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**COMPARATIVE
RESEARCH METHOD
OF CONTEMPORARY
DRAMATIC ARTS**

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The purpose of the article is to analyse the comparative method specifics in contemporary art history in the context of dramatic arts research in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The research methodology of system-oriented approach involves the following methods: historical method is to study the development of the comparative method; the analytical, structural and logical method is to comprehend and cover the chronology of the historical aspect of the problem, mastering the comparative method specifics; the method of theoretical generalisation is to summarise. Scientific novelty. For the first time, the place and significance of the comparative analysis method in the process of art history research are substantiated, and the main concepts of the principles of interpretation of contemporary dramatic arts in research methods in other branches of humanitarian knowledge are analysed. Conclusions. The integration processes of the world art space of the late 20th and early 21st centuries contributed to the rapid dynamics and expansion of the boundaries of dramatic arts, the introduction of innovative methods and forms, the development of unique artistic complexes of research. Due to the actualisation of the interdisciplinary context in the scientific dimension, the comparative method has recently been actively used in art history research as one of the most interdisciplinary and practical terms of 21st-century scientific issues. The article clearly outlines the features of epistemological, logical, methodological, methodological, ideological, axeological and practical functions of the comparative method of dramatic arts research of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Furthermore, we have specified the place and functions of comparative studies in the context of the peculiarities of contemporary dramatic arts: to compare trends in the development of national dramatic arts, to study their direct and indirect interrelation, typological, inter-art and interdisciplinary connections; to identify similar and different techniques, methods, principles, approaches, etc.; to provide an opportunity to trace the development of scenic processes.

Keywords: dramatic arts; comparative research method; comparative paradigm

Introduction

Art as a complex social phenomenon that models life in a variety of phenomena and human assessments allows the application of various approaches and methods (sociological, philosophical, theoretical and informational, psychological, etc.) for its research, developed for the comprehension of objective and subjective phenomena and processes of reality.

One of the current issues of the national art history as an independent scientific discipline at the present stage is the choice of the research method and determination of the position of art history concerning other related scientific disciplines and the subject of research (Panofsky, 1998, p. 340), the development of adequate methodology for modern artistic phenomena, which is due to the activation of scientific work of a specific type.

Updating specific art research methods depends on changing the needs of public life and the formation of research tasks.

The syncretic quality of imagery and general synergy as one of the typical tendencies of contemporary art caused the development of innovative methodological approaches in art history.

In the context of dramatic arts evolution in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the comparative method is now a method of comparative research of connections, common and distinctive features in different art phenomena.

Analysis of recent researches and publications has shown that comparative analysis as a method of conducting contemporary art history studies attracts considerable attention from foreign scientists. For example, several scientific articles by V. Prokoptsova, who developed the principles of the comparative approach in art

history (The Comparative Space of Modern Art History (Prokoptsova, 2015, p. 121), Methodological Foundations of Comparative Art History (Prokoptsova, 2013), etc.); N. Agafonova's scientific publication Comparative Art History: Methodological Strategies and Cinematic perspective (Agafonova, 2007) is devoted to the methodological problems of comparative art history as a scientific direction that studies artistic objects and systems in comparison, in the context of the features of cinematic perspective.

But national scientists, despite their interest in the problems of the methodology of modern art history research (Klekovkin, 2017; Shmahalo, 2007; Yatsiv, 2009, etc.), consider first of all the most common methods — biographical (historical and psychological), autobiographical and formal method, iconology and iconography (Skrynnyk-Myska, 2012); culturalogical (semiotic, game and structuralism concepts of culture) (Petrova, 2004); method of semiotic analysis (Shumylovych, 2006).

Identification of the essence of the comparative method, theoretical comprehension of the principles and analysis of components in the context of the specifics of the 21st-century dramatic arts research will contribute to the improvement of the application effectiveness of the method of scientific knowledge in modern art history studies to expand the information dimension of the author's texts and move to a new level of innovative developments.

Purpose of the article

The purpose of the article is to analyse the comparative method specifics in contemporary art history in the context of dramatic arts research in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

The following methods were used to achieve this purpose: historical (study of the development of the comparative method), analytical and structural and logical (comprehension and coverage of the chronology of the historical aspect of the problem, mastering the comparative method specifics), the method of theoretical generalisation (to summarise).

Main research material

The comprehensive methodology for art research emerged in the course of the long historical development of European culture.

The interaction and mutual influence of various methods of art research, which were positioned as leading ones in certain cultural and historical epochs (philosophical, art history, specific scientific, etc.), are in the process of continuous development of modern art history as a complex methodology for studying diverse aspects of art.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the integration of expressive means into traditional arts contributed to the rapid dynamics and expansion, particularly of dramatic arts, the introduction of experimental methods and forms, and the development of innovative artistic complexes that require unique research.

The clear tendency to synthesise, combine and technologise in contemporary dramatic arts is reflected not only in the popularisation of happenings, performances, theatre projects but also in integrating plastic, screen, computer, and other arts into performances that enhance performance the spectacle of productions significantly. These phenomena are pervasive in contemporary dramatic arts, and, according to researchers, appealing not so much to dogmatic forms and methods. Still, intellectual and pedagogical transformations based on the current logic of art development contribute at the same time to its research — relevant art requires the initiation of new forms of knowledge (Prokoptsova, 2011, p. 165).

According to D. Skrynnyk-Myska, the urgent need of national art history at the beginning of the 21st century was the modernisation of the post-Soviet model of scientific knowledge, developed based on the materialist interpretation of spiritual phenomena typical of the 20th century, the class approach to social phenomena, the replacement of analytics with descriptiveness (Skrynnyk-Myska, 2012, p. 90).

One of the appropriate methods of studying the development of art at the present stage is the comparative method (from Latin *comparatio* — comparison, proportionality) or comparative historical method, turn to which is directly related to the principle of interdisciplinarity, which in the humanitarian knowledge of the late 20th and early 21st centuries is positioned as “the simultaneous presence of various methodological paradigms responsible for their “subject” of the general research “dimension” in a particular scientific study”, expressing the tendency to integrate scientific knowledge (Karpov, 2015).

In the context of the art history specifics, the research “dimension” is artistic practice, which includes a work of art, its creation and representation directly, which causes the inclusion of related disciplines in it.

The researchers note that the foundations of the comparative method of studying systems and phenomena were laid by Aristotle — the ancient Greek philosopher who attempted to make a comparative description of the political structure of the city-states of Hellas and formulated the typology of forms of government (Khan, 2016).

The founder of the comparative method is Russian literary historian O. Veselovskiy, who introduced it in literary studies (late 19th century), in addition, the scientist developed several approaches to the development of genres, artistic language, plot poetics, social status of the artist, the social function of poetry, etc. This method as a comparative-historical method was introduced into theatrical studies by his brother, Russian literary critic, the author of the famous work *Ancient Theatre in Europe* O. Veselovskiy. O. Klekovkin emphasises that in Soviet times, “during the struggle first with formalism and later with cosmopolitanism, the spread of his (O. Veselovsky) concepts was impossible by the dominance of Zhdaniv’s concept of art” (Klekovkin, 2017, p. 122), and its author is recognised as the “ancestor of “grovelling before the West”.

In the last decades of the 20th century, a new comparative paradigm was formed, which consists of the initiation of an innovative concept of the research object, integration of innovative methods and a new vision of scientific value, and a special social justification for the research. These innovations took place through the methodological enrichment of comparative studies due to the turning to the methods and concepts of modern humanities.

At the present stage, comparativistics is positioned not only as a modern methodology that allows comparing the past and present, data with the experience of other researchers but also as one of the most effective ways to predict the future.

In particular, comparative art history, using the possibilities of retrospective analysis, acquires the properties of revealing the essential mechanisms of cultural and artistic processes.

The comparative method is aimed at identifying a unified space of functioning of artistic and aesthetic ideas. In the context of the specifics of the evolution of dramatic arts, it contributes to the study of a unique “language of art” — a commonality of ideas typical of visual and auditory “texts” of art, considered and understood through the use of “principles of image transfer” (Prokoptsova, 2004, p. 19).

Researchers emphasise that the comparative method, projecting on several types of art, chooses a unified approach for analysis, which helps to find standard and specific features for a particular kind of art, providing opportunities for comparison, the comparative juxtaposition of forms and expressive means, types and genres (Prokoptsova, 2011, p. 166).

V. Prokoptsova accentuates that modern art history, maintaining the established methodology of academic analysis aimed at the differentiated study of certain types of art (for example, fine arts, music, cinema, theatre), suggests a new methodology of comparativistics, which provides conduction of a comparative analysis of historical, worldview, stylistic, species, genre, text, linguistic and expressive and other features of the formation of certain phenomena (Prokoptsova, 2015, pp. 121-122).

A. Kokorin, analysing the functions of comparative analysis, claims that it expresses stable manifestations of essence and quality in gnoseological, logical, methodological, methodical, worldview, axiological and practical directions that perform their specific function:

- gaining new knowledge about comparison objects (*gnoseological function*);
- focus on the implementation of comparison without violating the laws of formal and dialectical logic,

in particular:

- a) comparison on the same grounds;
- b) the exclusion of phenomena and situations that do not relate to the comparative analysis objects directly;

- c) the substantive nature of comparison (*logical function*);

– transformation of the obtained results of phenomena comparison into means of the solution of practical tasks (*methodological function*);

– the focus of the subjects of scientific knowledge on the choice of means of comparison and strengthening of the problems of determination of the sequence of use of methodological tools in the process of solution of practical tasks (*methodical function*);

– focus on the system of views on the world in the process of comparative analysis that has formed in the consciousness of a particular person and determines his attitude to reality and the direction of activity (*worldview function*);

– focus on the assessment of phenomena compared in terms of their standard and distinctive features (*axiological function*);

– focus on ensuring the solution of practical tasks — it is implemented based on the content, essence and specific quality of comparative analysis (*practical function*) (Kokorin, 2009, p. 45).

The researcher emphasises the implementation specifics of the worldview function of comparative analysis in real life. In his opinion, the worldview of the subjects of comparative analysis, influencing its structure and effectiveness, becoming the property of people consciousness, begins to affect their understanding and comprehension of reality.

In the context of comparative analysis application, in the process of studying contemporary dramatic art, the gnoseological function can contribute to:

- obtaining new information about phenomena, elements, methods and other aspects of comparison (depending on the choice of the author of the study);
- obtaining new knowledge about their interaction in the conditions of stage space of the late 20th and early 21st centuries;
- obtaining information about past, present and future of the analysed artistic phenomena (provided that a complete comparison is carried out);
- obtaining a substantive idea of the space and time of existence of phenomena and objects of analysis;
- promotion of the development of the theory, methodology and methods of phenomena cognition of contemporary dramatic art.

The methodological function of comparative analysis extends the understanding of objects and subjects of dramatic arts, contributing to the strengthening of practical capabilities (enriches the set of means, techniques, approaches and methods of stage practice).

In the context of the specifics of dramatic arts, the world function of comparative analysis becomes significant, contributing to identifying the logic of a stage work structure, the choice of unique means of a solution of the authorial problems, the sequence of their use, etc.

In the analytical researches of modern theorists (V. Tolstoi, etc.), the direct relationship of theatrical, plastic, choreographic, fine, musical, media and other types of art in the context of the specifics of the development of dramatic arts in the late 20th and early 21st centuries is focused.

The Postmodern period contributed to the formation of new directions of dramatic arts evolution, characterised by various stylistic forms and cultural traditions, the synthesis of art types through genres, expressive means, artistic techniques, semantic elements and associations (plastic and choreoplastic theatres, etc.).

Movements, gestures, facial expressions, words, sounds, colour (verbal and non-verbal elements) as the main means of expression of dramatic, plastic, choreographic, musical and fine arts give originality and uniqueness to art forms and at the same time contribute to their interaction in the context of the specifics of the dramatic arts. Moreover, the principles of their correspondence (association, analogy, interpretation) reveal the mechanism of unity and relationship features.

Integrating multimedia technologies into modern traditional art has led to a shift in its artistic space and the emergence of innovative audiovisual communication in the researchers' opinion. In this context, we emphasise that the art space is characteristic of figurative models created in production — the imagery of the stage space is only one of the options for its distribution.

There are examples:

- *multimedia*, which involves the interaction of various types of art, the use of technical means, various ways of the interaction of art and technology in real time (Prokoptsova, 2013, c. 221);
- *genre-dialogue performance*, characterised by a radical combination of life and art, multifold cultural content, provocative nature of artistic language, aimed at the destruction of ethical rules, aesthetic norms and social taboos, overcoming the boundaries between an artist and a viewer (Antonyan, 2015, p. 5) (the increased popularity of such artistic phenomenon as a vivid phenomenon of socio-cultural reality at both international and national levels);
- *video installation* with video technologies, installation art, and specific use of all aspects of the environment to influence a viewer, combining fine and performing arts qualities within a unified artistic space into modern performative video installations (Parfait, 2006, p. 111).
- *media art* as a new art direction experiments and generates numerous genre varieties, the technical improvement of which contributes to the invention of new demonstration opportunities and artistic forms.

In particular, the analysis of visual images and gestures developed in various cultural traditions based on the comparative research method allows identifying universal and specific features of action characteristic of the performance, as well as its reception in various types of discourse and cultural and historical contexts.

The comparative analysis of media art research, in the context of the historical development of a specific national culture, contributes to the identification of individual characteristics of figurative expressiveness in the composition, formation, colour, light, sounds, rhythms and national fullness of the work content, despite the variety of types, genres and forms.

The interaction of drama, music, dance, plasticity and painting in the context of the specifics of the dramatic arts of the late 20th and early 21st centuries is manifested in the relationship of the essential features of these types of art at the conceptual and terminological, ontological (spatial and temporal), semiotic (depictive and expressive) and psychophysical (auditory and visual) levels. Comparative analysis of the theoretical levels of the relationship of dramatic, choreographic, plastic, musical and fine arts helps to identify signs of similarity, differences, identity, the nature of mutual influences and borrowings.

According to the specifics of the research of plastic arts and choreography, the comparative method can be used:

- to compare various musical and choreographic concepts of production;
- to identify ideological and conceptual, thematic, aesthetic standard or distinctive features (based on the comparison of formal and semantic aspects of choreographic interpretation);
- analysis of separate plastic or choreographic texts and visual means of production expressiveness to compare the plastic and choreographic language of the Postmodern era with other stage phenomena of different chronological periods.

Open access to various world art forms contributed to the expansion of the genre and kind spectrum of dramatic arts, the emergence of innovative, experimental directions, tendencies and trends in the Ukrainian stage space.

In the national socio-artistic dimension, at the end of the 20th century, a period of active creative search begins, the dynamics of which is determined by socio-public transformation processes – unique artistic complexes and creative tendencies are formed, the study of which requires a particular methodology.

The application of the comparative method in this context contributes to:

- the disclosure of the system of design of stage space and time at the end of the 20th and first decades of the 21st century;
- the study of certain homogeneous elements of national theatrical culture;
- the comparison of the style of dramatisations of works of classical drama by contemporary Ukrainian directors, performed in different periods of their creativity;
- the possibility of tracing the development of theatrical processes in the late 20th and early 21st centuries;
- the comparison of plastic, choreographic, dramatic and other compositions of various stage productions in a cross-cultural context and historical retrospect;
- a precise determination of the difference between the categories “stage space” and “theatre space”;
- the consideration and comprehension of the formation features of an innovative artistic image in the dramatic art;
- the determination of general and specific means of creating stage productions according to the conditions of academic drama theatre, studio theatre, art groups, avant-garde and alternative theatre, theatre of plastic miniatures, choreoplastic theatre, etc.

The use of comparative analysis in the process of the study of contemporary dramatic arts, among other things, contributes to:

- the formation of an integrated view of the evolution of various types of art within the dramatic one;
- the study of dramatic arts as a unified, syncretic phenomenon with standard socio-cultural foundations and a related system of expressive means;
- the consideration of the author’s creativity of directors and performers (theatre directors, choreographers, actors, dancers, set designers, composers, etc.);
- the identification of generalised, deep connections of cross-genre and interspecific synthesis;
- the comparative consideration of the specifics of depictive and expressive means of theatrical, plastic, pantomimic arts and choreography in the conditions of contemporary stage space;
- the definition and characterisation of interaction and complementarity of external and internal expressiveness, figurative-thematic and semantic-content aspects.

Conclusions

The integration processes of the world art space of the late 20th and early 21st centuries contributed to the rapid dynamics and expansion of the boundaries of dramatic arts, the introduction of innovative methods and

forms, the development of unique artistic complexes of research and particular expanded methodology of creative and scientific problems.

Contemporary art history is positioned as a mobile intellectual structure that contributes to identifying and systematising changes in contemporary arts using unique methods (V. Prokoptsova). Due to the actualisation of the interdisciplinary context in the scientific dimension, the comparative method has recently been actively used in art history researches as one of the most interdisciplinary and practical in terms of scientific issues of the 21st century. The need to identify the general and the special is explained by the importance of the unification of national art systems to study the processes of world globalisation and localisation at the level of dramatic arts.

In the study, it is found out that in the context of the contemporary dramatic arts features, comparativistics, using the possibilities of retrospective analysis, reveals the essential mechanisms of cultural and artistic processes; compares tendencies in the development of national dramatic art, studies the direct and indirect relationship of typological, inter-artistic and interdisciplinary connections, identifies similar and different techniques, methods, principles, approaches, etc.

The comparative method, aimed at the identification of a unified space of functioning of artistic and aesthetic ideas, contributes to the tracking of the development of artistic processes in the context of the specifics of the national socio-artistic space, the identification of standard semantics of stage works and the study the unique “language of dramatic arts”.

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**КОМПАРАТИВНИЙ МЕТОД
ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ СУЧАСНОГО
СЦЕНІЧНОГО МИСТЕЦТВА**

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Мета статті — проаналізувати специфіку компаративного методу в сучасному мистецтвознавстві у контексті дослідження сценічного мистецтва кінця XX – початку XXI ст. Методологія системного аналізу дослідження поєднала такі методи: історичний (вивчення розвитку компаративного методу), аналітичний та структурно-логічний (осмислення та висвітлення хронології історичного аспекту проблеми, освоєння специфіки порівняльного методу), метод теоретичного узагальнення (для підбиття підсумків). Наукова новизна. Вперше обґрунтовані місце та значення методу компаративного аналізу в процесі мистецтвознавчого дослідження, проаналізовані основні концепції принципів інтерпретування сучасного сценічного мистецтва в контексті методів дослідження інших галузей гуманітарного знання. Висновки. Інтеграційні процеси світового мистецького простору кінця XX – початку XXI ст. посприяли стрімкій динаміці та розширенню меж сценічного мистецтва, впровадженню новаторських методів та форм, розвитку унікальних художніх комплексів дослідження. У зв'язку з актуалізацією у науковому вимірі міждисциплінарного контексту останнім часом у мистецтвознавчих дослідженнях активно застосовується компаративний метод як один із найбільш міждисциплінарних та ефективних в умовах наукової проблематики XXI ст. У статті чітко окреслили особливості гносеологічної, логічної, методологічної, методичної, світоглядної, аксеологічної та практичної функцій компаративного методу дослідження сценічного мистецтва кінця XX – початку XXI ст. Встановили місце та функції компаративістики у контексті особливостей сучасного сценічного мистецтва: порівнювати тенденції розвитку національного сценічного мистецтва, вивчати їхній безпосередній та опосередкований взаємозв'язок, типологічні, міжмистецькі та міждисциплінарні зв'язки; виявляти подібні та відмінні прийоми, методи, принципи, підходи та ін.; надавати можливість прослідкувати розвиток сценічних процесів.

Ключові слова: сценічне мистецтво; компаративний метод дослідження; компаративістська парадигма

**КОМПАРАТИВНИЙ МЕТОД
ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ СОВРЕМЕННОГО
СЦЕНИЧЕСКОГО ИСКУССТВА**

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Цель статьи — проанализировать специфику сравнительного метода в современном искусствоведении в контексте исследования сценического искусства конца XX – начала XXI в. Методология системного анализа

исследования соединила следующие методы: исторический (изучение развития компаративного метода), аналитический и структурно-логический (осмысление и освещение хронологии исторического аспекта проблемы, освоение специфики сравнительного метода), метод теоретического обобщения (для подведения итогов). Научная новизна. Впервые обоснованы место и значение метода сравнительного анализа в процессе искусствоведческого исследования, проанализированы основные концепции принципов интерпретации современного сценического искусства в контексте методов исследования других отраслей гуманитарного знания. Выводы. Интеграционные процессы мирового художественного пространства конца XX – начала XXI в. содействовали стремительной динамике и расширению границ сценического искусства, внедрению новаторских методов и форм, развитию уникальных художественных комплексов исследования. В связи с актуализацией в научном измерении междисциплинарного контекста последнее время в искусствоведческих исследованиях активно применяется компаративный метод как один из самых междисциплинарных и эффективных в условиях научной проблематики XXI века. В статье четко обозначили особенности гносеологической, логической, методологической, методической, мировоззренческой, аксиологической и практической функций сравнительного метода исследования сценического искусства конца XX – начала XXI в. Установили место и функции компаративистики в контексте особенностей современного сценического искусства: сравнивать тенденции развития национального сценического искусства, изучать их непосредственную и опосредованную взаимосвязь, типологические и искусствоведческие связи; выявлять подобные и отличительные приемы, методы, принципы, подходы и др.; предоставлять возможность проследить развитие сценических процессов.

Ключевые слова: сценическое искусство; компаративный метод исследования; компаративистская парадигма