Вона охоплює кілька вимірів: естетичний (візуальна та сенсорна привабливість), моральний (пов'язує красу з чеснотою та етикою, як в аристотелівській евдемонії), соціально-культурний (відображає соціальні ієрархії, гендерні ролі та громадські стандарти) та комунікативний (служить засобом для міжособистісного та міжкультурного діалогу).*

*Крім того, у науковій розвідці вказано, як національний менталітет глибоко формує та підтримує власні критерії краси, діючи як сховище колективної пам'яті та прагнень.*

*Ці критерії не лише впливають на повсякденне життя – від моди та мистецтва до міжособистісних стосунків – але й розвиваються у відповідь на соціально-політичні зрушення, такі як міграції, технологічний прогрес та екологічні проблеми. У статті зацентовано увагу на тому, що розуміння краси крізь призму національного менталітету пропонує цінні знання про міжкультурну комунікацію, формування ідентичності та глобальні естетичні діалоги, що сприяє подальшим міждисциплінарним дослідженням для відстеження поточних еволюцій.*

**Ключові слова:** краса, національна ментальність, естетичне, культурні цінності, мовна картина світу.

**Statement of the problem.** The category of beauty is one of the basic in the humanitarian knowledge and cultural practice of mankind. Despite the centuries-old history of philosophical and art-critical discussions, the problem of defining the essence of beauty, its criteria and role in society remains open. It becomes especially relevant in the context of studying national mentality, because beauty is not universal in its specific manifestations, but depends on the system of values, worldview orientations and cultural traditions of a particular people.

In the globalized world, two opposing trends are observed simultaneously: on the one hand, the unification of ideas about beauty under the influence of the media and mass culture, on the other hand, the preservation of unique cultural and mental interpretations that serve the function of identifying and distinguishing one national community from another. This creates the need for interdisciplinary research into beauty as a concept that combines philosophical, linguistic, cultural, and socio-communicative dimensions.

The problem is to identify how the concept of “beauty” reflects the peculiarities of the national mentality, what cognitive mechanisms participate in its formation, and how differences in the perception of beauty affect intercultural communication.

**Research analysis.** The problem of beauty is one of the most debated in the humanities, and for centuries representatives of various intellectual traditions have addressed it. In ancient philosophy, Plato considered beauty as an eternal idea that exists independently of material manifestations, while Aristotle associated it with harmony, measure and order. In the medieval tradition, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas interpreted beauty as a reflection of divine perfection. In modern times, Immanuel Kant in his Critique of Judgment emphasized the subjectivity of aesthetic evaluation, which arises in the process of the free play of imagination and reason. Hegel in his Aesthetics considered beauty as a sensual manifestation of the Absolute Spirit. These concepts laid the foundation for further cultural and psychological research.

In modern humanities, beauty is analyzed from different perspectives: Umberto Eco in his work “The History of Beauty” (2004) traces the evolution of ideas about beauty from antiquity to postmodernity, emphasizing the cultural variability of the criteria of beauty; Christopher Sartwell (“Six Names of Beauty”, 2017) offers a multidimensional analysis of beauty through

six different conceptual planes (kali, tian, etc.), demonstrating its universality and at the same time cultural specificity; in psychology and cognitive science, beauty is increasingly viewed as an emotion or affective reaction (Armstrong & Detweiler-Bedell, 2008), which has adaptive significance for humans.

Language as a carrier of culture records the peculiarities of the perception of beauty in different national traditions. Studies of aphorisms, proverbs and literary texts of English-speaking cultures (Augustin, Wagemans & Carbon, 2012) show that the concept of beauty mostly has a positive assessment and is associated with such areas as truth, happiness, harmony. Ukrainian scholars (Hnatyuk, 2012; Syrota, 2018) emphasize the connection of beauty with spirituality, morality and natural harmony, which reflects the traditional mentality of Ukrainians.

Modern authors (Ter-Minasova, 2000; German, 2014) emphasize the importance of studying the category of beauty in the context of intercultural interaction. Differences in the criteria of perception can both complicate communication and enrich cultural dialogue.

Thus, the analysis of scientific works shows that beauty is a multidimensional concept that combines aesthetic, cognitive, cultural and communicative dimensions. However, the issues of its role in the formation of national mentality and the specificity of linguistic expression remain insufficiently researched, which determines the relevance of this article.

**The aim of the article** is a comprehensive analysis of the concept of “beauty” as a component of the national mentality in Ukrainian, English-speaking and wider European cultural contexts. The objectives of the study are: to trace philosophical and culturological interpretations of beauty in different historical eras; to find out how the national mentality determines the criteria and value orientations in the perception of beauty; to consider linguistic forms of objectification of the concept of beauty in aphorisms, proverbs and literary texts; to investigate the relationship between ideas about beauty and gender, social and cultural stereotypes; to identify the role of beauty in modern communicative practices (glossy magazines, advertising, social networks); to substantiate the importance of the category of beauty for establishing effective intercultural dialogue.

Thus, the article is aimed at the theoretical understanding of beauty not only as an aesthetic category, but as a multidimensional cultural phenomenon that reflects the unique

features of the national mentality and at the same time forms the prerequisites for global communication.

### **Presentation of the main material.**

The category of beauty has always occupied a central place in the history of human thought, serving as a reflection of cultural values, aesthetic norms, and social ideals. As one of the cultural universals, beauty appears in every nation's worldview, but the ways it is understood and evaluated are determined by national mentality. In this article, beauty is explored not as an abstract notion alone but as a multidimensional concept that interacts with language, culture, and social consciousness [4]. The goal is to extend the earlier analysis and offer a cross-cultural perspective that integrates Ukrainian, European, and English-speaking contexts. Particular attention will be paid to the philosophical, linguocultural, and communicative aspects of beauty [2].

The philosophical tradition of beauty begins with ancient Greece. Plato emphasized beauty as an eternal idea, transcending the material world, while Aristotle regarded beauty as harmony, order, and proportion. In medieval thought, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas associated beauty with divine perfection, establishing its theological dimension. The modern era brought new interpretations: Immanuel Kant linked beauty to the faculty of aesthetic judgment, where beauty arises in the free play between imagination and understanding, while Hegel saw beauty as the sensory manifestation of the Absolute Spirit [8]. These philosophical views laid the groundwork for the perception of beauty as both an objective and subjective phenomenon [3; 9].

Beauty functions as a cultural universal. Anthropological research shows that all societies distinguish between beautiful and ugly, but the criteria are relative and context-dependent. For example, in Western European art, beauty was traditionally associated with classical harmony and proportion, while in Japanese aesthetics, concepts such as 'wabi-sabi' emphasize imperfection, simplicity, and transience [7]. Ukrainian culture, deeply rooted in folk traditions, identifies beauty with natural harmony, fertility, and moral integrity, often symbolized through folklore and folk songs. English-speaking cultures highlight beauty as a combination of inner and outer qualities, as revealed in aphorisms and literary expressions [10].

National mentality can be defined as a system of collective values, perceptions, and cognitive orientations that characterize

a cultural community. Beauty, as part of this system, functions as a marker of identity and worldview.. Ukrainian mentality often associates beauty with spirituality, moral purity, and connection to nature. In Anglo-American cultures, beauty is frequently tied to ideals of individuality, freedom, and success. Meanwhile, in continental Europe, beauty reflects both philosophical traditions and modern consumerist tendencies. Thus, beauty serves as a mirror of collective mentality, shaping not only aesthetics but also ethical and communicative practices [1].

Language encodes the worldview of a nation, and beauty is no exception. Aphorisms and proverbs in English, Ukrainian, and European languages reveal different conceptualizations of beauty. For instance, English expressions such as 'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder' highlight subjectivity, while Ukrainian sayings like «Не все те золото, що блищить» underline the moral dimension of beauty. German and French aphorisms often emphasize the aesthetic and intellectual unity of beauty and truth. This demonstrates how national mentality is crystallized in linguistic forms and how language becomes a mediator of cultural values [6; 8].

The concept of beauty is inseparable from gender representation. In most cultures, beauty is predominantly associated with femininity, often leading to stereotypical and commercialized portrayals in mass media [2; 4]. However, contemporary feminist criticism challenges such one-dimensional views, emphasizing inner qualities, empowerment, and diversity. In Ukrainian and European traditions, beauty of women has often been idealized in folklore and literature, but today there is a shift toward pluralistic interpretations [7]. This illustrates how the concept of beauty evolves together with changing social roles and cultural expectations.

In modern times, beauty has become a subject of global discourse, shaped by media, advertising, and digital platforms. Glossy magazines construct standards of attractiveness, often reinforcing consumerist ideals [6; 8]. Social networks amplify these images, but they also provide alternative spaces for redefining beauty in terms of authenticity, body positivity, and inclusivity. Intercultural studies show that global trends often clash with traditional understandings, creating hybrid forms of beauty perception [5; 7].

The concept of beauty plays a vital role in intercultural communication. Since perceptions of beauty vary, misunderstandings may occur in



cross-cultural contexts. At the same time, beauty serves as a universal bridge, capable of uniting different cultures through shared appreciation of art, nature, and human creativity [1; 5]. Ukrainian cultural diplomacy, for example, often relies on aesthetic representations – folk art, music, and visual symbols – as means of communicating national identity abroad. Thus, beauty contributes not only to aesthetic discourse but also to cultural dialogue.

**Conclusions.** The study of beauty as a component of national mentality reveals its multifaceted and dynamic nature, encompassing aesthetic, moral, cultural, and communicative dimensions. Beauty is not merely a superficial or decorative phenomenon; it embodies the values, ideals, and ethical norms of a society, reflecting both collective consciousness and individual perception. Through the analysis of English-speaking, Ukrainian, and European traditions, it becomes evident that beauty operates as a mirror of historical experience, cultural memory, and social norms, simultaneously shaping and being shaped by them.

In particular, beauty functions as a communicative category, influencing verbal and non-verbal interactions, literary and artistic expression, and everyday social behavior. It mediates the perception of the world, allowing individuals to interpret reality through culturally informed aesthetic lenses. At the same time,

beauty represents moral and ethical standards, offering models of ideal behavior, social harmony, and human relationships.

The comparative study of diverse linguistic and cultural contexts demonstrates that beauty is both universal and culturally specific. While certain aesthetic principles, such as harmony, balance, and proportion, are shared across cultures, the ways in which beauty is conceptualized, expressed, and valued vary significantly depending on historical traditions, national identity, and social priorities. For instance, Ukrainian cultural narratives often intertwine beauty with folklore, spirituality, and national identity, whereas English-speaking and European traditions may emphasize philosophical, artistic, or utilitarian interpretations of beauty.

In the modern era of globalization, beauty continues to play a crucial role in shaping identity, communication, and cultural exchange. It not only reflects the convergence of global aesthetic standards but also reinforces cultural uniqueness, allowing societies to maintain distinctive values while participating in shared global dialogues. Consequently, beauty functions as a dynamic mediator between the individual and society, the national and the universal, bridging the past and the present, and contributing to the ongoing formation of cultural consciousness.

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