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Reception of the Artistic Heritage of Ukraine of the 20th and Early 21st Century in Contemporary Artistic Practices: The Role of Museum and Private Collections in the Cultural Dialogue between Ukraine and Poland

By Alla Diachenko[1], Volodymyr Petrashyk[2], Olha Denysiuk[3], Yaroslav Lohinskyi[4], Dmytro Dotsenko[5]

ABSTRACT:
This article examines the reception of Ukraine's artistic heritage from the 20th to the early 21st century in contemporary artistic, museum, exhibition, and collection practices, considering the Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue. The starting point is the understanding of reception as a process of perception, comprehension, interpretation, and the subsequent integration of a cultural phenomenon into a new sociocultural context. It is argued that Ukrainian art of the 20th and early 21st centuries took shape amid political instability, imperial divisions, short-lived forms of Ukrainian statehood, the institutional rise of the 1920s, and the violent curtailment of the modernist experiment in the 1930s. It has been established that, in contemporary reception, museum and private collections no longer function merely as illustrative confirmation of historical and art-historical propositions but rather serve as a medium for the formation of new knowledge about a work of art, its origin, attribution, institutional history, and possibilities for public presentation. In this sense, the collection serves as a space where scientific reconstruction, museum interpretation, the preservation of cultural heritage, and international cultural communication intersect, especially in the context of the military threat to Ukraine's heritage. To illustrate these processes, exhibition case studies are presented as examples of museum representation, institutional cooperation, and cultural communication. Its scientific novelty lies in presenting a comprehensive and well-founded analysis of the reception of 20th- and early 21st-century Ukrainian art within the Polish cultural sphere, as well as in identifying directions for the further development of the Ukrainian-Polish dialogue through museums, private collections, research, and educational initiatives.

Keywords: reception of artistic heritage, contemporary artistic practices, museum collections, cultural dialogue, Ukrainian–Polish relations, Ukrainian art of the first third of the 20th century, cultural sustainability; provenance ethics; heritage protection; museum diplomacy.

1. Introduction

The artistic heritage of Ukraine of the 20th and early 21st centuries belongs to those phenomena that have been in the zone of incomplete visibility for a long time.

|[1]Department of Industrial Design and Computer Technologies, Faculty of Decorative and Applied Art, Mykhailo Boichuk Kyiv State Academy of Decorative Applied Arts and Design, Kyiv, Ukraine. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4496-5931
[2]National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, Ukraine. https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5407-9357
[3]Department of Theory and History of Art, National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, Ukraine. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8196-8608
[4]Department of Painting and Theory of Composition, National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, Ukraine. https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8198-8388
[5]Department of Painting and Composition, National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, Ukraine. https://orcid.org/0009-0007-5139-3544

Individual names and works (for example, Oleksandr Bogomazov, Oleksandra Ekster, Mykhailo Boychuk and his school, the artists of the Kultur-League, etc.) were known to specialists, but in the international art-historical circulation they were often dissolved in the broader definitions of "Russian avant-garde", "Soviet art"or "Eastern European modernism". Given this, the modern reception of this heritage involves returning the works to their own historical, geographical, linguistic and institutional context without being limited by aesthetic admiration for form.

The relevance of the topic is also due to the military context, within which Ukrainian cultural heritage has been threatened. According to The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as of June 10, 2026, 536 damaged cultural objects have been verified in Ukraine, including 41 museums (UNESCO, 2026). That is, the museum collection is not limited to its perception as a subject of historical and art-historical analysis, but is transformed into an object of protection, evacuation, temporary storage, restoration and international solidarity. In this context, the Polish direction acts as a geographically close space for displaying Ukrainian art, and at the same time is an environment where historical common heritage, conflict memory and modern support for Ukraine form a complex cultural dialogue.

The problem is that in the scientific literature, Ukrainian art of the 20th and early 21st centuries is mainly analyzed either as a historical and stylistic phenomenon or as part of the discourse of the Ukrainian avant-garde. However, the issue of its modern perception, understanding and interpretation through museum and private collections, and how such a reception affects the cultural dialogue between Ukraine and Poland, remains less developed. Filling the gap found in modern scientific literature requires a combination of historical genesis, analysis of specific exhibition cases and assessment of opportunities for further institutional cooperation.

Despite the existence of thorough historical and art studies devoted to Ukrainian modernism, avant-garde, scenography, graphics, and artistic and industrial practices, the scientific literature still lacks a systematic explanation of why museum and private collections become key mediators of the reception of Ukrainian artistic heritage of the 20th and early 21st centuries in the Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue. Previous studies have mostly focused either on the stylistic analysis of works, or on the history of individual artists and institutions, or on the politics of memory. At the same time, what has been overlooked is how a collection – whether public or private – becomes an active participant in cultural dialogue: it generates new knowledge about a work, returns it to its historical context, legitimizes Ukrainian cultural subjectivity in the international museum space, and creates an infrastructure for long-term cooperation. This gap is of significant importance, since without an analysis of reception through collections it is impossible to fully understand how Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue overcomes post-imperial, Soviet and narrow-national frameworks. The theoretical contribution of the article is that reception is viewed not only as an art-historical understanding, but as a process of cultural sustainability: the ability of heritage to be preserved, reinterpreted, transmitted and integrated into new international contexts through museum and private collections.

2. Literature Review

The issue of the history of Ukrainian art of the last century is systematically considered in the publication "Essays on the History of Fine Arts of Ukraine of the 20th Century"(Sydorenko, 2006), which presents the development of the artistic process not as a sequence of isolated names, but as the interaction of art schools, institutions, stylistic trends and historical traumas; which is important for establishing the genesis of the Ukrainian artistic heritage, as it allows combining the avant-garde, monumental art, graphics, scenography and decorative and applied practices in a single field of research. In addition, the collection Makaryk & Tkacz (2010) is important, in which Kyiv of the early 20th century is considered as an active center of modernist experiments in theatrical, visual, literary and cultural life, which allows us to more accurately explain Ukrainian modernism not as a peripheral phenomenon, but as a component of the European modern process.

The study of Ukrainian art of the 20th and early 21st centuries, its national artistic language, compositional and coloristic features, decorativeness, ornamentation, modern and artistic and industrial practices was carried out by Diachenko (2024), Kriukova and al. (2020) and others. Their works provide grounds to consider Ukrainian artistic heritage as a complex cultural space that combines national tradition, modernization searches, folk motifs, avant-garde experiments, scenographic, graphic and decorative design practices. The problem of Ukrainian modernism as a phenomenon that has long required rethinking in connection with imperial, Soviet and national frameworks of interpretation is raised by Grabowicz (2019), emphasizing the need to revise the established canons and methods of describing Ukrainian modern culture. In turn, the scenographic dimension of the Ukrainian avant-garde is detailed by Chechyk (2022), who analyzes the theatrical system of Alexandra Ekster and its connection with Ukrainian scenography of the 1910s–1920s, which is especially important, since the reception of Ukrainian heritage encompasses painting, theatrical, graphic and spatial artistic practices.

Theoretical approaches to understanding reception as a process of perception, comprehension, assimilation and further development of a cultural phenomenon in a renewed cultural environment are presented in the work of Verbetskyi (2024). His approach allows us to interpret the reception of Ukrainian artistic heritage not as a passive preservation or formal return to the past, but as an active process of redefinition, in which museum institutions, curators, collectors, contemporary artists and viewers participate. In the broader Eastern European context, Piotrowski's (2009) approach considers the art of the region through the interrelation of artistic practice, politics, ideological pressure and post-war transformations, while later developments consider the art of post-communist Europe in the context of political, social and cultural transformations after 1989 (Piotrowski, 2012); where art often became a means of rethinking trauma, ideological control, memory and democratic change.

A separate area of research is related to the role of private institutions, patronage, preservation of tangible cultural heritage and restitution and protection processes in wartime. These issues are raised in the works of Kershys (2025), Poltavska (2025) and other researchers, which allow us to consider private collections, museum funds and non-state cultural initiatives as part of the modern infrastructure of preservation, updating and international representation of Ukrainian cultural heritage. The concept of cultural

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diplomacy in this context should be clarified through the approach of Cummings (2003), which connects it with the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture between peoples. At the same time, the strategy of Ukrainian Institute (2020) provides a contemporary Ukrainian framework for cultural diplomacy, emphasizing dialogue, exchange, cooperation, and representation of Ukraine through culture; therefore, museum exhibitions and collection projects in Ukraine and Poland are potentially viewed as art history events and as tools for long-term cultural communication in a broader sense.

Although the existing research provides a sufficient theoretical basis for analyzing the stylistic features, cultural reception, and institutional preservation of Ukrainian art, it requires further systematization in terms of the impact of the reception of Ukrainian artistic heritage on Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue. In view of this, it is relevant to study how museum practices, private collections, exhibition projects, and contemporary artistic interpretations shape the space of intercultural understanding, actualize common historical and cultural experience, and create opportunities for further development of cultural cooperation between Ukraine and Poland.

To build a holistic analytical framework for the study, four theoretical perspectives are combined: reception theory, cultural diplomacy, museum studies, and private collecting studies. Reception theory, presented in the works of Verbetsky (2024), allows us to understand the perception of Ukrainian heritage not as a passive preservation of the past, but as an active redefinition of a cultural phenomenon in a new sociocultural environment. Cultural diplomacy, conceptualized through the approaches of Cummings (2003) and the strategy of the Ukrainian Institute (2020), explains how exhibitions, catalogs, educational programs, and inter-institutional exchanges transform artistic heritage into a tool for international dialogue. Museum studies and the definition of a museum by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) allow us to analyze a museum as an institution that not only preserves, but also researches, interprets, and represents heritage, forming new systems of knowledge. Finally, studies of private collecting, restitution, and cultural heritage preservation (Kershys, 2025; Poltavska, 2025) reveal the role of non-state collections in filling gaps in state funds, preparing international loans, and supporting publication and exhibition infrastructure. Taken together, these approaches form an analytical model in which the reception of Ukrainian artistic heritage in Poland is considered at four levels:

1) perception and interpretation of the work;
2) institutional mediation of the museum;
3) collection and provenance infrastructure;
4) diplomatic and cultural sustainability effect.

It is through this framework that the exhibition cases in Łódź, Kraków, and Warsaw are further analyzed.

3. Methodology

The study is qualitative, interpretative, and comparative-case in nature. Its goal is not to establish statistical representativeness, but to identify the mechanisms of reception of Ukrainian artistic heritage of the 20th and early 21st centuries through museum and

private collections in the Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue. The selection of exhibition cases was carried out according to three criteria:

1) spatial affiliation to the Polish museum environment;

2) involvement of Ukrainian museum and/or private collections;

3) different reception functions - representation of Ukrainian modernism, historical and educational explanation of Ukraine to the Polish viewer, and military-security and diplomatic presentation of the collection.

In accordance with these criteria, three cases were selected: "In the Eye of the Storm. Modernism in Ukraine"(Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi), "Ukraine. A different angle on neighbourhood"(International Cultural Centre in Kraków), and "The Cabinet of European Art"(The Royal Castle in Warsaw). The source base consists of official museum materials, press releases, curatorial descriptions, catalogues, analytical publications, ICOM and UNESCO documents. The analysis was carried out in three stages: description of the case, thematic and content analysis of its representational strategies, comparative generalization regarding the role of collections in reception and cultural dialogue. The limitation of the study is that the sample of cases is limited to Poland and does not claim to comprehensively cover the European context. At the same time, this methodology allows us to identify typical models of reception that can be tested in further, broader comparative studies.

4. Results

Fundamental to the formation of the artistic heritage of Ukraine in the 20th and early 21st centuries was the combination of several interrelated processes, which included the modernization of art education, the search for a national form, the active assimilation of European modernist languages, the development of urban cultural centers, and the struggle for cultural autonomy. Ukrainian art of this period did not develop in an isolated space, because between Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odessa, Lviv, Krakow, Warsaw, Paris, Munich, and Moscow, the Ukrainian lands with their figures became a place where European modernism acquired its own configuration.

At the turn of the 19th–20th centuries, Ukrainian culture entered modernity through the complex coexistence of populist, symbolist, modernist, and neo-Byzantine landmarks. Visual art turned to folk ornament, iconographic tradition, decorative flatness, Cossack myth, and peasant themes, but at the same time actively responded to impressionism, modernism, cubism, futurism, and constructivism. The Ukrainian heritage of the 20th–early 21st centuries is multifaceted and includes the active development of painting, scenography, book and magazine graphics, posters, monumental art, artistic and industrial practice, and design, along with other less developed trends.

It is important that political history directly determined the fate of artistic processes, which can be traced in the genesis of the reception of Ukraine's artistic heritage, presented in Table 1. Between the revolution of 1905, the First World War, the collapse of the Russian Empire, the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921 and the formation of Soviet Ukraine, a short but intense space of artistic freedom emerged. It was in this situation that Boychukism, Ukrainian cubo-futurism, constructivist searches, theatrical avant-garde and a powerful graphic movement were formed (Akinsha et al., 2022; Mudrak,

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1986; Shkandrij, 2001; Mudrak & Rudenko, 2015). Official materials of the exhibition « In the Eye of the Storm"emphasize that Ukrainian modernism unfolded against the backdrop of the 1905 revolution, World War I, the collapse of the empire in 1917, the short-lived Ukrainian People's Republic, and the founding of Soviet Ukraine; despite these upheavals, art, literature, theater, and cinema experienced a boom (Belvedere Museum Vienna, n.d.).

Table 1: Genesis of the reception of the artistic heritage of Ukraine in the 20th and early 21st centuries

Period	Artistic phenomena	Notable events	Essence and meaning
Late 19th - 1900s.	Modernism, symbolism, the search for a national style, the development of art education	Increasing interest in folk art, icon painting, decorative art, and national themes	The basis is being formed for the further combination of European modernity and Ukrainian visual tradition.
1905-1914	Pre-avant-garde experiments, modernist graphics, exhibition movement	Active contacts of Ukrainian artists with European centers, growing role of Kyiv, Odessa, Lviv	Ukrainian art is perceived as part of a broader modern process, but with its own local specificity.
1917-1921	Art of the Ukrainian Revolution, national symbols, book graphics, poster	Short-term statehood stimulates the need for a visual language of a new culture	Modern reception defines this period as a moment of combining art and cultural subjectivity.
1920s	Boychukism, cubo-futurism, constructivism, theatrical avant-garde, Kultur-Liga, scenography	Kyiv Art Institute, Kharkiv Constructivism, Les Kurbas' experiments, works by Yermilov, Bogomazov, Petrytsky, Meller	The artistic phenomena of this period are the core of the contemporary museum return of Ukrainian modernism to European art history.
1930s	The collapse of the avant-garde, socialist realism, repression, destruction or concealment of works	Stalinist repressions against the intelligentsia, destruction of art schools, forced unification of artistic language	Reception takes on a memorial and decolonizing dimension, which involves the popularization of works of art, the establishment of the authority of artists, the return of contexts, etc.
1950-1980s	Official Soviet art, unofficial practices, gradual rethinking of modernism	Modernism and the avant-garde remain partially displaced from the public canon	Modern museums work with gaps, archives, re-attributions, and the return of forgotten materials.
1991-2021	Post-Soviet opening of archives, new exhibitions, private collections, art market	Formation of an independent art historical discourse, emergence of new museum and private initiatives	Ukrainian art is gradually separating from the Soviet-imperial framework
2022-2026	Military evacuation, international exhibitions, cultural diplomacy, digital documentation	Exhibitions of Ukrainian modernism in European museums; damage to cultural objects; Polish support programs	The reception becomes simultaneously art-historical, security and diplomatic

Source: compiled by the author based on (Diachenko, 2024; Kriukova et al., 2020; Sydorenko ey et al., 2006; UNESCO, 2026; Belvedere Museum Vienna, n.d.; Museo National Thyssen-Bornemisza, n.d.; Akinsha and et al., 2022; Mudrak, 1986; Shkandrij, 2001; Mudrak & Rudenko, 2015).

It is worth emphasizing the importance of Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue in the genesis of the reception of Ukraine's artistic heritage, because during the 20th century. in the cultural field of Ukraine and Poland there were common territories of memory, Galician and Lviv experience, mutual presence of artists, crossings through Krakow, Lviv, Warsaw, as well as complex stereotypes that required public understanding. In particular, after World War II and the establishment of the Soviet system, a significant part of Ukrainian modern art found itself outside the open Polish-Ukrainian dialogue, that is, its public reading was narrowed by the Soviet ideological framework, and the memory of pre-war artistic contacts remained fragmentary. Instead, after 1991, the reception gradually moved from the plane of casual interest in individual authors to the plane of institutional cooperation: exhibitions, catalogs, museum loans, conferences and educational programs began to form a new vocabulary of conversation about Ukraine as an independent cultural system, and not just as a part of the Soviet or Russian artistic space. The International Cultural Center in Krakow emphasizes that Polish-Ukrainian issues have been present in its program from the beginning (the conference «Nations and Stereotypes"1993) and to contemporary exhibitions and research projects on the common heritage of the borderland, the myth of Galicia, modern Lviv and the Maidan (International Cultural Center in Krakow, n.d.).

Speaking of reception, we are talking about a complex process within which the artistic heritage enters a new context, receives new names, explanations, expositional neighborhoods, source grounds and social function. In the culturological discourse, reception is interpreted as the perception, assimilation, comprehension and further development of a cultural phenomenon within another cultural situation (Verbetskyi, 2024; Kadol, 2025). For Ukrainian art of the 20th - early 21st centuries. modern exhibitions redefine the place of Ukrainian art in history.

However, museum reception has its own specifics. According to the definition of the International Council of Museums (ICM), Council of Museums; ICOM), a museum is a permanent non-profit institution in the service of society which researches, collects, preserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage (International Council of Museums, nd.). Thus, the museum forms a system of knowledge through the selection of works, the establishment of attribution, the creation of viewing routes, the explanation of the historical context, the correlation of local and international artistic contexts. Given this, for Ukrainian modernism, museum reception is an opportunity to emerge from the shadow of colonial or Soviet generalizations and gain the opportunity to be identified as part of Ukrainian and European art history.

In this process, a private collection plays the role of preserving materials that are missing from state funds; supplementing museum expositions; securing international loans; supporting the publication of catalogs and exhibition projects. In the case of Ukrainian art of the 20th and early 21st centuries, private collections often preserve material that is incompletely represented in state museums or has a complex history of existence. Therefore, thanks to the participation of private collections in the exhibitions «In the Eye of the Storm and Ukraine». A different angle on neighbourhood Ukrainian-Polish dialogue goes beyond the boundaries of state museum exchange and acquires a network character.

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International Cultural Center (Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury) explicitly notes that Polish and Ukrainian private collections were involved in the Krakow exhibition, in particular the collections of Igor Abramovich and Igor Voronov (International Cultural Center in Kraków, nd.). The materials of the exhibition of Ukrainian modernism also record the participation of private collections, particularly in the context of works that complement the museum corpus (Belvedere Museum Vienna, n.d.; Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi, n.d.). This shows that without private collections, a full reception of Ukrainian heritage is impossible, as they fill the gaps associated with historical losses, the incompleteness of state funds, and the long-term displacement of modernism from the public canon.

At the same time, the private sector needs a clear definition of ethical frameworks. Since the art of the 20th and early 21st centuries has a traumatic history – repression of owners and authors, displacement, confiscations, Soviet re-attributions, loss of documentation – any involvement of a private collection in the international cultural dialogue must be accompanied by a provenance check, a scientific description, transparent loan conditions and a public indication of the source of the work (International Council of Museums, 2017). Therefore, a private collection can be a tool of reception only when it is integrated into the scientific and museum circulation, and not replaces it.

At the same time, the participation of private collections in Ukrainian-Polish museum projects requires increased attention to provenance, transparency of ownership, and ethical risks. Ukrainian art of the 20th and early 21st centuries has a traumatic history: repressions against artists and owners, forced confiscations, transfers of collections, Soviet reattributions, loss of documentation, and long gaps in archival records. Therefore, a private collection can legitimately contribute to the formation of museum knowledge only under the conditions of verified provenance, open indication of the origin of works, independent expertise, transparent loan conditions, and compliance with the ICOM code of ethics. Particular caution should be exercised in situations where the origin of a work is associated with confiscation, war losses, restitution disputes, or incomplete documentation. Private collections become a full-fledged instrument of reception not when they replace state museums or academic expertise, but when they are integrated into scientific, exhibition and legal circulation, complement museum funds and increase public trust in the processes of heritage preservation and interpretation. Such an ethical protocol is a prerequisite for a private collection to work for cultural sustainability, not for a shadow market or opaque representation.

The role of museum and private collections in the contemporary cultural dialogue between Ukraine and Poland is most convincingly manifested in specific exhibition projects. In particular, the cases collected in Table 2 represent the return of Ukrainian modernism to European art history, the historical and educational explanation of Ukraine to the Polish audience, as well as the military preservation of the museum collection as a form of cultural diplomacy.

Table 2: Case analysis of Ukrainian-Polish museum exhibitions in the context of the reception of artistic heritage

Case	Time and place	Collection base	Content	Influence
«In the Eye of the Storm. Modernism in Ukraine»	Museum Arts, Lodz, 2025-2026.	Three Ukrainian museums, Muzeum funds Art, private collections	Ukrainian Modernism of the 1900s-1930s as a Polyphony of Styles, Identities, and the Desire for Cultural Autonomy	Forms the Polish and European context of Ukrainian modernism as an independent phenomenon, instead of perceiving it as an addition to the Russian or Soviet avant-garde
«Ukraine. A different angle on neighborhood»	International Cultural Center, Krakow, 2021-2022.	NAMU, other Ukrainian and Polish museums, libraries, private Ukrainian and Polish collections	Visual representation of Ukraine from the end of the 17th century to the present day	Works with the history of the neighborhood, overcomes superficial perceptions of Ukraine and introduces Polish audiences to the context of Ukrainian art
"The Cabinet of European Art »	Royal Castle in Warsaw, 2024-2025.	Collection of the Khanenko Museum, temporarily deposited in Warsaw	The European part of the Ukrainian museum collection, in particular Polonica, works by Rubens, Bellotto, Verne, Zurbaran	Shows the collection as an object of military protection, conservation, research and long-term partnership between museum professionals from Ukraine and Poland

Source: compiled by the author based on (The Royal Castle in Warsaw, n.d.; Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi, n.d.; International Cultural Center in Krakow, n.d.).

It is worth emphasizing that the analysis is limited to three Polish exhibition cases, so its results should not be mechanically extended to the entire European field of reception of Ukrainian art. The sample is purposeful, not statistically representative: it is designed to show different models of museum reception - art criticism, historical and educational, and conservation and diplomatic. This makes it possible to identify typical mechanisms, but at the same time limits generalization. In particular, cases from Germany, Austria, Spain, France, the USA, and other countries, where Ukrainian heritage also enters public circulation through museum, private, and diaspora collections, remain outside the scope of the study. Therefore, the conclusions obtained should be considered as analytical generalizations and hypotheses for further broader comparative studies, and not as an exhaustive map of European reception. At the same time, the Polish context is of particular value for research, as it combines a shared historical memory, complex

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neighborhood pages, active museum cooperation, and military support for Ukraine after 2022.

Exhibition «In the Eye of the Storm. Modernism in Ukraine» is central to the declared theme, as it directly concerns the art of Ukraine of the 20th and early 21st centuries. In the international version of the exhibition, initiated by Museo National Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, presented Ukrainian art from the 1900s to the 1930s, including famous Futurist, Cubo-Futurist, and Constructivist works (Fig. 1). The official description emphasizes that the development of Ukrainian modernism took place against the backdrop of the fall of empires, World War I, the revolutions of 1917, the Ukrainian War of Independence of 1917-1921, the creation of Soviet Ukraine, Stalinist repressions, and the Holodomor (Museo National Thyssen-Bornemisza, n.d.).

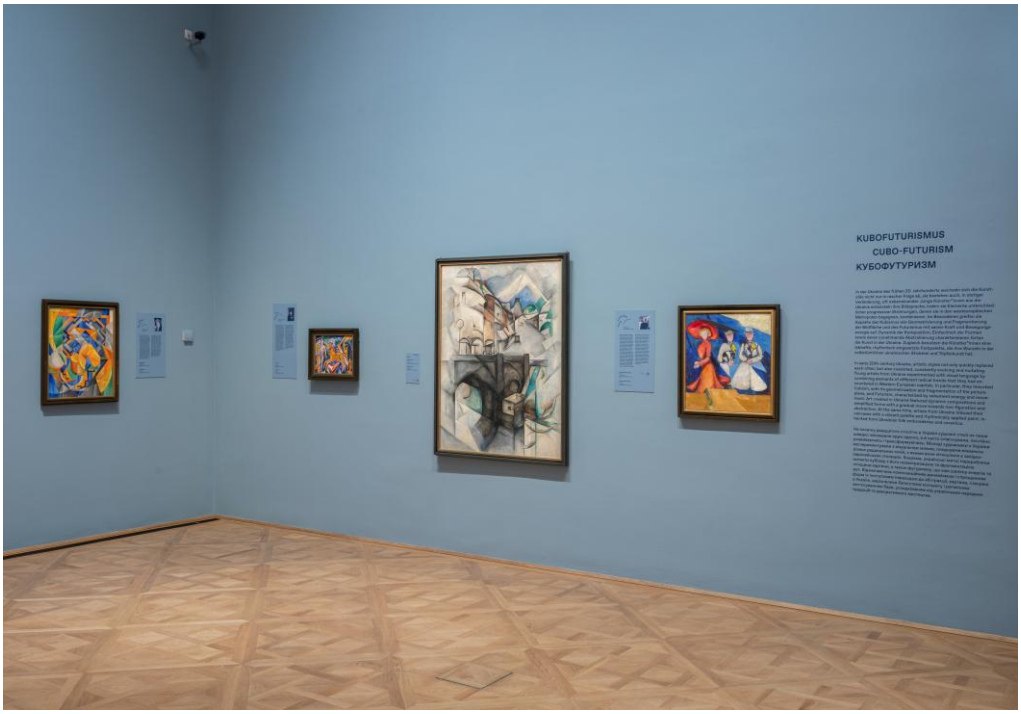

Figure 1: *Cubo-futurism hall in the exhibition «In the Eye of the Storm. Modernism in Ukraine»*
Source: official Belvedere materials, photo by Johannes Stoll / Belvedere, Vienna (Belvedere Museum Vienna, n.d.)

The importance of this exhibition is emphasized by the fact that it brings this international project to the Polish museum space with its own avant-garde tradition. Muzeum Sztuki emphasizes that the exhibition recreates the polyphony of artistic approaches and identities of the early 20th century and tells about artists who, through visual experiments, sought to renew Ukrainian culture and autonomy (Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi, n.d.). Thus, its impact on the Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue consists in changing the scale of the conversation, within which the Polish audience receives not only information about individual Ukrainian artists, but the opportunity to see Ukrainian modernism alongside Łódź's own avant-garde museum tradition. Thus, an equal dialogue

is formed, where Ukraine enters the space of modernist Europe as a culture with its own centers (in particular, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, Odessa) and its own artistic programs (Fig. 2).

Figure 2: *Exposition fragment of the exhibition "In the Eye of the Storm. Modernism in Ukraine»*
Source: official Belvedere materials, photo by Johannes Stoll / Belvedere, Vienna (Belvedere Museum Vienna, n.d.)

Instead, the exposition fragment of the exhibition Ukraine. A different angle on neighbourhood, organized by the International Cultural Center in Krakow in collaboration with the National Art Museum of Ukraine (Fig. 3), demonstrates a different type of reception than the modernism exhibition in Łódź, which may be due to its focus on a longer program of Polish-Ukrainian cultural reflection, in contrast to later exhibitions, which are mainly a reaction to the events of 2022. Here, Ukrainian culture is presented as a historical continuity, where painting, photography, graphics and documentary materials form the image of the neighbor. Such an exhibition approach is important for Polish-Ukrainian dialogue, because it does not limit Ukraine to one era or trauma, but shows it as a multi-layered culture. According to the official description, the exhibition had an educational function and was aimed at popularizing Ukrainian culture and artists, who were not well-known in Poland; it included works by Taras Shevchenko, Polish masters Józef Brandt, Jan Stanislavsky, Leon Vychulkovsky, works by Ilya Repin, as well as early avant-garde works by Georgy Narbut, Viktor Palmov, Lev Kramarenko, and contemporary artists (International Cultural Center in Krakow, n.d.).

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Figure 3: *Exposition fragment of the exhibition "Ukraine. A different angle on neighbourhood"at the International Cultural Center in Krakow*
Source: official materials International Cultural Center in Krakow (n.d.)

In our opinion, the main impact of this exhibition is to change the context and perception of the neighborhood. Ukraine in this exhibition is presented as a subject with its own long visual history, which is important for the Polish viewer, because visual material is able to correct stereotypes in situations where historical or political discourse often remains conflicting. Therefore, the International Cultural Center has actually turned the exhibition into a tool of soft cultural education: through works, catalogs, excursions, maps, photographs, posters, sculptures and private loans, a socially significant space of Ukrainian-Polish understanding was created, not a narrowly art-historical one.

On the other hand, the exhibition "The Cabinet of European Art. Masterpieces from the Bohdan and Barbara Khanenko National Museum of Art in Kyiv"in the Royal Castle in Warsaw (Fig. 4) is the subject of military protection, restoration, scientific description and diplomatic gesture, because its military reason for deposit is important. The materials of the Royal Castle indicate that the management of the Khanenko Museum, whose building was damaged during the Russian attacks on Kyiv in the fall of 2022, decided to deposit part of the collection in Warsaw in order to secure it for the war and carry out conservation work (The Royal Castle in Warsaw, nd.). Director of the Royal Castle of Malgorzata Omilianowska-Kiljanczyk emphasizes that the preparation of the exhibition allowed to preserve valuable objects from Ukrainian collections, prepare their

scientific research and create an important starting point for future projects of museum workers and scientists from Poland and Ukraine (The Royal Castle in Warsaw, n.d.).

Figure 4: *Exhibition space of the exhibition of works from the collection of the Khanenko Museum in Warsaw Source: press materials The Royal Castle in Warsaw (n.d.)*

The Royal Castle in Warsaw reports that since December 6, 2024, almost forty works from the Khanenko Museum have been presented; this was the first such large-scale presentation of the Khanenko collection outside of Ukraine (The Royal Castle in Warsaw, nd.). The press release specifically highlights the presence of works that have a Polish cultural and historical connection, such as a portrait of Stanislaw Augustus as Henry IV and two paintings from the collections of the last Polish king, which were until recently considered lost (Belvedere Museum Vienna, nd.). In view of this, we note that this exhibition expands the concept of reception. In this case, the perception of Ukrainian heritage abroad is a practice of institutional co-responsibility for its physical existence, conservation, scientific description, and future return to the Ukrainian museum space.

Thus, the conducted case analysis allows us to formulate a number of relevant directions for the further development of Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue, namely:

— creation of joint research programs on the history of Ukrainian modernism and its Polish contexts, which includes systematic work with archives, catalogs, provenance, artists' biographies, and inter-institutional ties in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, Krakow, Warsaw, and Łódź;

— preparation of bilingual Ukrainian-Polish catalogs and digital resources, which is due to the need to consolidate the subjectivity of culture through language in the scientific and public space. This is confirmed by the experience of the Krakow exhibition

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"Ukraine. A different angle on neighbourhood", which was accompanied by a large catalogue as a guide to the history of Ukrainian art (Krakow Travel, n.d.), which, without duplicating the exhibition, records the names of artists, titles of works, dates, sources of origin, museum and private collections, historical comments, and conceptual apparatus;

— joint programs for the restoration and temporary preservation of collections. In particular, programs such as the Khanenko Museum in Warsaw should be extended to include works of Ukrainian modernism, graphics, scenographic sketches, and archival materials that are particularly vulnerable to physical destruction;

— integration of contemporary artists into projects about the art of the 20th and early 21st centuries, because artists of the early 21st century work with archives, war, corporeality, material, city, and trauma; therefore, they can enter into a dialogue with Bogomazov, Boychuk, Yermilov, Petritsky, or Kultur-Liga by addressing a number of common issues, including how art responds to historical rupture, how the language of cultural autonomy is created, how visual form resists violence, etc.;

— ethical involvement of private collections, which involves open data on the origin of works, recording the state of preservation, scientific description, publication of catalog information, creation of opportunities for further research, etc.

Further research should not only expand the geography of cases, but also empirically verify whether the proposed tools of cooperation – bilingual catalogs, digital databases, restoration partnerships, educational programs, artist exchanges – really change the public understanding of Ukrainian heritage, museum collaboration, and cultural diplomacy. For this purpose, mixed designs are appropriate: surveys of visitors and curators, interviews with museum staff, analysis of the frequency of international loans, bibliometric analysis of catalogs and scientific publications, research on provenance databases, comparison of educational programs. Longitudinal and comparative projects that measure whether one-time exhibition events are turning into permanent institutional networks, whether trust in Ukrainian museums and private collections is growing, or whether the perception of Ukrainian art in Poland and wider Europe is changing are especially promising. Such an approach will allow us to move from describing individual initiatives to assessing their long-term impact on cultural sustainability and bilateral dialogue.

Therefore, in the near future, Ukrainian-Polish cultural dialogue should move from an event format to an infrastructural one, where the exhibition remains the central form of public reception, but with the support of catalogs, archives, educational programs, restoration cooperation, a digital database, and long-term communication between museums, private collectors, universities, and cultural institutions.

5. Conclusions

The conducted research gives grounds to assert that the artistic heritage of Ukraine of the 20th and early 21st centuries. in modern artistic and museum practices functions as an active resource of cultural memory, and not as a completed historical material. Its reception includes perception, comprehension, interpretation, reattribution,

museum exhibition, private collection addition, military preservation and cultural and diplomatic representation.

The genesis of Ukrainian art in the 20th century is expressed in extraordinary artistic intensity, because it was then that Ukrainian culture produced modern visual languages that combined European avant-garde tendencies, folk tradition, neo-Byzantine monumentality, decorativeness, constructivism, theatrical experiment, and graphic culture. The violent curtailment of this process in the 1930s caused a long break in its public reception, and therefore the contemporary return of Ukrainian modernism has both an art-historical and a memorial character.

The considered Ukrainian-Polish cases demonstrate interconnected methods of reception, in particular the introduction of Ukrainian modernism into the European museum context and the change of its perception from peripheral to independent; the creation of a broad historical framework for the Polish understanding of Ukraine as a subject with its own cultural history, etc. Museum collections in this process have evidentiary, interpretative, protective and diplomatic functions; and private collections complement the museum corpus, but require a transparent provenance, scientific and ethical framework. Therefore, the reception of the artistic heritage of Ukraine of the 20th - early 21st centuries. in the Polish cultural space is an important way of affirming Ukrainian cultural subjectivity and, as a result, creating new conditions for Ukrainian-Polish dialogue, in which the museum and private collection are instruments of memory, knowledge, protection and mutual understanding.

The results confirm and at the same time expand the existing research on Ukrainian modernism, cultural diplomacy, museum studies and heritage protection. They confirm Grabowych's thesis on the need to rethink Ukrainian modernism beyond imperial and Soviet canons, as well as Piotrowski's position on the inextricable connection of Eastern European art with politics, ideology and post-communist transformations. At the same time, the article extends Werbecki's theory of reception, transferring it to the plane of museum-collection infrastructure and Ukrainian-Polish dialogue. It also complements research on private collecting and restitution, showing that private collections can be not only an auxiliary resource, but also an active factor in cultural sustainability - provided that they are transparent in provenance and ethically responsible. Finally, the article challenges residual notions of Ukrainian art as peripheral, "Soviet,"or "Russian,"demonstrating that contemporary museum reception in Poland shapes Ukrainian cultural subjectivity through exhibitions, collections, catalogs, conservation, and interinstitutional cooperation.

To achieve the quality of such a process, it is proposed develop joint Ukrainian-Polish research programs on the history of Ukrainian modernism; create bilingual catalogs and digital resources on Ukrainian art of the 20th and early 21st centuries; initiate programs for the restoration and temporary preservation of vulnerable museum materials; involve contemporary Ukrainian artists in exhibitions on historical modernism; develop an ethical protocol for the participation of private collections in international projects; and strengthen educational programs for Polish audiences aimed at explaining Ukrainian modernism beyond colonial and Soviet schemes.

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