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Female Mascarons in the Architecture of the Lviv Secession

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Abstract---An important role in the formation of the architectural style of Lviv was played by the beginning of the twentieth century. As the capital of Galicia, which at that time belonged politically to the Austrian Empire, Lviv was strongly influenced by the Austrian Secession and the head of the Vienna School of Architecture O. Wagner. Nevertheless, Lviv architecture, to a certain extent, has preserved its originality and uniqueness. Secession is a phenomenon of the Lviv architecture of the early twentieth century. It determines the definition of sculptural decor as one of the main components of the “newest” artistic image of a building. Among the various types of plastic decoration, an important place is occupied by relief masks – mascarons, which are the most mysterious, attractive, and bizarre elements of the architecture of the Lviv Secession. The article notes the influence of various factors on the formation of new typological groups of mascarons not found in the architecture of previous eras. The artistic images of secession arise at the intersection of two key symbols and constant themes of art nouveau – eternal femininity and fabulous nature. In almost all cases, female mascarons are accompanied by plant motifs of the local flora.

Keywords---architectural detail, artistic image, mascarons, plastic solution, secession, style solution, symbol.

Introduction

Despite a general focus on Vienna, the local architectural school of Lviv at the turn of the centuries significantly strengthened, and the number of local specialists became sufficient for a natural desire to become independent of the whole influence of the capital of the Empire. Accordingly, at the beginning of the twentieth century, local architects openly advocated the need to design in Lviv exclusively on their own, without external interference (Bohdanova & Kopyliak, 2013). Since that time, it is not always possible to determine unambiguously where the pan-European influence ends and where local traditions begin. Art nouveau, which emerged under the slogan of anti-historicism and opposition to

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the styles of the past, marked the search for new architectural ideas. Innovative trends in Lviv construction techniques were manifested in the activities of large architectural and construction companies, where they developed integrated project of their own factories and production workshops, where advanced projects and the latest engineering solutions were implemented (Studnytska, 2014).

The greatest achievements in this field were made by the construction company of I. Levynskyi, whose design bureau made a significant contribution to the development of the Lviv secession architecture. Other developers, such as A. Bohokhval'skyi, K. Boublik, A. Zakharevych, T. Obminskyi, L. Ramult, V. Sadlovskyi, M. Uliam, R. Felinskyi, Ya. Schultz, as well as lower-ranking construction entrepreneurs, tried to keep up with I. Levynskyi (Zhuk, 1993). The construction and art industry of Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century had a large conglomerate of workers, whose specialty was the manufacture of stucco parts, including masks. Most of them were concentrated at large construction enterprises that had their own staff of sculptors and shapers, or cooperated with permanent subcontractors – specialized enterprises – suppliers of sculptural forms and flashing.

Since the main formative principle of secession was the synthesis of arts, architects attached special importance to the decorative ornaments of facades, thinking through them even at the design stage of the structure. The union of an architect and a sculptor created the appearance of a building or a whole ensemble (Almazov, 2012). Any decorative element used in facade decoration plays a role not only as a means of artistic and plastic expressiveness but also reveals the ideological and figurative content of a structure. Mascarons, as a type of architectural and decorative plastic, often attract attention with their creepy, comical, or romantic faces, often endowed with hidden symbols. The variety of masks is fascinating since they are available in the arsenal of decor of most architectural styles. Art Nouveau, in the Lviv version of secession, has marked a break with eclecticism and the search for new architectural ideas, and at the same time, has become the last stage when mascarons are actively involved in a set of decorative design of structures (Mudra, 2016; Gede Budasi & Wayan Suryasa, 2021).

As the capital of Galicia, which at that time belonged politically to the Austrian Empire, Lviv was strongly influenced by the Viennese architecture and the head of the Viennese School O. Wagner, from where new artistic images for masks came. However, the architecture of Lviv has not become a simple reflection of the newfangled Austrian direction, but to a certain extent retained its originality and uniqueness (Architecture of Lviv, 2008). Stucco and cement female mascarons were one of the most popular types of sculptural plastic in Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the decoration of architectural objects of the secession, masks are mostly abstract, but very mysterious, mystical, as if creatures from a parallel reality (Miliani et al., 1998; Menzel et al., 2018).

Literature Review

The Lviv exteriors of the beginning of the twentieth century are an integral part of the architectural image of the central part of the city (Wirakusumah et al., 2021;

[Stamps III, 1999](#)). The variety of styles, artistic images, forms and materials in the architectural decor of Lviv buildings has become the subject of research conducted by many domestic scientists of recent decades. However, mascarons, being an integral part of the decoration of the facades of Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century, have been outside the scope of special attention of researchers and limited to individual facts or references. The most significant contribution to the study of Lviv mascarons of the Art Nouveau era has been made by I. Zhuk in his PhD thesis “Decorative detail in the architecture of Lviv Art Nouveau: principles of shaping and systematization” (1989). In the first section of Chapter II entitled “Stucco and Cement Plastic”, the researcher identifies a group of the Lviv secession mascarons among other types of sculptural details. Raising the topic of their authorship, the scientist notes the firms engaged in the manufacture of relief masks and indicates the names of individual sculptors. I. Zhuk establishes the general features of placing secession mascarons on the facade surface. He focuses on the key role of masks among other types of sculptural exterior decoration ([Kashef, 2008](#); [Petrovic, 2020](#); [Abbasov & Sanchez, 2020](#)).

The work contains individual addresses of buildings decorated with masks, the years of their construction, and the names of architects. The researcher also raises the issue of typological groups of mascarons that are found on the facades of the Lviv secession architecture. However, the typology established by him needs to be improved, since the artistic images of Lviv secession mascarons are not limited only to the types indicated by the author. In addition, I. Zhuk does not resort to the in-depth symbolic analysis of masks and revealing their artistic qualities. Since the prototypes for Lviv mascarons in general and masks of the early twentieth century in particular are European patterns, we can find information on the symbolism of European secession mascarons in the article by L. Stoilova and P. Iokimov “The Symbolism of Decorations in Art Nouveau Style” (2014). The authors of the article in the paragraph entitled “The Masks” focus on the most popular type of masks of the early twentieth century – macaroni of the Medusa, the image of which has received a new aesthetic interpretation under the influence of secession. In addition, the researchers casually mention other types of modern mascarons (Perseus and Mercurius mascarons) popular in European architecture.

In addition, the articles of [Okunieva \(2008\)](#), and [Cheban \(2019\)](#), which raise the issue of symbolism of a female image in Art Nouveau architectural decor, are important for our work. The symbolism of architectural and decorative plastics in general has become the subject of a special study by [Kadurina \(2013; 2015\)](#), who in her books analyzes the information code of decor on the example of the architecture of the city of Odesa. The author identifies a group of mascarons among the various elements of sculptural decoration of Odesa facades and analyzes their symbolic meaning and information content. A comprehensive study of the Lviv secession, in particular decoration and architecture, has been carried out by Yu. Biryulov in his monograph “The Art of the Lviv Secession” (2005). Analyzing the main types of facade decoration of Lviv buildings of the secession period, the researcher also mentions mascarons as one of the elements of sculptural decoration. Yu. Biryulov designates mascarons facade symbols as identification signs, but limits their characteristics only to references to their

availability in the sculptural composition of individual secession buildings (Biryulov, 2008).

Moreover, Yu. Biryulov has made a significant study of the Lviv sculpture, including architectural and decorative sculpture of the early twentieth century, in his monographs “Lviv Sculpture from Early Classicism to Avant-Gardism” (2015), “Rzeźba lwowska od połowy XVIII wieku do 1939 roku: Od zapowiedzi klasycyzmu do awangardy” (2007). The research contains valuable information on the dating and authorship of a significant part of the Lviv secession mascarons.

Materials and Methods

The systematization and generalization of the results of the analysis of literary sources have shown that there is a need for a comprehensive study of the role of mascarons in the architectural and decorative plastic of Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century. The art history analysis of the materials of our research makes it possible to comprehensively study the typology, symbolism and stylistic features of the Lviv secession mascarons at the beginning of the twentieth century as a historical, cultural and artistic phenomenon. The primary sources and basis of our work are, directly, mascarons on the facades of Lviv structures built in the early twentieth century. Therefore, an important component of the source base of the scientific work is the photographic materials of integrated on-site surveys carried out by the researcher during 2014-2019. The source base of the article consists of more than 100 Lviv mascarons of the early twentieth century. Owing to a large number of research objects, we can trace the full range of artistic-stylistic and figurative-symbolic transformations of the Lviv secession masks (Rounce, 1998; Yang et al., 2017).

To solve the objectives sought in the study, we have used a set of interrelated and complementary general scientific and special methods, namely: system analysis — to conduct a qualitative analysis of the problem of Lviv mascarons of the early twentieth century; study and systematization of scientific literature and sources on the research subject; iconological, semiotic and hermeneutical methods help to trace the influence of Europe on the Lviv architectural and decorative plastic and interpret individual artistic images of Lviv masks of the early twentieth century; to identify their symbolism and information load from the perspective of pan-European artistic ideas; comparative method enables to identify similarities and differences in the typology and plasticity of the Lviv secession mascarons in the context of pan-European practice; synthesis method is used in the research in developing the typology of leading artistic images of the Lviv mascarons of the early twentieth century and in determining the factors that influenced its formation; as well as in making conclusions; iconographic and structural methods are used in the study and systematization of features of individual typological groups of the Lviv mascarons of the early twentieth century; formal method helps to analyze the external characteristics of each individual mascarons as an art form. The combination of the above methods has made it possible to determine the principles of stylistic and figurative-plastic features of the Lviv secession mascarons of the early twentieth century, their symbolic and informational load, as well as role and place in the architectural and decorative

compositions of facades of Lviv structures of the studied period ([Len & Hoang, 2019](#); [Sugár et al., 2018](#)).

Results and Discussion

The prerequisite for the appearance of new architecture in Lviv was the significant acceleration of the economic and cultural development of the city at the turn of the nineteenth-twentieth centuries. Culture is changing its character, and we are talking primarily about creating an integral culture that, among other things, would arrange the urban environment in the conditions of increasing urbanization. Art is intensively combined with the lifestyle of that time ([Malanchuk-Rybak, 2008](#)). The idea of creating a new style turned out to be quite a time-consuming problem, which also affected the formation of facade decoration. A significant range of theoretical attitudes of modernity also complicated the choice of new images for mascarons. In this regard, masks created during the Art Nouveau period were supplemented with new, specific images that were not found in the architecture of previous styles ([Skochilov, 2000](#)).

The development of the Lviv secession was characterized by certain stylistic stadiality. In the late 1890s, neo-Romantic trends reigned in the city's architecture, marking the so-called "proto-secession" (1889-1904). It should be noted that in the late 1890s and early 1900s, secession elements, if any, were usually timidly and inconsistently used. At the stage of completion, an architectural object oriented to one of the neo-styles was supplemented with female masks or other details characteristic of secession ([Zhuk, 1989](#)). From 1904 to 1908, the Lviv secession passed the "ornamental" stage. At this stage, the evolution of mascarons entered a new phase of its development. The power that could radically renew a person's life, make him full-blooded, protecting him from the harmful effects of routine and imperfections of everyday life, was attributed in secession to beauty and art as its guide. Hence, a determining factor and driving force of the formation of the artistic system of secession was the fervent dream of a fabulous, harmonious and renewed world without human alienation and degradation ([Zhuk, 1993](#)).

This factor explains the considerable popularity of the most mysterious, attractive and sometimes bizarre element of the architectural decor of the Lviv secession – mascarons. Secession stone faces enliven the city's architecture, infusing it with psychologism and transforming it into a fantastic, fabulously bizarre world created by the imagination of architects and sculptors ([Obertas & Khisamutdinov, 2015](#)). The Lviv sculpture after 1900 in the main vector of its development broke the dominant meaning of historicism and academic canons of the second half of the nineteenth century. While preserving the elements of objective perception and reproduction of reality, which was understandable given the specifics of the means of artistic expression, sculptors moved quite far in the direction of subjective transformation, individual vision of the world. The catalyst for shaping was the artist's imagination. The emotional and figurative genesis of sculpture was revealed in the symbolic content and in the uncontrived modeling of volumes and surfaces, impressionistic-secession fluidity of contours. Instead of the static

forms inherent in the nineteenth century, the authors of the new generation sought to create dematerialized volumes with multiple meaning.

In general, an important part of the new artistic worldview was symbolism, in which adherents of secession found the conceptual generalization of their aspirations and experiences (Biryulov, 2005). The genealogy of symbolism and art nouveau was almost identical, and they reached their zenith in the second half of the 1890s by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. Never before in the history of architecture have so many types of women's masks been presented on the facades of buildings. The aesthetics of general artistic symbolism, as a source of allegorical and metaphorical images, is also associated with ancient traditions and cults, esotericism and future considerations (Okunieva, 2008; Cheban, 2019; Kshitsova, 2003).

Modernity, correlating with symbolism, increases attention to the mystical, emotional and mental inner life of the individual, determining the subjectively author's vision of the topic and manner of plastic expression. The perception of spiritual depths directs artists to the possibility of identifying their state of mind with the mythological image or the state of nature (Protas, 2006). The objective reflection of reality was combined with complex metaphors (Biryulov, 2015). Nowadays, art culture, like politics and social life, felt the sting of the increased influence of the then ideologies. In particular, this concerns the problem of "women and society", which had a direct impact on the artistic culture of the early twentieth century (Malanchuk-Rybak, 2008).

The image of a woman is one of the oldest in art. Each historical era created a certain system of female images, which, on the one hand, reflected the then life realities and, on the other, were the embodiment of norms (aesthetic, ethical, socio-cultural, etc.), stereotypes, phobias and complexes of their time. At the same time, artistic images of women are the product of the artist's "view", his worldview, and his "male" subjectivity. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the methodology of feminist and gender research was formed and developed in the field of humanities and social sciences. A powerful inspiration for these processes was the idea of emancipation of a woman generated in the European socio-cultural environment, which in the nineteenth century was transformed into a structured ideology of feminism, whose main attention was focused on criticizing social discrimination against women, restricting them in the field of law, education, economy, and culture (Malanchuk-Rybak, 2008).

The manifestation of feminist ideas in the field of artistic culture has taken various forms. Inspirations of the idea of emancipation of a woman in artistic culture could have a clearly defined declarative and demonstrative character, directly related to the popularity of various female mascarons on the facades of Lviv buildings of the secession period. It is no coincidence that it was the fair sex that became one of the main objects of art of this style and its active fan, since secession had a distinctly feminist coloring. Outstanding art nouveau artists synthesized the most famous female images of different historical eras, as well as created many new ones specific to this style. The image of a woman, embodied in the sculptural form of a mask, appeared at the intersection of two key symbols and constant themes of art nouveau – Eternal Femininity and Nature (usually

fabulous) (Okunieva, 2008). The content and imagery of mascarons have significantly increased, and in accordance with the philosophy of art nouveau, have acquired mystery and mysticism (Cheban, 2019).

In the European fashion of that time, the established type of female beauty – the ample curves of the “Renoir sun-haired beauty” is inferior to the image of a delicate secession girl (Kravchenko & Fetsych, 2008), which, however, has two variants – nymph of the land of flowers and demonic image of a vamp. The duality of the idol is connected, on the one hand, with the illustration of the ambivalence of female nature (the presence of a divine and demonic being in it), and on the other, with the cyclical concept of being, the eternal life cycle, the forces of nature that connect man with the universe. Most female mascarons of the Lviv secession period are marked by various psychological characteristics (from benevolence to anger). Being placed on the facade of the building, these artistic images enliven the urban environment, bringing a certain mood to it. They act as carriers of the ideals of beauty and the meaning of the world addressed to people. Symbol is not in them, but in what they point to. Symbol is mystery and revelation at the same time (Obertas & Khisamutdinov , 2015).

The duality of female mascarons is a symbolic generalization of the most important moments of human existence: “Life” (“Spring”) and “Death” (“Autumn”). Thus, a single artistic image, which in a deeper understanding of semantics is a confrontation between Eros (love, beauty, life) and Thanatos (death), is created. A number of typical dual (opposite “images-symbols”) female mascarons of the ornamental stage of the Lviv secession include the artistic image of spring deity, the embodiment of the ideal of beauty, a dreamy, smiling nymph. The image of a girl’s face in a halo of luxurious hair (the motif of “hair blooming”), and framed by lush floral motifs, is found on many secession structures of Lviv in the period 1900-1908. The fragile faces of a flower woman are depicted under the cornice of a building at M. Voronoho Street, 3 (architect K. Otto or J. Schultz, 1908-1909) (Figure 1), under the eaves of stove at A. Bogomolets Academician Street, 7 (architect I. Levynskyi, 1906) (Figure 2), etc.



Figure 1. The fragile faces of a flower woman under the cornice of a building at M. Voronoho Street, 3 (architect K. Otto or J. Schultz, 1908-1909)

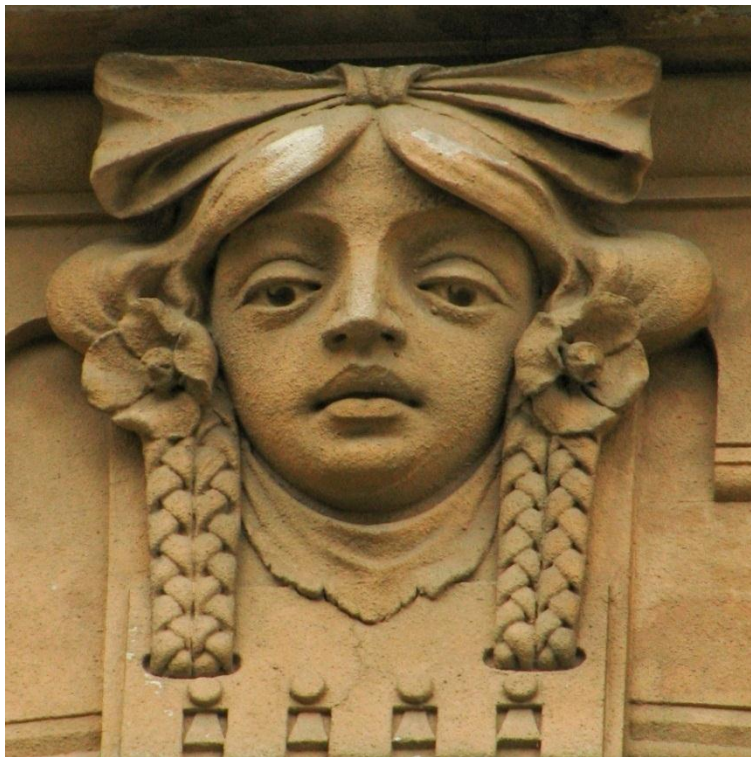


Figure 2. The fragile faces of a flower woman under the eaves of stove at A. Bogomolets Academician Street, 7 (architect I. Levynskyi, 1906)

The dominance of plant motifs with naturally curved lines and their interweaving as a symbol of infinity emphasized the woman's belonging to the mysterious forces of nature (Cheban, 2019). All the masks of this subgroup are obviously created according to the same pattern: fancy flowers or plants are symmetrically woven into the wavy hair on both sides of mascarón's face. Climbing stems of plants usually form, together with the mask, an exotic ornamental composition, which emphasizes the plasticity of the female mascarón with a flat background. Most often, the temples of masks are decorated with poppies, daisies, sunflowers, anemones and periwinkle – wildflowers of the local flora. The image of a mystical dream, mysterious, fragile *mavka* (mermaid) from the plant world is the embodiment of harmony with nature reflected in the artistic images of masks on the facades of the Lviv secession buildings of the early twentieth century. Illustrating the idea of eternal femininity, cyclical life, and a transitional state, Art Nouveau chooses a variety of not only spring, but also autumn motifs (Zhuk, 1989). Along with the symbols of youth, flowering, there are signs of maturity, fertility, and ripe fruits. This is clearly demonstrated by female mascaróns, supplemented with bundles of ripe fruits and lush acanthus leaves on the facade of stove at Hluboka Street, 16 (architects G. Salver & I. Viniash, 1910) (Figure 3). Ripe fruits here are a symbol of fertility and prosperity (Kadurina, 2013).



Figure 3. Female mascaróns, supplemented with bundles of ripe fruits and lush acanthus leaves on the facade of stove at Hluboka Street, 16 (architects G. Salver & I. Viniash, 1910)

To reconstruct the semantics of a female mask, the range of symbolic meanings inherent in it, it is necessary to take into account that the convergence of images of women and nature is reflected in music, poetry, Art Nouveau painting, as well as in psychoanalysis as one of the most fashionable hobbies of that time (Okunieva, 2008). Undoubtedly, the image of a modern woman is based on “archetypal representations”. C. G. Jung, who has discovered the phenomenon of collective unconscious, connects the appearance of such images with the loss of

religious symbols, their lifelessness for modern man. Trying to cope with “spiritual poverty”, the intelligentsia has turned to the mysterious symbols of the East.

Archetypes are perceived and experienced when religious obstacles that protect a person from natural and demonic principles in himself are destroyed. C. G. Jung describes the appearance of creatures representing these principles as follows: “Whoever looks into the water sees his own image, but behind it living creatures soon loom up; fishes, presumably, harmless dwellers of the deep-harmless, if only the lake were not haunted. They are water-beings of a peculiar sort. Sometimes a nixie gets into the fisherman's net, a female, half-human fish. The nixie is an even more instinctive version of a magical feminine being whom I call the anima. She can also be a siren, melusina (mermaid), wood-nymph, Grace, or Erlking's daughter, or a lamia or succubus, who infatuates young men and sucks the life out of them.” The images listed by C. G. Jung have found a variety of embodiments in Art Nouveau art (Okunieva, 2008; Jung, 1981). “Feminine” in the art of the early twentieth century is always on the verge of human and natural. Women's masks framed by plants do not belong to either the human world or the natural world, but are located somewhere between these worlds.

The next subgroup of the Lviv female mascarons of the studied period may be conditionally called “secession mermaids” due to the peculiarities of their figurative and plastic solution. Elegant relief faces are framed by strands of long wavy hair, which serpentine intertwines with floral motifs and curls down, forming the main compositional accent of the facade. Their frozen gaze is directed into the distance or at passers-by. Wavy scattered hair of female mascarons plays an important role in the Art Nouveau ornament. In addition, hair is a symbol of vitality and a source of energy, which may be directly related to the philosophy and symbolism of secession. Intertwined with strands of curly hair, the relief heads of mermaids are flanked by stylized or exotic floral motifs. The mascarons of this group can be seen above the central window of the second floor of stove at S. Bandera Street, 61 (architect K.-Yu. Dranevych and I. Viniash, sculptor Yu. Shebesta, 1906) (Figure 4). A woman's face with wavy scattered hair decorating the facade of stove at K. Levytskyi Street, 14-16 (architect T. Obminskyi for the firm of I. Levynskyi, 1907 (Architecture of Lviv, 2008) (Figure 5) is arranged in a double relief disk characteristic of secession – a solar sign, which is supplemented with stylized leaves and vertical twisted cords that go down.

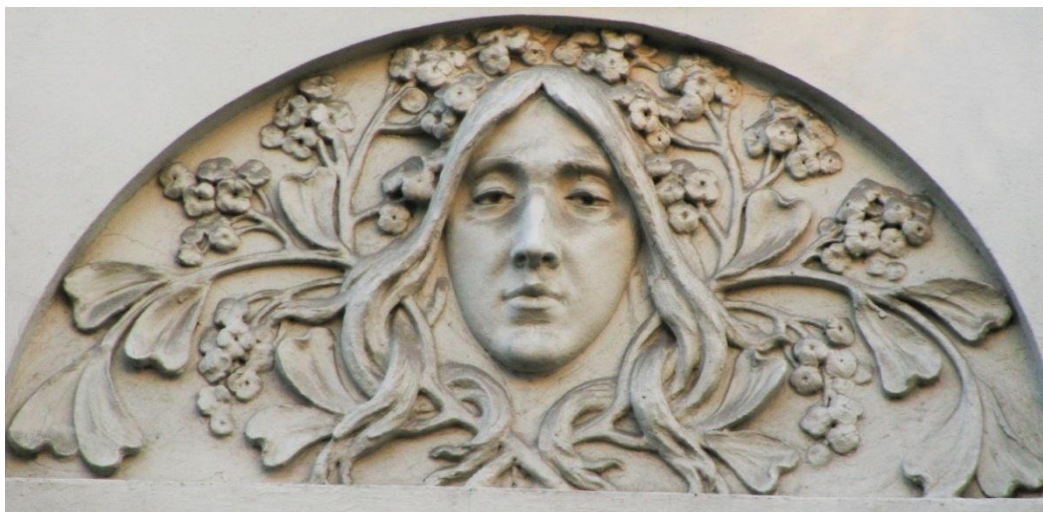


Figure 4. Exotic floral motif above the central window of the second floor of stove at S. Bandera Street, 61 (architect K.-Yu. Dranevych and I. Viniash, sculptor Yu. Shebesta, 1906)



Figure 5. Exotic floral motif decorating the facade of stove at K. Levytskyi Street, 14-16 (architect T. Obminskyi for the firm of I. Levynskyi, 1907 (Architecture of Lviv, 2008)

The prototypes of various European female mascarons of this period were the works of A. Maillol and A. Rodin, paintings and drawings by Klimt, S. Vyspianskyi (Cheban, 2019). It is arguable for sure that the work of a famous Czech artist Alphonse Mucha had a certain influence on the iconography of the secession female mascarons of Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is obvious that the trends of new modern styles, in particular the “Mucha’s style”, penetrating Galicia, have made it possible to freely express original artistic ideas

in the architectural decor of secession buildings in Lviv. Mascarons with long scattered wavy hair and rich floral decor have become the prototype of the female image of A. Mucha. In addition, as in the advertising posters of A. Mucha, and in the architectural decor of secession buildings there is an aesthetic of symbolism. Similar in their figurative and artistic solution to the mascarons of young nymphs are female artistic images of such works by A. Mucha: posters of Sarah Bernhardt (1896), vignettes for goods: Bieres de la Meuse (1897), Biscuits Le Fevre-Utile (1896), Cycles Perfecta (1902), Moet & Chandon (1899), the series “Seasons of the Year” (1896), as well as the works “Fruit” (1897), “Flower” (1897) and many others.

The demonic antipode of the “fairy of the land of flowers” is the mascarons of a vamp figure (Zhuk, 1989). A favorite type of artistic culture of the early twentieth century that is the demonic image of a vamp woman, a femme fatale, a red-haired witch of the Art Nouveau era, which was closely connected with the theatrical and bohemian environment (Kramarchuk, 2015), could not but be reflected in the architectural art of Lviv during the secession period. The combination of the real and the whimsical-fantasy is found in expressive female mascarons on the facade of stove at D. Vitovskiy Street, 7 (architect and sculptor M. Makovych, 1905) (Figure 6) and Sh. Rustaveli Street, 8-8a (Figure 7) (architect V. Sadlovskiy, sculptor T. Orkasevych, 1906).



Figure 6. Expressive female mascarons on the facade of stove at D. Vitovskiy Street, 7 (architect and sculptor M. Makovych, 1905)



Figure 7. Expressive female mascarons on the facade of stove at Sh. Rustaveli Street, 8-8a (architect V. Sadlovskiy, sculptor T. Orkasevych, 1906)

The latter are complemented symmetrically by plant motifs and an abundant “carpet” of chestnut leaves of one of the favorite motifs of the Lviv secession – a tree typical of the streets of Lviv, its parks and squares (Biriulow, 2007; Kambarova, 2021). Such mascarons with serpentine hair are endowed with special emotionality and expressiveness. They “scream” either from pain or anger, thereby likening themselves to the image of the ancient goddesses of revenge – Gorgons, Furies, Erinyes. It is worth noting that the large mascarons that are repeated on D. Vitovskiy Street, 7, in their figurative and plastic solution are close to the allegorical image of freedom in the sculpture group “Marseillaise” by the French sculptor of the first half of the nineteenth century Francois Rude, who decorates the Arc de Triomphe on the Place de Gaulle in Paris, France (1833-1836). The disturbing, menacing artistic image of Freedom with tousled hair, distorted by a heart-rending scream, was obviously the prototype for creating the above mascarons, having a certain emotional impact on the Lviv sculptor M. Makovych.

The authors of the Viennese secession mascarons, which served as a model for Lviv artists, derived female fabulousness, irrationality and mystery from ancient mythologies. Some of the masks depict the artistic image of *Medusa*, the most popular among the Gorgon sisters, who turned a person to stone with her eyes (Stoilova, 2014). According to a later version of the myth, Medusa was once a girl with beautiful hair. If in antiquity the jellyfish was depicted with a wide-open mouth, fangs, snakes instead of curls, wide-open eyes, which were supposed to turn all living things into stone, gradually its image became humanized and feminized. For many centuries, the image of Medusa found in numerous versions of mascarons on the facades of buildings protected the interior space and its inhabitants from evil and misfortune that is served as an apotrope. The creators of secession have revived these myths and filled them with new aesthetics and even new content. Being influenced by the philosophy of symbolism in the visual

arts, artists drew objects of creative vision from the depths of centuries and cultures (Stoilova, 2014). If in antiquity the mascarons of Medusa were placed on the facades of buildings to scare away evil forces, then in Art Nouveau architecture, this image began to symbolize the independence of women and their emancipation.

In contrast to official academism and bourgeois conservatism, the artistic world of the Viennese Secession was flooded with femme fatales – stunning images of Medusa Gorgons, Furies, Erinyes, and other mythical creatures. In addition, it is worth noting that Medusa quite often decorates the attics of buildings, as their peculiar apotheosis (Stoilova, 2014). The Medusa's serpentine hair is gradually taking the form of spirally twisted long curls, and her face reflects the image of a beautiful girl. If the mascarons of European Art Nouveau are characterized by the image of femme fatale with long, curly hair, a mysterious and seductive look, then in the Lviv architectural and decorative plastics this image was reinterpreted and formed as a symbol of purity and spirituality – mascarons reflected female innocence and modesty (Cheban, 2019). There is practically no eroticism in Lviv's artistic images. Instead, we can see romance.

A separate typological group of female mascarons of the Lviv secession includes artistic images that, according to a researcher I. Zhuk, are the image of an *exalted muse*, or a *dormant Sphinx*, as a symbol of hidden wisdom (Kadurina, 2013). Closed lips and heavy closed eyelids reproduced a popular type of beauty at the turn of centuries – a face with elongated features, complemented by parted hair (Zhuk, 1989). Such masks, crowned with a high crown, are depicted on the facade of the building at S. Rudanskyi Street, 1 (architector S. Banhrod, sculptor P. Harasymovych (?), 1901-1902) (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Mask, crowned with a high crown, are depicted on the facade of the building at S. Rudanskyi Street, 1 (architector S. Banhrod, sculptor P. Harasymovych (?), 1901-1902)

It is worth noting that secession female images are distinguished at the same time by sensuality and seclusion from the outside world (gaze seems to be aimed deep into itself), in which the dominant is not the physical, but the spiritual (Cheban, 2019). The semantics of mysterious and mystical female mascarons of the early twentieth century, semi-real, semi-fantastic creatures that seem to exist between two worlds – human and natural, although cause multidimensional associations, but still exclude one of the main ones – procreation and maternity. T. Okunieva notes that the image of “androgyné”, which is characteristic of Art Nouveau art, reflects the beginning of the crisis of sexual identity – a woman appears as the personification of male love and desire, but she remains inaccessible (Cheban, 2019; Okunieva, 2008).

Against the background of the general growth of self-awareness in Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a need to implement national ideas in architecture. In particular, this is traced in the artistic images of mascarons of this period, which cannot be clearly identified as belonging to Austrian, Polish or Ukrainian. National images were formed in the absence of its own state. It is obvious that the use of such mascarons on the facades of Lviv buildings of the early twentieth century did not have a clearly defined national program (Linda, 2001). The last group of mascarons in the architecture of Lviv secession structures of 1900-1908 consists of *romantic* female mascarons in characteristic

ethnic headdresses, caps and headscarves. These masks were supplemented with elements of folk clothing, such as a collar, and a rich necklace as one of the oldest women's jewelry. First of all, it acted as a talisman, protection from evil spirits and unkind people. The necklace on the Lviv mascarons is sometimes supplemented with dukaches ("coins").

Women's relief faces on the facade of secession stove at D. Vitovskiy Street, 5a (architect K.-Yu. Dranevych, sculptor Yu. Shebesta, 1906) are characterized by features of individualization. The artistic image is complemented by elements of an ethnic costume – a cap, collar tied with a ribbon and three coral bottoms around the neck. A woman's face with an expressive chin, narrow lips and a thin nose adorns the piers between the windows of the second floor of the building. In addition to the above, the Lviv secession is distinguished by many other women's masks that are not included in the typology discussed above. It should be noted that European female mascarons could embody the image of a contemporary – a specific woman, for example, the wife or mistress of the owner of the building or architect, a famous opera singer, actress, etc. (Cheban, 2019), but we do not find reliable information about such masks in Lviv.

Summing up the results of the analysis of numerous Lviv secession structures, we can conclude that the availability of masks on the facade surface and the optimal number of "points of interest" in the building décor, are important for the architectural image of a facility. If there are too many of them, it is difficult for the viewer's gaze to stop (Kadurina, 2015). In the architecture of Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century, mascarons could most often be seen under the cornice, between windows, on the attic, keystones of arched driveways and above door, and window openings. The secession women's masks, rhythmically repeated on the façade surface. Sometimes they are complemented by a favorite secession motif – winding lines running down, creating a special atmosphere on the exterior surface. Separately, we would like to focus on the analysis of floral motifs included in the compositions of the Lviv secession masks of the studied period. Since the sources of iconography of the new style are the aesthetics of general artistic symbolism, Art Nouveau has extremely diversified the facade decor with special semantic codes for reading it (Skibitska, 2011). The availability of various decorative floral motifs creates a variety of semantic meanings, giving buildings originality and creating a unique image of the architectural object as a whole (Korovkinka, 2016).

One of the favorite motifs of the Lviv secession style was the poppy as a symbol of innocence, purity, as well as sleep, silence, night and memories; the anemone as a symbol of short-term (fleeting) girlish beauty. Less often among the plants decorated with the Lviv secession mascarons, one can find periwinkle as a symbol of girlhood and youth, sunflower as a symbol of vitality and energy of the sun, and a large number of seeds symbolize prosperity and fertility, chamomile as a symbol of youth and innocence or rebirth, cornflower as a symbol of youth and beauty, stylized iris and clover, shamrock, symbolizing faith, hope and love (Korovkinka, 2016; Almazov, 2012).

Relief plant compositions, which often include the mascarons of nymphs, are represented not only by wild and forest flowers of the local flora, but also by

classic and exotic, fantasy plants. Popular were acanthus (symbol of life, immortality), laurel leaves (symbol of glory, honor, emphasis on significance), oak (symbolizing wisdom, strength, endurance), chestnut, grapes (symbol of fertility, spiritual life and rebirth), pine branches with cones (Studnytska, 2014; Ivashko, 2009; Kadurina, 2013; Korovkinka, 2016). The specifics of the East have brought to modernity a set of techniques and ways of interpreting the world (Oborska, 2009). In the sculptural decor of some buildings in Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century, the passion for Eastern culture was manifested in the appearance of mascarons with plants and flowers of exotic oriental flora woven into their hair. Sometimes women's faces are complemented by a ribbon-crown on the head, characteristic secession earrings, large-shaped beads, bows, or curly winding ribbons – elements directly related to the cult of femininity, attractiveness, and beauty. Mascarons with masculine features were rare for the architecture of the Lviv secession before 1908. In addition to the favorite female masks, in the architecture of Lviv during the secession period, there were grimaces of chimeras, monsters with bared mouths, Lions, characters of ancient mythology, which in combination with plant and solar signs represent a new style of plastic interpretation.

At the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, a wave of interest in the techniques of the Viennese Secession subsided. Since about 1908, Lviv architecture has entered a new phase of its development, and undergone changes and transformations that give rise to the definition of subsequent years as a period of late or “rational” secession (1908-1914). Relief faces during this period were geometrized, and the degree of their plastic deformation, schematism, and generalization increased. Facial expression and mood increased, and the model with closed lips and closed eyelids was forgotten (Zhuk, 1989). Currently, in Lviv, there are about 100 secession structures, in the decor of which there are female mascarons of various types and symbolic content. Taking into account the fact that secession mascarons make up the architectural decor of the building, compositionally emphasizing and arranging its individual parts, respectively, repeating on the facade surface, their total number in Lviv architecture today is about 300 units.

It seems that some mascarons of Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century were made according to highly artistic originals (possibly Viennese), since a significant part of the masks were compositionally and typologically similar. Individual secession mascarons are marked by quite high artistic qualities, and being original works of art, can compete with easel sculptures of famous Lviv artists of this period. As a result of the on-site surveys of Lviv, it is established that the secession mascarons on the facades of houses of the early twentieth century are partially preserved, a significant part of them corresponds to the original design appearance. However, the general physical condition of the masks requires restoration work. Damage to masks is the result of the fragility of building materials, systematic exposure to moisture, seasonal freezing and thawing, weathering of the surface layer, as well as unsystematic rearrangements and reconstructions (Linda & Pekarchuk, 2015). Thanks to the on-site surveys, a comprehensive picture of the current state of the mascarons of Lviv at the beginning of the twentieth century has been created. Today, the Lviv secession buildings decorated with mascarons continue to form the basis of development in

the central part of the city, creating a characteristic architectural image. For the first time in the theory of Ukrainian Art, typological groups of Lviv secession mascarons of the early twentieth century have been analyzed, the features of their development have been identified; the stylistic, and figurative and plastic features of Lviv secession mascarons of the early twentieth century have been analyzed; a special analysis of the content load and symbolism of the Lviv secession mascarons of the early twentieth century has been made (Noardo, 2018; Goldschmidt, 1994).

Conclusion

The beginning of the twentieth century is a turning point both for the architecture of Lviv in general, and for mascarons in particular. The rejection of the architectural heritage of previous styles, associated with the influence of the Vienna Secession on the architecture of Lviv, has led to the search for new, not previously tested images for mascarons. They are mysterious female mascarons that contain a wide range of messages encoded in the deep symbolism of the style. The ardent dream of a fabulous, harmonious, renewed world, due to the results of technological progress and urbanization, inspired ideas of emancipation of women in the early twentieth century and the cyclical concept of inexhaustible human life are the factors that have influenced the formation of new female images of secession mascarons. The main groups of artistic images of the Lviv secession mascarons include: nymphs of spring, the embodiment of life and beauty, decorated with floral motifs, mature female images supplemented with bundles of ripe fruits, "secession mermaids" with long curly hair, feminized artistic images of Gorgon Medusa screaming in pain or anger, images of an exalted muse or a dormant Sphinx and romantic female mascarons in ethnic headdresses. The unifying element of all groups of masks is plant and floral motifs, symmetrically flanking secession female faces, and strengthening their connection with nature and the cyclical concept of being. Secession buildings create a characteristic architectural image of Lviv and should become objects of protection and restoration. After all, it is impossible to imagine the architecture of the Lviv secession, without such a decorative motif as mascarons.

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