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Winged Image of the Divine: A Comparative Note on Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish Art in Early Modern Ukraine*

Introduction: Under Divine Wings

The issue of divine providence and protection became topical in mid-17th-century Ukrainian lands. The Greek Orthodox Ruthenians living in the epicenter of the encounter between the Catholic West, Christian Orthodox East, Protestant North, and Muslim South, sought religious and political allies. The struggle of the Ukrainian Cossacks against the Catholics entailed aggression towards their Jewish neighbors as well. When contemplating divine intervention in their destiny, the Ukrainians and Jews similarly transmitted their ideas through a visual model that represented – symbolically or figuratively – the celestial patron as if physically protecting the people under his outstretched limbs. The iconography was not newly invented, but adopted from the art of the two empires flanking the Ukrainian lands: the Holy Roman Empire of the Habsburgs and the Muscovite Tsardom. Jews and Christians derived this metaphor from the same biblical sources: Exod. 19:4, which recounts God's protection of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, "I bear you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself," and Deut. 32:11, which allegorizes God's providence as an image of the eagle who "stirs up her nest, flutters over her young, spreads abroad her wings, takes them, bears them on her wings." Yet, in a departure from biblical discourse, both Christian and Jewish artists rendered the symbolic eagle as double-headed. Occasionally, Ukrainian artists also applied the symbolic protective wings to other divine figures. A comparison of the genesis and message of that imagery is the subject of this paper.

Habsburg's Eagle

The origins of the European heraldic double-headed eagle are traced back to the imagined ability of this eagle to look in two opposite directions, which were understood as

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the Western and Eastern parts of the empire by the Byzantine dynasty of Komnenos as early as the mid-11th century.¹ This symbol was brought to the Christian West by Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (1194–1250), who asserted his position as a direct successor to the Roman emperors of antiquity and the re-unifier of the Western and Eastern parts of the realm. The Habsburgs inherited the eagle emblem, and in the late 15th century it became one of the principal images of Christ's providence over the social hierarchy in the Habsburg Empire. In a Bavarian woodengraving of 1487 (fig. 1), the crucifix appears in front of the eagle as the symbol of the Habsburg Empire, bearing the caption *Das hailig [römisch]h Reich*. The image implies that the emperor, who is blessed by Christ, governs the nobility and the army, who in their turn take care of the craftsmen and peasantry.² The spread of the eagle's wings repeats Christ's cruciform posture, as if extrapolating Christ's blessing and protection and promulgating it down over all the members of the Empire. A new image in visual art, the parable of the hands of the crucified Christ as wings spread over and protecting the nations was first expressed in the writings of the Church fathers. Lactantius, a 4th-century Christian apologist, described the crucified Christ as extending his hands on the cross and thus plainly stretching out "his wings towards the east and the west, under which all nations from either side of the world might assemble and repose."³ The *Quaternionenadler*, depicting an eagle bearing the Crucifix and heraldic shields of the governing bodies and social groups (fig. 2), was created by Hans Burgkmair in 1510 to promote Maximilian I as Elected Roman Emperor of the German People. Burgkmair's engraving circulated widely and was often copied in Habsburg's Austrian and German possessions. The eagle's wings have literally turned into human arms in the posthumous portraiture of Maximilian in the Missal book belonging to his daughter, Margaret of Austria (fig. 3). The eagle's hands hold a sword and white lilies, which allude to the strength and mercy of the emperor's government over his secular and clerical subjects.⁴

¹ N. Zappeiriou, *The Greek Flag from Antiquity to Present* (Athens: Eleutheri Skepsis, 1947), 21–22; *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 472, 669.

² I discussed the double-headed eagle motif in Habsburg art more extensively in my "The Eagle, Its Twin Heads and Many Faces: Synagogue Chandeliers Surmounted by Double-headed Eagles," *Jewish Ceremonial Objects in Transcultural Context*, eds. J.-M. Cohen, S. Berger, I. E. Zwiép (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 77–129.

³ "Nam quod extendit in patibulo manus, utique alas suas in Orientem Occidentem que porrexit, sub quas uniuersae nationes ab utraque mundi parte ad requiem conuenirent," Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius, "Epitome divinarum institutionum," in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: J. P. Migne, 1844), 6:1058, chapter 51.

⁴ The sword and the white lilies are standard symbols of Christ's judgment and mercy, respectively, in the images of the Last Judgment in Early Netherland paintings. For example, see Hans Memling's *Last Judgment*, oil on wood, 1466–1473, Gdańsk, Muzeum Narodowe.



Fig. 1. *Das hailig [römisch]h Reich*, woodengraving. Bavaria, 1487.
From Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Réveils et prodiges. La gothique fantastique*
(Paris: A. Colin, 1960), 245



Fig. 2. Hans Burgkmair the Elder, *Quaternionenadler: Das hailig Römisch Reich mit seinen gelidern*, woodcut, 1510



Fig. 3. Petrus Almaire (Peter Imhoff), *Secular and Spiritual Classes in the Empire Pay Homage to Emperor Maximilian I.* The Missal of Margaret of Austria, Netherlands, 1515–1516. Mechelen, Stadsarchief, fol. 1v

Muscovite Eagle

To the East of the Ukrainian lands, the double-headed eagle was the emblem of Muscovy. The Byzantine heraldry had been borrowed directly from the late 15th century by Ivan III in reaction to the Habsburgs' earlier use of it as their imperial symbol.⁵ After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Ivan III had married Zoe (Sophia) Paleologue, a niece of the last Byzantine Emperor, and claimed his kingdom to be the successor of the Eastern Roman Empire.⁶ The great state seal of Ivan III's grandson, Ivan the Terrible (1530–1584), who asserted that he was an offspring of August the Emperor, employs the eagle as the symbol of an empire blessed by Christ that unites its members under its wings (fig. 4).⁷ The “Golgotha Cross” above the eagle; one more cross on the eagle's crown; and Saint George, the holy patron of Moscow, on the eagle's breast, denotes the sacredness of the kingdom. The other medallions in the proximity of the eagle designate the Russian lands. Thus in the 16th century, both the Russian double-headed eagle and the Habsburg's *Quaternionenadler* were not mere heraldic emblems but also a sign of God's protection of the state.



Fig. 4. The Great State Seal of Tsar Ivan the Terrible, between 1547 and 1584.
From Lakier, *Russkaia geraldika*, fig. XV–6

Mary's Veil

Another Christian image that implies divine protection over individuals and society as a whole is the veil of Mary, whose names in Greek, Σκέπη, and in Russian, Покров, have similar meanings of a “veil” or “cloak” as well as “protection.” An early 16th century icon from Moscow (fig. 5) exemplifies the Slavonic iconography of Mary's protective veil.⁸ The painting illustrates the legend of a 10th-century miracle that happened to a certain Andrew who witnessed the descent of the Virgin together with a host of saints in the Blachernae church in Constantinople. The painting shows Andrew in the bottom center, in front of the Royal Gate of the iconostasis in the church. The Virgin had inter-

⁵ See Gustave Alef, “The Adoption of the Muscovite Two-Headed Eagle: A Discordant View,” *Speculum* 41, no. 1 (1966): 1–21.

⁶ Marshall Poe, “Moscow, the Third Rome: The Origins and Transformations of a ‘Pivotal Moment’,” *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* (2001): 412–429.

⁷ Aleksandr B. Lakier, *Russkaia geraldika*, vol. 1 (Saint Petersburg, 1855), 219–230, 234–235, 246–247.

⁸ Mikhail V. Alpatov, *Drevnerusskaia ikonopis'* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1978), 29, 31, 318 no. 167–168.



Fig. 5. *Mary's Intercession*, tempera on wood. Moscow school, early 16th century.
Saint Petersburg, The Russian Museum

ceded with Christ on behalf of all Christians and then spread her veil over the congregation in the church as a protection.⁹ The figures of a tsar, depicted in the chair to the left of Andrew, and a metropolitan to the right of him, imply that Mary blesses and protects both secular and sacral rulers. Two centuries later, an Ukrainian painter of the *Intercession* icon (fig. 6) adapted the story from Constantinople to his reality by locating Mary with her veil in the church of Sulymivka near Kyiv, dressing the dignitaries in the fashion of his time and inserting Ukrainian Cossacks into the congregation.¹⁰

In the Western version of this iconography, Mary shelters the people under her outspread cloak. The Latin term for these images, *Mater Misericordiae*, accents the aspect of divine mercy, and their German name, *Schutzmantelmadonna*, stresses Mary's role of protectress. The type of the *Mater Misericordiae* also had an impact on the icon painters in the Ukrainian lands since the 17th century. Like the *Intercession* from Sulymivka, an 18th-century Ukrainian *Mater Misericordiae* icon communicated a political message by including the Christian Orthodox Archimandrite on the left of Mary and the Russian Tsar with the Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky on her right (fig. 7).¹¹

Winged Protectors of Hetmanate Ukraine

The symbolism of the double-headed eagle and Mary's veil of mercy became pivotal in the propaganda for the political and religious alliance of Khmelnytsky's Cossack Hetmanate and the Tsardom of Russia that was established in 1654. The delegation sent by Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich to Kyiv in order to accept the Cossacks under the Russian crown presented to Khmelnytsky a standard portraying the holy protectors of the Greek Orthodox Ruthenians: Christ, Mary stretching her veil to protect the faithful, and saints, including sanctified monks of the Orthodox Pechersky Lavra (Cave Monastery) in Kyiv.¹² As a response, Khmelnytsky saluted Aleksey Mikhaylovich as "an eagle that stirs up her nest," quoting Deut. 32:11, in order to emphasize that the Tsar "stretched his royal mercy over Kiev and all Lesser Russia [i.e., Ukraine]."¹³ A member of Khmelnytsky's delegation to Moscow, Ukrainian Archimandrite Innocent Gisel (ca. 1600–1683),¹⁴ reasserted this rhetoric on the frontispiece of the *Paterik Pechersky*,

⁹ John Wortley, *Studies on the Cult of Relics in Byzantium up to 1204* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2009), 149–154.

¹⁰ *Shedevry ukrains'koho ikonopysu XII–XIX st.: al'bom*, ed. L. Chlenova (Kyiv: Mystetstvo, 1999), 114–115.

¹¹ An essential research of the Polish and Ukrainian iconography of *Mater Misericordiae* is Mieczysław Gębarowicz, *Mater Misericordiae–Pokrow–Pokrowa w sztuce i legendzie środkowo-wschodniej Europy* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1986).

¹² We know the standard only from its description in Dmitrii Bantysh-Kamenskii, *Istoriia Maloi Rossii* (Saint-Petersburg–Kiev–Kharkov: Tipografiia I. I. Chokolova, 1903), 528.

¹³ *Akty, otnosiashchiesia k istorii Iuzhnoi i Zapadnoi Rossii* (Saint-Petersburg: Tipografiia P. A. Kulisha, 1878), 10:216–217.

¹⁴ Nikolai F. Sumtsov, "Innokentii Gisel'," *Kiievskaia starina* 10 (1884): 183–226; *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, ed. by Volodymyr Kubliovych (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 2:58.



Fig. 6. *Mary's Intercession* from the church of Sulymivka. Oil, tempera, gilding, and silvering on panel, the 1730s. Kyiv, The National Art Museum of Ukraine



Fig. 7. *Mater Misericordiae with the Portrait of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky* from the Intercession Church of Deshky, oil, tempera, and gilding on wood, the 1730s. Kyiv, The National Art Museum of Ukraine

a hagiography of the Lavra's monks published in Kyiv in 1661 (fig. 8).¹⁵ The same biblical quotation, "as an eagle stirs up her nest" is written here on two banderoles above Christ, thus associating him with the divine eagle. In this depiction, Christ delegates his protection to Mary, who grants her mercy to the Russian eagle hovering above the Uspensky (Dormition) Cathedral and the patriarchs of the Kyivan Lavra. In contrast to the mere semblance of the crucified Christ's arms and eagle's wings observable in the symbolic images of Habsburg's imperial eagle, the artist of the *Paterik* frontispiece gives a pair of actual eagle's wings to both Christ and Mary, explaining the portrayal of a winged Mary with the apocalyptic verse "and to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle" (Rev. 12:14) that appears in the banderoles above her figure.

Both the German-born Gisel and the engraver of the *Paterik* illustrations, Lavra's monk Ilia, were Orthodox clerics well acquainted with Western art,¹⁶ and their frontispiece wood engraving merged the eastern and western iconographic traditions. Mary's descent from Christ to a church and its congregation repeats the layout of the Russian icons of her intercession (cf. fig. 5), whereas the veil shown as a cloak with outstretched edges rather than as a shawl above her head replicates the Catholic iconography of *Mater Misericordiae*. The Russian eagle under its celestial protectors is an antithesis to the Catholic pictures, where the divine eagle is Habsburg's (fig. 1) and the location of the Russian state emblem above a church in Kyiv symbolizes the political and religious protection of Muscovy over Ukraine.

Gisel's utilization of western sources is even more apparent in the frontispiece of his own book, *Mir z Bogom chelovieku* (Peace with God for Man) (fig. 9), compiled after the annexation of eastern Ukraine to Russia in 1667 and printed in the Lavra in 1669.¹⁷ Here, the Russian eagle with its raised pinions is modeled on the Habsburg emblem (e.g., figs 1–3) rather than on the Byzantine-styled eagle with its wings turned down as that depicted in the *Paterik*. The eagle is now the dominant image, and – as with the Habsburg art (cf. fig. 3) – the agent of the dual aspects of divine providence that cares

¹⁵ A manuscript translation of the Polish *Paterykon abo żywoty ss. Oycow pieczarskich* (Kyiv, 1635) into Church Slavonic was completed by the Archimandrite Joseph Trisna in 1656. Gisel added an introduction praising the Russian Tsar to the book and inspired the symbolic design of the frontispiece. Forty eight woodcuts for this edition were produced by Ilia, a Lavra's monk, in 1555–1560. See Iakym P. Zapasko and Iaroslav D. Isaievych, 1574–1700, *Pamiatky knyzhkovoho mystetstva. Katalog starodrukiv, vydanykh na Ukraini*, vol. 1 (Lviv: Vyshcha shkola, 1981), no. 402.

¹⁶ Gisel was born to a German reformist family in East Prussia, left for Volhynia where he converted to Orthodoxy, and then studied theology, including Catholic writings, history, jurisprudence, philosophy, and languages, at the Kyiv College and at European universities. See Sumtsov, "Innokentii Gisel," 183–226; Nikolai F. Sumtsov, *K istorii iuzhnorusskoi literatury XVII stoletia* (Kharkov, 1885), 3:3. Ilya widely copied Dutch and German prints. See Dmitrii A. Rovinskii, *Russkii narodnye kartinki*, vol. 1 (Saint Petersburg: R. Golike, 1900), cols. 10, 40.

¹⁷ Zapasko and Isaievych, *Pamiatky knyzhkovoho mystetstva*, no. 458; Aleksandra A. Guseva, Tat'iana N. Kameneva, and I. M. Polonskaya, *Kievskie izdaniia vtoroi poloviny XVII v.*, vol. 2, no. 1 of *Ukrainskie knigi kirillovskoi pechati XVI–XVII vv. Katalog izdani, khраниashchikhsia v Gosudarstvennoi biblioteke SSSR im. V. I. Lenina* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia biblioteka SSSR im. V. I. Lenina, 1981), 115.



Fig. 8. *Paterik Pechersky* (Kyiv, 1661), frontispiece



Fig. 9. Innocent Gisel, *Mir z Bogom chelovieku* (Kyiv, 1669), frontispiece

for the faithful and punishes the infidels. The eagle stretches its right claw with a palm branch inscribed with “Peace to the Faithful” over the Russian Tsar and his army who, as this reads in the banderole above their heads, “trust in the shadow of these wings.” The arrow inscribed “Sore for the Enemies” in the eagle’s left claw threatens the Poles who, as one learns from the scroll, “get their deserts.”¹⁸

Dual Providence over the Jewish People

Jewish chronicles and folk legends epitomized the Khmelnytsky uprising of 1648–1649 as a national disaster comparable to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem followed by the exile.¹⁹ As with the traditional interpretations of the destruction of the Temple, the massacres of Jews during those years were accepted as God’s retribution for those who abandoned the Torah.²⁰ The survivors believed that divine anger would be tempered with divine mercy,²¹ which would ultimately bring messianic redemption

¹⁸ Numerous versions of the iconographic scheme of Gisel’s allegories were popular in the Ukrainian and Western Russian lands until the first half of the 18th century, as long as the struggle of Russia for control over the eastern parts of Poland continued. Several examples are reproduced in Gębarowicz, *Mater Misericordiae-Pokrow-Pokrowa*, fig. 42; *Pamiętki knyżkovoho mystetstva*, nos. 780, 2857; Mariia Alekseeieva, *Graviura petrovskogo vremeni* (Saint-Petersburg: Iskustvo, 1990), 10–11. See also Dmitrii Iu. Krivtsov, “Obraz dvuglavogo orla v simbolike zapadnorusskikh posviatitel’nykh predislavii XVII – nachala XVIII vv. (na materialakh izdaniia tipografii Kiievopecherskoi Lavry,” in *Geral’dika: Materialy konferentsii “10 let vosstanovleniia geraldicheskoi sluzhby Rossii”* (Saint Petersburg: Izdatel’stvo Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 2002), 58–67. The copies of Gisel’s image of the double-headed eagle in Central Russia were often stripped of the political connotations relating to the encounter of the East Orthodox Christians with the Polish Catholics. For example, the icon painter Semen Ivanov of Ustiuzhna near Vologda (fig. 10) placed under the eagle’s arrow and palm branch a pair of identically recumbent worshipers rather than the two conflicting troops, and depicted the apostles and evangelists instead of the Kyivan saints, see Ufi Abel and Vera Moore, *Icons* (Stockholm: Stockholm Nationalmuseum, 2002), 128–129. On this iconography, see also Oleg Tarasov, *Icon and Devotion: Sacred Spaces in Imperial Russia* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 277–280.

¹⁹ Joel Raba, *Between Remembrance and Denial: The Fate of the Jews in the Wars of the Polish Commonwealth During the Mid-Seventeenth Century as Shown in Contemporary Writings and Historical Research* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 37 ff, 67 ff, 139. See also Alan Mintz, *Hurban: Responses to Catastrophe in Hebrew Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 102–105; Chone Shmeruk, “Yiddish Literature and Collective Memory: The Case of the Chmielnicki Massacres,” *Polin* 5 (1990): 173–183.

²⁰ This view of the massacres appears to be denoted by the plea of Jews in the hour of danger as described by Meir ben Samuel from Szczepbrzeszyn: “We will give our lives for the holiness of our Lord, <...> and may be then we desert [God’s] grace,” Meir b. Samuel of Szczepbrzeszyn, *Tsuk ha-Ettim* (Kraków, 1650). See reprints in Hayyim Jonah Gurland, *Le-Korot ha-Gezerot al-Yisrael* (Kraków, 1889), 4:115; Moshe Rosman, *Texts on the Massacres of the Years 1648–1649: Meir of Szczepbrzeszyn*, N. N. Hanover (Jerusalem: Merkaz Dinur, 1981), 6.

²¹ This approach is found in the Bible. E.g., Ezekiel prophesied that God does not desire the destruction of sinners, but rather that through repentance they may live (18:23). See also Exod. 34:6–7; Hos. 11:9.



Fig. 10. Semen Ivanov, *Divine Eagle Slaying the Dragon*, Ustiuzhna, the Vologda region; oil, tempera, and gilding on canvas mounted on wood, 1729. Stockholm, The Nationalmuseum

to God's chosen people. The concept of sheltering of the righteous "under the wings of divine presence" that echoed the biblical discourse referring to the eagle bearing the exiles on its wings to God (Exod. 19:4) became a common idiom in Jewish chronicles of Khmelnytsky's persecutions. In the eulogy compiled in memory of the victims, Yom Tov Lipmann Heller (1579–1654) begged: "God, full of mercy, give right repose to the souls of the murdered under the wings of the divine presence, <...> for the merits of the

martyrs gather the dispersed.”²² The synagogue painters utilized the double-headed eagle as the image best able to signify God’s rulership over the world, the duality of divine providence, and hope for redemption under the wings of God’s presence.

In the center of the ceiling painting tentatively dated 1714 (fig. 11),²³ in the synagogue in Khodoriv (then Chodorów) near L’viv, the verse from Deut. 32:11 written around the double-headed eagle identifies it as a symbol of divine protection over individual men, who are represented by small hares whose necks are grasped in eagle’s

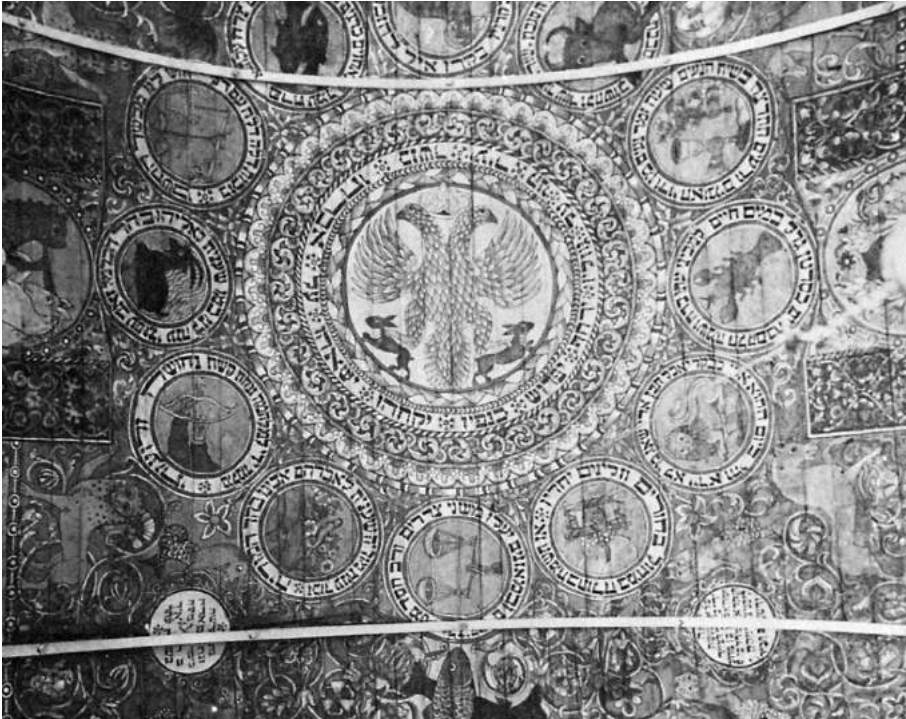


Fig. 11. Khodoriv, synagogue: ceiling painting in the prayer hall (detail), 1714.

Photograph by A. Breier, before 1913. Tel Aviv Art Museum,
The Prints and Drawings Department

²² Gurland, *Le-Korot ha-Gezerot al-Yisrael*, 1:10; Raba, *Between Remembrance and Denial*, 70. Note also the concluding sentence of Nathan (Nata) Hanover’s popular chronicle of the Khmelnytsky massacres *Yeven Metzulah* (literally, “Deep Mire”; figuratively, “Abyss of Despair”) first published in Venice in 1653: “the Lord should hearken to our cries and gather our dispersed ‘from the four corners of the earth’ [Isaiah 11:12], and send us our righteous Messiah, speedily in our day,” Nathan Hanover, *Abyss of Despair (Yeven Metzulah)* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983), 121. See also Rosman, *Texts*, 44, and similar excerpts in Raba, *Between Remembrance and Denial*, 70.

²³ Alois Breier, “Die hölzernen Synagogen in Galizien und Russisch-Polen aus dem 16., 17. und 18. Jahrhundert” (PhD thesis, Vienna, 1913), 13; Alois Breier, Max Eisler, and Max Grunwald, *Holzsynagogen in Polen* (Baden bei Wien, 1934), 9–10.

claws.²⁴ The verse about the eagle fluttering around its young and taking them heavenwards suggests that the painting represents the eagle rescuing the hares rather than cruelly preying upon them.²⁵ This aspect is clearer in the ceiling painting of ca. 1746 in the synagogue of Smotrych (fig. 12), where the eagle embraces the hares' waists and looks in their eyes. The small stars between puffy patterns on each side of the eagle represent the sky. In the Khodoriv synagogue, the eagle within the sun-like circle surrounded by the signs of the Zodiac suggests God's eternal government over the universe. The single great crown above both its heads stresses the unity of the double-headed eagle.

The eagle's double heads may imply God's rule over both sides of the world, but also may connote the duality of divine justice and mercy that was a dominant topic in the Jewish chronicles of the Khmelnytsky times, as well as a prevalent motif in the frontispiece of Gisel's book. The world-views of the Jews and Ukrainians were modeled on a common topos: providence pursues the sinners but has mercy on the righteous, who finds shelter under Divine wings. The difference is in the identification of the sides. For Gisel and his engraver, the eagle protects Greek Orthodox Muscovites and pursues the Polish Catholic enemies (cf. fig. 9). The Jews believed that they, the "eagle's young," are subjects of both divine anger and paternal protection. Unlike the groups of people shown as objects of divine protection in Ukrainian art, the hare allegory in Jewish art conveys the idea of God's care of each individual person. In contrast to the Christian hierarchical schemes of divine providence that sanctify the present social order, the Jewish images are concerned with the ideal order of the world to come.

To the best of our knowledge, no church contained a painting of the double-headed eagle within the wheel of the Zodiac such as that found in the Khodoriv synagogue, but similar motifs circulated in prints. Here, as elsewhere in Europe, the book illustrations and single printed sheets facilitated the migration of images across cultures and served as a model for wall paintings. The eagle within a circle surmounting the twelve pictures of labourers and the Zodiac sings as if insuring the proper sequence of times in Johann Schultes' Catholic printed calendar for the year 1637 (fig. 13). The sun surrounded by the signs of the Zodiac was painted on the ceiling of a wooden palace of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich in Kolomenskoye near Moscow in 1667–1669, and copies of it in folk prints have been found as far as Ukraine (fig. 14).²⁶

²⁴ On the hare as an allegory of the Jew in medieval Jewish art, see Laura Pasquini, "The Motif of the Hare in the Illuminations of Medieval Hebrew Manuscripts," *Materia Giudaica* 7, no. 2 (2002): 273–282.

²⁵ This reading was proposed by Andrzej Wierciński, "Orzeł i zając: Próba interpretacji plafonu sufitowego synagogi w Chodorowie," in *Żydzi i Judaizm we współczesnych badaniach polskich. Materiały z konferencji, Kraków 21–23.11.1995*, ed. Krzysztof Pilarczyk (Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1997), 376. See more argumentation in Elliott Horowitz, "Odd Couples: The Eagle and the Hare, the Lion and the Unicorn," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 11 (2004): 243–258.

²⁶ Rovinskii, *Russkii narodnyie kartinki*, vol. 1, cols. 45–46, and fig. V facing col. 47–48; Ol'ga A. Belobrova, "K istorii knizhnoi miniatury i narodnoi kartinki kontsa XVII – pervoi poloviny XVIII veka," in *Narodnaia kartinka XVII–XIX vekov*, ed. M. A. Alekseieva, E. A. Mishina (Saint Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1996), 71–81.



Fig. 12. Smotrych synagogue: ceiling painting above the Holy Ark, 1746(?).
Photograph by S. A. Taranushchenko, the 1920s. Kyiv, The National Library of Ukraine,
the Department of Manuscripts, found 278, no. 473, item 804

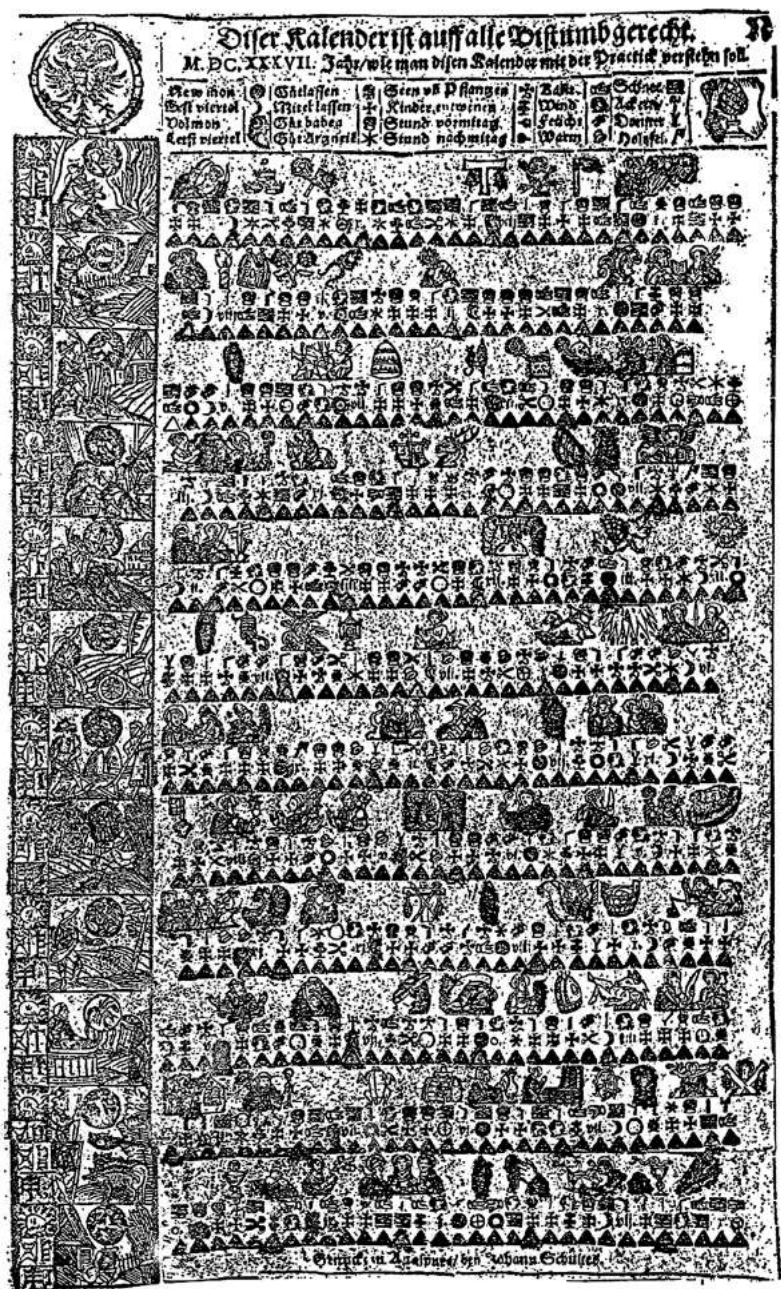


Fig. 13. Johann Schultes, *Calendar for the year of 1637*, woodengraving. Augsburg, Staats- und Stadtbibliothek

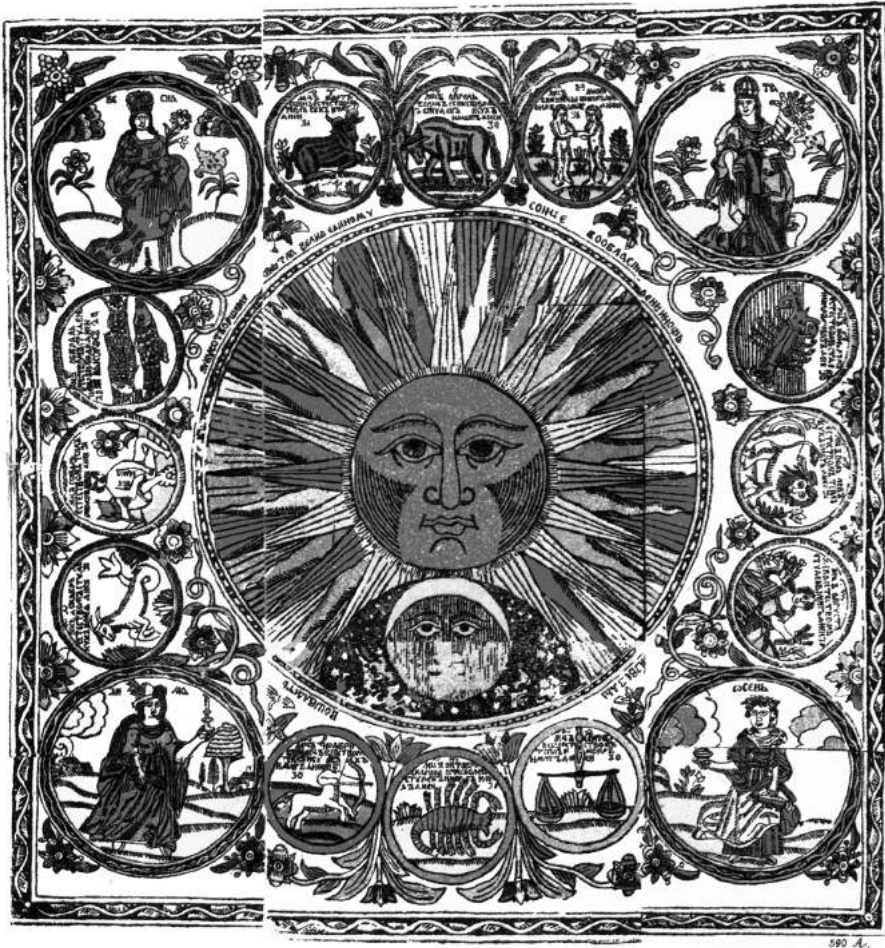


Fig. 14. The Sun and the Moon, the Twelve Signs of Zodiac, and the Four Seasons, a copy of the ceiling painting of 1667–1669 in the palace of Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich in Kolomenskoye near Moscow, woodcut, coloured by hand. Muscovy, the late 17th or the early 18th century

Paintings to Sculptures

The images of the double-headed eagle disseminated by Christian prints and paintings also became part of church design. The eagle is seen above the carved wooden Royal Gate in the *Mary's Intercession* icon (fig. 6) that is thought to be a depiction of the lost iconostasis from the Sulymivka church. An iconostasis crowned by a carved wooden eagle (fig. 15) is still to be found in the Spaso-Preobrazhenska (Transfiguration of the Savior) church of 1734 in Velyki Sorochyntsi. As in the Ukrainian political graphics and

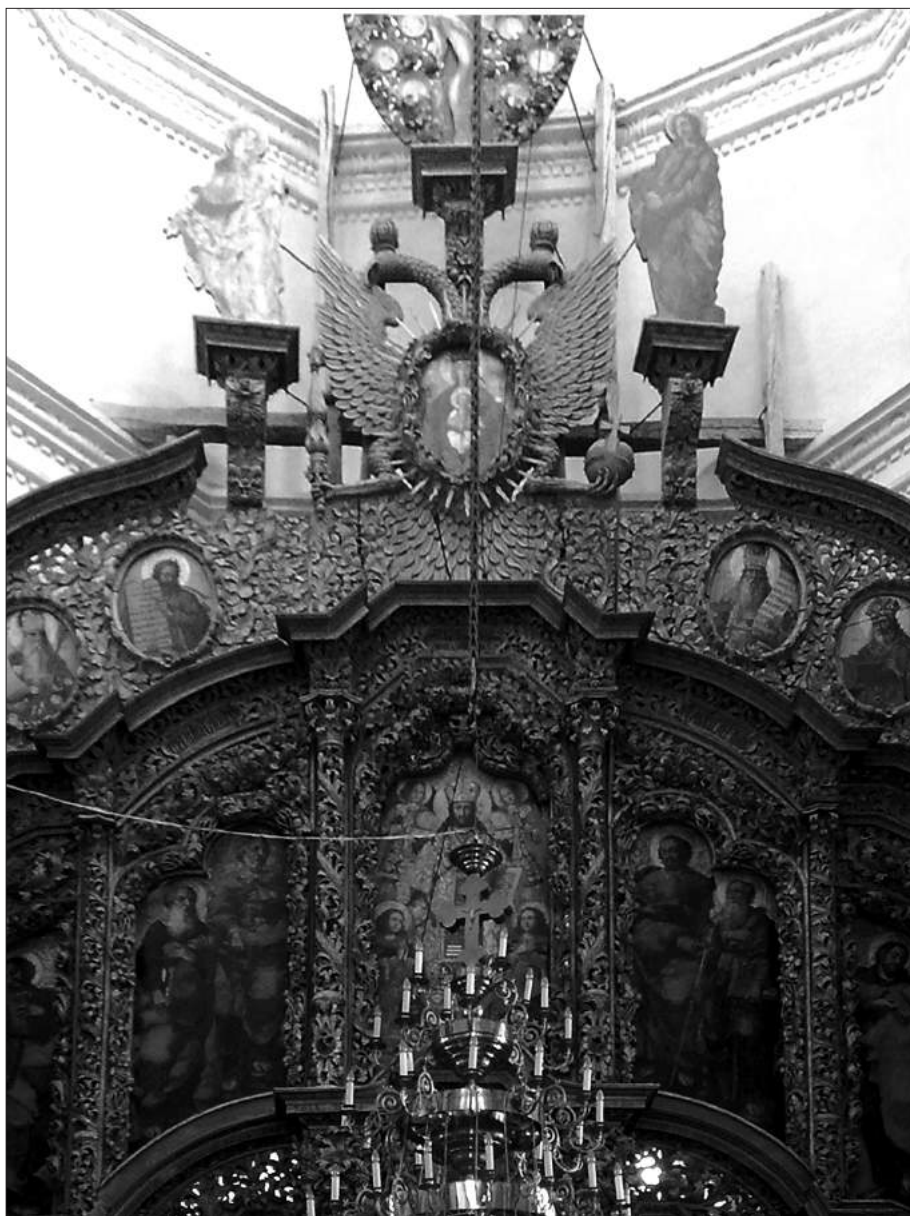


Fig. 15. Velyki Sorochyntsi, the Transfiguration of the Savior Church: iconostasis (detail), carved and gilt wood, 1734



Fig. 16. Kremenets, synagogue: the Torah Ark, early 19th century.
Photograph by Solomon Yudovin, 1912. Saint Petersburg, Petersburg Judaica Center

the Intercession icon of Sulymivka, the eagle designates divine providence that is transmitted through the spiritual protection of Greek Orthodox Russia.

A similar transition of this image into sculptural decoration occurred in Eastern European synagogues, where a sculpted double-headed eagle symbolizing God's rulership and providence was often set atop the Torah ark (fig. 16), the bimah, and other ritual objects.

Conclusion: Survival of the Symbol

The politically charged symbol of the double-headed eagle encouraged the Ukrainians during their struggle for dominance over the Greek Orthodox Church in their lands. After that aim had been achieved when the Ukraine was more fully integrated into the Russian empire in the late 18th century, this symbol disappeared from their ecclesiastic art. The aviamorphic symbol of divine providence in synagogue art sublimated the traumatic Jewish experience of the Khmelnytsky massacres. Even after these historical and psychological connotations had faded, the double-headed eagle continued to be a prevalent symbol of the divine in Jewish art in Ukraine and surrounding lands – Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, and Romania – until the Holocaust.

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