

Research of the Symbolic and Allegorical Composition of the "Eye of Providence" in the Cultural Heritage of the Trypillia Protocivilization and Religious Analysis Context

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Abstract: Well known in religious culture, the symbol "Eye of Providence" or "All-seeing eye" is an emblem sign with deep foundations, which lies in the architectural and iconographic tradition of Christianity, Masonic societies, various esoteric circles. The Radiant Delta became a visual icon in the 15th century and was used in mystical philosophical teachings, and as a decoration on religious paintings and works of art. "The Eye", as an emblem, was incorporated into the interiors and exteriors of both Orthodox and Catholic churches, often in the most visible way. The glow of the all-pervading "Eye" inside or above the triangle has become a metaphor meaning the One God with his essence of all-encompassing and all-seeing and is sometimes interpreted as a symbol beyond the reach of human imagination and objective cognition. However, referring to archaic religions and mythologies, the author reveals archetypal images and schemes, signs and their combinations, which are hiding concepts, notions and structural-semantic patterns, that are obvious precursors to the formation of the modern cult symbol of the "Eye of Providence". The article examines the history of the "Eye of Providence" as a symbol, which in the biblical tradition undergoes its formation from a textual sign to an iconographic image and leads its common thread of "written history" from the ancient temple cult. From this the specificity of the semantic structure of the studied sign-symbol and certain historical and cultural contexts in which the above symbol is developing, is determined. The author proves that the metaphorical symbol of the "Eye" with its semantic specificity existed long before the emergence of the biblical expression and was specifically reproduced in different ancient peoples. Initially, it was associated with cult buildings. From the point of view of the archaic human cognition of the symbol under study, the regularities concerning natural phenomena and the visible Cosmos, by the "patronage" of which the original expression of the sacred "Eye" was born, are revealed. The work involves research on the temple of Trypillia culture, because the establishment of a universal „thread of history" of the „Eye" expression from the archaic temple cult and cult buildings gives rise to such an appeal. With this it is established that the „Heavenly Eye" expression originated from the astronomical situation and was associated with the stellar allegory of Taurus / Taurus constellation – a sacred image in many cultures of the Eneolithic era.

Keywords: "Eye of Providence", "All-Seeing Eye", "Radiant Delta", Taurus Constellation, Eneolithic, Trypillia Culture, Cosmology, Trypillia Religion

1. Introduction

When we touch on the issue of the "Eye of Providence" or "All-seeing Eye" emblem, the first thing that comes to mind is the Masonic symbol. However, anthropomorphic symbolism of the single "Eye" and its symbolic and

allegorical components are deep, archaic images related to the common religious concepts, and their origins can be traced from the cosmological cults of ancient peoples.

In the study of the "Eye of Providence" symbol, it is urgently important to analyze the biblical texts that served to crystallize the symbol in its modern, emblematic expression.

It is believed that the Old Testament psalms, which were used in the liturgy and ceremonies of Solomon's temple, were precursors to the later pictorial tradition of God's eye [18]. Just this biblical text shows signs of such a phenomenon. For example: "The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord is on his heavenly throne. He observes everyone on earth; his eyes examine them." (Psalm 11: 4); "From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth... But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love" (Psalm 33: 13-15, 18); "The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry" (Psalm 34: 15). From the biblical psalms, the anthropomorphic religious idea of the Supreme Being watching over his creatures from the high throne in the heavenly temple, looking approvingly on those who know his presence and are adhering to the moral law. A similar use of the symbolic theme is found in the Book of Proverbs, which repeats the idea that "The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good" (Book of Proverbs 15: 3).

Christianity probably borrowed the concept of the "Eyes" / "Eye" symbol from Jewish texts. The theme of the all-seeing / all-encompassing gaze carries over to the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find: "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him..." (Hebrews 4: 13). The first letter of Peter emphasizes the etymology of the divine gaze: "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer..." (1 Peter 3: 12).

It is in the Christian tradition that the image of God's "Eye" is transformed from a theological text into an iconographic image. This syncretic symbol is united by the Jewish and Christian idea of the One God and his all-encompassing gaze, realized precisely in the pictorial tradition of Christianity, since Judaism has a taboo on the image of God. The biblical symbol, which had two expressions, the "Eye" and the "Eyes", is eventually reduced to a single "Eye" in emblematics, which carries a more archaic order with reference to Jewish religious texts and Solomon's temple.

Already since the end of the XV century, the Image of immortal irradiated "Eye" enclosed in a triangle becomes known in church emblematics [19]. During the same period the anthropomorphic symbol often appears in church architecture and religious paintings. It is widely disseminated in books and emblems as an allegorical image for the awareness of the omnipresent God and the Holy Trinity. Subsequently, the "Eye of Providence" / "Radiant Delta" becomes a popular emblem with the early Masons. The earliest manifestation of such symbolism can be studied from the beginning of the 17th century. [23] It becomes generally recognized in Masonic societies as the embodiment of the close care of the Supreme Architect. And as early as 1782 the radiant "Eye" appears on the back of the Great Seal of the United States of America above the triangle-pyramid [24], as a sign that the "Eye" or God approves / supports the prosperity of the state. This symbol is also widely used in

other American seals and emblems and is known from the reverse of the dollar bill.

It was all worth citing for the understanding that the iconographic representation of the radiant "Eye" traces its common thread of "written history" back to an ancient temple cult. Judging by the Old Testament biblical texts originally the God's Eye was associated with the Heavenly Temple, the projection of which was used to build the earthly Tabernacle, and in its historical time – the Temple of Solomon [25]. It is the concept of the ancient Temple (in the biblical understanding of the Temple of Solomon) is the forerunner of the "Eye of Providence" or "All-seeing Eye" symbol, which is well known in modern times as a powerful symbol surrounded by radiant light and covered by a triangle. Considering the study of M. Eliade, the classic of world religious studies, that "Judaism borrowed the Ancient Eastern concept of the temple as a copy of the heavenly archetype" [5], for our study it is very important to involve the general concepts of the Temple known in the religions of the ancient Near East and in general traditions and their religious buildings in order to understand the origins of the patterns associated with the modern symbol of the "Eye". Having identified such a central role of the Temple and temple cult in the study of this symbol, it is also important to refer to recent studies on the Nebelivka temple (Trypillya culture), which in relation to the Middle Eastern religious structures carries the phenomenological concept of "Primacy" or "Primordality" (according to the American pragmatist C. Peirce), for it reaches its cultic depth of 6 thousand years.

2. The Origin and Basis

The symbol of the "Eye of God" (the Eye of Ra / Gora) in its literal manifestation is best known from ancient Egyptian culture. The all-seeing solar "Eye" was a symbolic attribute of the temple complexes and pyramid-tombs and early passed into the amuletic attribute. "The Eye of Ra" was glorified during temple rituals to protect the pharaoh, sacred places, and ordinary people. Ancient Egyptian and Middle Eastern sailors often depicted this symbol on their boats to be sure of a safe sea voyage [2]. To this day, boaters sailing the Nile and throughout the Mediterranean believe in the protective power of the Eye [6].

The symbol of the Egyptian "Eye" was associated with fire, flame and the red glow that appeared with the morning star. It is important to accentuate that in ancient Egypt the cult of the "Eye" was also associated with the cult of the Heavenly Cow: in the "Book of the Heavenly Cow" there is a mythological plot about punishing people with the "Eye of Providence" [10] who came down to earth as the goddess Hathor – the Heavenly Cow who bore the Sun. The Egyptian cult of the Heavenly Cow combined with the symbol of the "Eye of Providence" gives some reason to look at this mythological background from a cosmological perspective, because it is known that the constellation Taurus was associated by many ancient peoples with Tur, Cow or Ox, and the very astronomical position in this star cluster highlighted the

symbol of the "Eye of Heaven" - a bright star in the area of the allegorical head of the Heavenly Bull, which can be a cultural code for understanding the modern symbol of the "Eye of Providence".

It is known that another name for the constellation Taurus is "Eye of the Taurus" (Latin: *Oculus Tauri*), originating from the Aldebaran star, the brightest in this star cluster of celestial bodies. Aldebaran is a bright and conspicuous red spectrum star in the constellation of Taurus and is generally one of the most prominent and brightest stars in the night sky. Its position in the stellar allegory of the cosmic Bull-Tur (Greek Taurus) falls on the conditional head (muzzle) of the animal, so as if the space giant looks with one "eye" at the earthly existence, which formed the corresponding name.

Given (Figure 1) and the astronomical position in the constellation of Taurus: the horns of the Bull-Tur star as if forming a V- or K-shaped stellar asterism, which is connected with the head (muzzle) of an animal – a conventional triangle, which extreme point is the brightest Aldebaran star – blood-filled bull's eye. Sometimes Aldebaran is also described as the "Eye that looks menacingly at the hunter Orion", a constellation that is just southeast of Taurus [20]. Consideration of such an astronomical position brings to mind a correspondence to the composition of the "Eye of God" in or above the triangle (read pyramid).

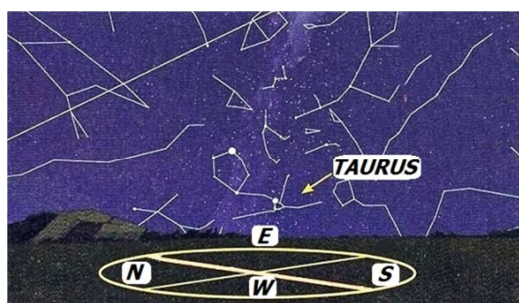


Figure 1. The Taurus constellation and an approximate astronomical situation on the vernal equinox in the Eneolithic (~ 4 000 - 1 700 BC).

In general, it is necessary to go deeper into the archaic cult of the stellar Bull-Tur in order to understand the origins associated with the formation of its symbolism and its structural components.

The formation of the cosmological image of the Bull-Tur should be seen in the period of the so-called Neolithic or agrarian revolution (by the definition of archaeologist G. Childe), when the ancient population shifted from hunting and gathering to reproductive economy. The intensification of agriculture contributed to significant changes in the technological, social, and ideological spheres. Fertile land became the basis for organized sedentary settlements and its cultivation the engine for social transformations and ideological progress. It was in the Eneolithic farming culture that cattle played a decisive role in land development, especially in arable farming. The domesticated tur, quite early on becoming an assistant to man, ensured the prosperity of the collective. So, in the conditions of reproductive economy there was a special leap in the development of the

mytho-religious image of the "horned helper".

On the example of the Trypillia culture, which arose during the "Neolithic Revolution" in the modern lands of Ukraine, can be most clearly traced the formation of a sacred cult of the Bull-Tur, where this adored image (motif of a bull's head or a symbol of Two-toothed horns) was present from ritual plastics to the Trypillia temple complexes. For the Trypillia ethno-cultural group it also became one of the main religious symbols of the cosmological world outlook (according to soviet philologist V. Toporov).

The image of the Bull-Tur in the first farmers in the territory of modern Ukraine became an astronomical guide, which was a consequence of the rational calendar knowledge emergence and the system of cosmological ideas about the starry sky creation. Actually, close attention to celestial phenomena was caused by the same sedentary farming way of life, where "a spring day feeds a year". The fact is that the Trypillia expansion and the greatest flowering of this ethno-cultural community was in the zodiacal era of Taurus [1], when at the vernal equinox from about 4000 BC to 1 700 BC a star cluster (Figure 1) appeared in the eastern point of the horizon, which in Greek culture was called Taurus (Lat. Taurus). Stellar Taurus was "denoting" the point of the vernal equinox almost throughout the Eneolithic era, and already after 1700 BC the constellation of Aries began to dominate the sky (appear at the equinox). The following zodiacal era of Aries became one of the symbols of the Jewish religion (the blood of lambs saves the Jews from Egyptian captivity (Exodus 12: 1-7); Abraham sacrifices a ram instead of Isaac (Genesis 22: 13); Jewish ritual instrument Shofar made of ram's horn, etc.), and following Aries, the Age of Pisces, becomes one of the symbols of Christianity (Jesus multiplies fish to feed the crowd (Matt. 15: 34-38); the first disciples of Christ are fishermen (Matt. 4: 18-21) Jesus eats fish with his disciples after his resurrection [26]). Consequently, the starry sky and the zodiacal epochs played one of the key roles in the system of human ideas about the universe and religious beliefs already in a fairly early historical period.

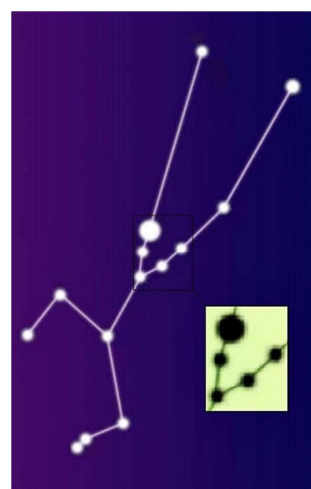


Figure 2. The constellation of Taurus with easily noticeable groups of stars.

Trypillians, and other ancient cultures of Europe and the

Middle East observed the culmination of the stellar analogy Bull-Taurus appearance at dawn before sunrise (heliacal rising [12]) when above the horizon line, exactly in the eastern part of the world there was a “cosmic phenomenon” of horned image. This fixed a stable calendar event and as if the celestial Tur brought the sun of a new time on his horns (remember, for example, widespread Egyptian sculptures, where the solar disk between the horns of the Bull was depicted). Thus, the purely earthly image of the Bull-Tur from real life was transferred to the depths of cosmonyms, which were created by people by associative forms and were the beginning of all cosmology.

The cosmic programming of the stellar age of the Taurus-Tur was a pattern of its time. So simultaneously many ancient cultures honored and worshipped the horned image. Defining the cosmological dependence of the Neolithic epoch, the domestic researcher M. Chmykhov wrote: “The core of the law was the movement of the sun in the circle of the zodiac, and the highest holiday and the beginning of the law was the celebration of the beginning of the year and the first (main) constellation of the zodiac – the vernal equinox” [3].

Taurus was a sacred image and the first sign of the zodiac in Mesopotamia. The ancient population called it “Big Bull of Heaven” because it was the constellation in which the Sun rose on the day of the vernal equinox [22]. Researchers note that before about 4000 BC in Mesopotamia four constellations had already been identified (Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius), which by their heliacal ladders marked the onset of the four seasons of the year associated with equinoxes and solstices [13].

The Minoan civilization is known for its temple complexes with stylized horns of the Bull-Tur [30], which were both sacred religious symbols and astronomical viziers by means of which calendar observations were carried out. At a certain point of the year the Sun descended between the two-toothed horns, which recorded the calendar event.

The developed cult of the sacred Bull-Buffero is also known in the ancient civilizations of the Indus valley, which allows to know from seals from the cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, as well as Sumerian evidence about people from the Meluhha state (India) [15]. In the Rigveda there is a story in which the celestial Bull is described, which looks with hundreds of eyes (not with hundreds of stars?): “Every minute the Bull is being eulogized, it roars loudly, ejaculating semen, it roars loudly, ejaculating semen; Stares with a hundred eyes” [17]. The role of the Bull as a symbol of God is also characteristic of those elements of ancient Indian mythology that can be associated with early, pre-Indo-Aryan origins.

Various sacralized signs of Bulls-Turs are known in the mythologies of old Sumer, old Europe, Assyria, Babylon, Greece and Rome. According to archaeologist E. Yarovy: “Scientists have long established that the wild bull, or tur, was one of the most respected animals among the ancient population of Eurasia. Its cult was widespread everywhere in the North-Western Black Sea region” [28].

The image of the stellar Taurus and its component symbolism

(eye, triangle, horns) quite early became associated with the temple cult, which is of particular importance for the etymological definition of the modern symbolic-allegorical composition of the Eye of Providence. Thus archaeologist M. Gimbutas in his monograph: “Civilization of the Great Goddess: The World of Ancient Europe” reports about the special expression of the Bull cult on the settlements of Vinca culture. In at least four ancient settlements some bucrania were found, which were mounted either on clay columns or on the walls of sanctuaries: they were bull skulls, covered with a layer of clay, with noses painted blue and red triangles painted on their foreheads [11] – the triangles probably denoted the astronomical position in the corresponding constellation. Here also M. Gimbutas reports finding a cult vessel with a central motif of triangle and horns [11].

It is known that in North American Indians “Eye of Providence” was located at the top of the triangle [21] - this most plausibly resembles and perhaps reproduces the astronomical position with the Taurus star.

In Syria, the Heavenly Bull was associated with the gates of the heavenly palace of An. Such a palace was imagined as a heavenly or real temple. The motif of the Bull and the gate is explained by the projection of the constellation shape [22]. Apparently, this is the reason for the widespread image of the Mesopotamian winged Bull with bulging eyes (an expression of omniscience and omnipresence) and the story about the battle of Gilgamesh with the Heavenly Bull, which in their semantic code still gravitate to astronomical metaphors.

We also investigate the correspondence of “Eyes” symbolism and terminology to archaic cult constructions, where a hole in the roof or wall of a temple / sanctuary represents a kind of “heavenly gates” or “solar doors” through which the cosmic “image of God” enters the sacred space at a certain time. As the embodiment of the “Eye of Providence of God”, most likely, it is the nearby Cosmos with its bright objects that is primary (stars, sun, moon), one can observe the manifestation of the “Eye” in the symbolism of ritual architecture in the form of a hole directed to the sky in the vault of the temple or cathedral – an open access to the heavenly worlds [7]. The most striking example of this surviving terminology and the corresponding temple structure is the pagan Pantheon Temple, where the opening in the dome of the temple is called Oculus, which is translated as “Eye”, literally “Eye of the Temple”. It is known that there was a hole in the roof of the Temple of Jupiter for observing the stars [4]. In the Christian religion this expression is emphasized in the main temple of the Christian world – the Temple of the Holy Sepulchre, where above the Holy Sepulchre (The Edicule) a symbolic hole in the dome-vault is formed from which sun-like rays spread gilded, in different directions in a circle (isn't it “the Eye of God” expression?).

3. In the Trypillia Proto-Civilization

Returning to the Trypillia proto-civilization and its temple building the author finds that the heavenly allegory of the sacralized in the agricultural world image of the Bull-Tur was

a kind of sacred message of heaven, following which the Trypillians built their cult constructions. An obligatory attribute of the Trypillia temple complexes were the symbols of the Horns of the Bull (studied from the Nebelivka temple [29] and ceramic models of the Trypillia temples), and the Temple and its "Horns" were always oriented to the east-west axis of the world. The pledge of such sacred manifestation was the appearance of the stellar allegories of Tur at the point of the solar equinox above the eastern horizon, to which the Trypillian Temple was directed in space. Exactly six months later, the constellation disappeared in the western part of the horizon at the autumnal equinox. Such celestial procession of night and day luminaries as if divided the year into two equal parts and with its celestial message formed the orientation of the Temple, created by the message of heaven (the concept of the Heavenly Temple). In other words, heliacal east and sunset stellar Taurus in the Trypillia era coincided with the key points of the solar equinoxes, which in the calendar-practical plane served as a measurement of the semi-annual agricultural season and in the religious sense was a sophisticated metaphor of the inevitability of universal cycles according to the "laws" of which the Temple and human society functioned.

Understanding the meaning of the Taurus constellation in the Trypillia temple construction becomes especially important in the study of the "Eye of Providence" genesis as an established symbolic component of the Bull-Taurus allegory and its bright star Aldebaran. It is known that in the eastern part of the Nebelivka temple a "light passage" was arranged for fixing the annual equinoxes [29] or, roughly speaking, a hole was made through which the sun of the equinox days fell into the depths of the main ritual hall. The fact that a kind of eastern rounded passage was arranged in the building of the Trypillia temple to monitor the annual solar processes and the sun rays' entering into the structure of the sanctuary, suggests that along with the solar mysteries some helical staircase of the cosmic Bull-Tur could be detected. Consequently, the "Eye of God" (read Eye of Taurus - Aldebaran star) irradiated by the Sun (read heliacal dawn, in which the constellation appears together with the Sun) or is not a reference to the sacred reality of the Eneolithic world, where the "Eye of Heaven" is on top of the triangle or inside of it (Figures 1, 2) was observed during the spring equinoxes in the temple cults? In the author's opinion, posing such a question is a fundamental answer to the genesis of the modern symbolic-allegorical composition of the "Eye of Providence" and its temple-cult sources. The fact that the symbol of the "Eye of Providence", as a rule, in the internal structure of the Christian church is depicted on the eastern parts of the facades or is turned in the interior of buildings to the eastern part of the world, and in Masonic lodges the "Eye" is always arranged on the eastern wall [14], also indicates the connection of syncretic symbol with the archaic cosmology.

It should be added that the context of the head of the sacred Bull-Tur in the form of a triangle and star-eye, which is "glaring" in the forehead of the cosmic image in Trypillian religion, is further emphasized by appropriate cult plastics. In the settlement Bulbochi (Moldova) a cult bukranium/bovin

was found with copper inlay in the head (Figure 3) [9]. This inlay of red metal probably hinted at a correspondence with the most prominent red star in the constellation of Taurus, and the head-triangle of zoomorphic image, to the stellar asterism, corresponding exactly to this geometric figure. In addition, the Trypillians created cult vessels with handles in the form of "zoomorphic triangles" connected with horn motifs [8], and among the "graphic language" of the farmers the symbol of a triangle stands out, in the center of which is a circle with a red dot [27]. It was this symbol that appeared on the layout of the Nebelivka temple and was seen by the author on the eastern wall of the Temple during its presentation on December 7, 2019 at the "Religion of Nature" Spiritual Center [16].

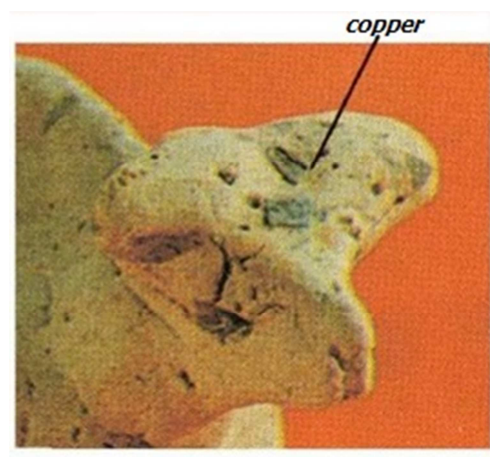


Figure 3. Cult bucranium with a copper insert on the forehead. Settlement of Bulbochi, Moldova.

4. In the Ukrainian ethnoculture

It is worth noting that somewhere in the depths of national memory Ukrainian ethnoculture still cherishes the image of the mighty, starry Tur, unconcealed from his cosmic abode looks with a single "Eye" at all earthly deeds. Exactly such expression can be seen on the cover of the book "Prayer to Dazhbog" by the Ukrainian writer and researcher of the Ukrainian mythology V. Voitovych. Here the head of horned Tur is surrounded by stars, and in his very center there is the "Eye" in a triangle and Ukrainian symbols, which is a good illustration of the archaic myth for a beholder. And the Ukrainian money was not left without attention to the ever seemingly Masonic, but still archaic-cosmological symbol. Thus, on the 500-hryvnia Ukrainian banknotes there is an image of "Eye" in the "Pythagoras Triangle" of philosopher G. Skovoroda, which is also presented here as if embodying some mystical message, which should be meaningful by means of Ukrainian philosophy.

5. Conclusions

The religious symbol of the "Eye of Providence" cognition peculiarity is the specificity of appeal to the biblical texts, from which the said symbol crystallizes into a non-verbal,

sign manifestation. It is precisely the biblical texts that stand primordially on the point that the “Eye of the Lord” should be considered undivided from the temple cult, from which this symbolism has not actually retreated to this day. This reveals the primary specificity of the semantic orientation of the being studied sign-symbol and narrows the field of religious studies to be involved.

Focusing on the central role of the Temple and the Temple cult in this study, it became clear that the concept of the “Temple Eye” was a common phenomenon in prehistoric religions. Its specificity reaches a literal symbolic expression on the elements of the Temple's interior to the holes in the Temple structures, by means of which observations of astronomical phenomena were carried out. At the same time archaeoastronomical connection of ancient temple complexes of the Eneolithic era determines the central role of the Taurus constellation in the symbolism etymology of the “Eye”. It is the stellar analogy of the Bull-Tur, due to its visible asterism conditionally forms a “heavenly triangle” with its top – the “Eye of Taurus”, the bright star Aldebaran, which probably was the primary basis of any expression “the Eye from Heaven”.

By bringing to the study the concept of the Trypillia Temple and its most famous and largest to date - the Nebelivka temple complex, it became clear that the “Eye of Heaven in a triangle” at certain key points of the year could literally appear in the Temple. This understanding was possible given the previously studied design of the Temple, which provided a light passage of the sun's rays to the main ritual day of the annual equinoxes. Hence, the first appearance of the Taurus constellation over the horizon in the year together with the sunrise at the vernal equinox could be observed from the middle of the agricultural Temple. Determining this leads to an underlying understanding of the Eye of Providence temple symbol, which is usually depicted on a shining / irradiated background.

Taking into account the results of the study, it becomes clear that the formation of the symbol of the temple “Eye” has undergone “evolution” from the reality of the natural world to textual expressions and eventually to the sign-emblematic manifestation. Such a symbol should be defined as a general religious phenomenon, initially forming its sign and semantic identification in the cosmological cults and archaic temple construction system of values.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest associated with this manuscript.

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Biography



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