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Semantic Transformations of the Lexeme *Икона* in the Russian Language of the Newest Period

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Abstract. The study focuses on the analysis of semantic changes of the lexeme *икона*, considered in a synchronous-diachronic perspective. The relevance of the study is determined by its implementation in an interdisciplinary, linguo-philosophical, as well as a contrastive, Russian-English paradigm. This ensures the objectivity of conclusions about the causes and consequences of neosemantization of the word *икона* in modern Russian. Proceeding from the study of lexicographic data, illustrative material of the National Corpus of the Russian Language and open Internet resources, it is proved that the emergence of new lexical-semantic variants of the noun *икона* is the result of semantic borrowings from the English language. The appearance in the English word *icon* of terminological meanings relating to the field of semiotics and computer technology is based on the concretization of the primary meaning “image, likeness”, in which it was borrowed from the Greek language. The emergence of a new lexical-semantic variant “idol, idol of the masses” in the semantic structure of the word *icon* is based on the actualization of the potential seme “symbol”. The use of this meaning in relation to various celebrities of pop culture leads to the positioning of icons of style, fashion and sex symbols at the highest levels of the value hierarchy of the consumer society. Anglo-American linguoconcepts penetrate into the modern Russian language as a result of calquing the lexical units from English-language publications. Despite the functioning of the lexical units *икона стиля*, *моды*, *фэшн-икона* and the word *икона* in the meaning of a religious artifact in different types of discourses, the presence of a common seme «object of worship» causes their semantic diffusion. The parallel use of the word *икона* in relation to diametrically opposed objects of sacralisation leads to a linguoaxiological clash of “own” and “strange” spheres. The result of this collision is the desacralisation of the concept *икона* in the national language consciousness.

Keywords: icon, icon of style, desacralization, semantic borrowing, semantic derivation, neosemantization, anglosemantisms

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Семантические преобразования лексемы *икона* в русском языке новейшего периода

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Аннотация. Проанализированы семантические изменения в лексеме *икона*, рассматриваемые в синхронно-диахронической перспективе. Актуальность исследования определяется его выполнением в междисциплинарной, лингвофилософской, а также в контрастивной, русско-английской парадигме, что обеспечивает объективность выводов о причинах и последствиях неосемантизации слова *икона* в русском языке. На основе изучения лексикографических данных, иллюстративного материала Национального корпуса русского языка и открытых интернет-ресурсов установлено, что возникновение новых лексико-семантических вариантов существительного *икона* является результатом семантических заимствований из английского языка. Появление у слова *icon* терминологических значений, относящихся к области семиотики и компьютерных технологий, основывается на процессе специализации первичного значения «изображение, подобие», в котором оно было заимствовано из греческого языка. Лексико-семантический вариант «идол, кумир масс» возникает в семантической структуре слова *icon* в результате актуализации потенциальной семы «символ». Употребление слова *icon* в этом значении по отношению к различным знаменитостям поп-культуры приводит к позиционированию икон стиля, моды и секс-символов на высших уровнях ценностной иерархии общества потребления. В современный русский язык англо-американские лингвоконцепты проникают в результате калькирования российскими масс-медиа соответствующих лексических сочетаний в англоязычных изданиях. Несмотря на то, что кальки *икона стиля, моды, фэшн-икона* и лексема *икона* в значении религиозного артефакта функционируют в различных типах дискурсов, наличие у них общей семы «предмет поклонения» приводит к семантической диффузии собственного, автохтонного, и заимствованного значений. Параллельное использование слова *икона* по отношению к диаметрально противоположным объектам сакрализации приводит к лингвоаксиологическому столкновению «своего» и «чужого». В результате понятие *икона* подвергается десакрализации в национальном языковом сознании.

Ключевые слова: десакрализация, семантическое заимствование, семантическая деривация, неосемантизация, англосемантизм

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Introduction

While existing as the means to meet the nomination demands of people, lexis of a language represents one of the most variable and mobile layers. Semantic transformations of lexemes involve metaphoric and metonymic shifts, widening or narrowing of meanings, the redistribution of nuclear and peripheral semes within a word meaning, changing of evaluative-connotative components. One could consider be a specific type of semantic transformations the process of desacralization which is understood as “a devaluation of sacred (divine) patterns, religious ideas, world view assumptions”¹.

The desacralization process is determined by means of a great many of extralinguistic factors of social, ideological and political character. According to the opinion of E.V. Petrukhina, in lexis of various languages, the loss of sacred meaning is due to the lessening of the Christian world view, the secularization of culture and worldview picture [1. P. 239]. Pressure of secularization has been most vividly sensed since the previous century — the end of the 1990s. The influence of the American linguoculture functioning as a donator of globalization processes leads to the importation of the consumer society ideals possessing hedonistic imperatives: live here and now; retrieve worldly goods and physiologically gained pleasures of your existence, and do not experience earthly austerity reckoning upon the forthcoming prosperity in the unearthly afterworld. As assemblers-translators of the ideological assumptions there used to serve various borrowed lexical units, which are often contradicting the cultural-and-semantic word memory of the target language. The word *икона* belongs to the Anglosemantisms of the type, and in Russian, for quite a many years it possessed the only one referential correlation to the most important artifacts of the Orthodox culture. The aim of the study is to realize the analysis of semantic transformations having taken place in the meaning of the Russian word *икона* in the newest period of time. The realization of the set aim previews to distinguish the peculiarities of the Russian word *икона* functioning in the diachronic-synchronic prospects involving the English language data as a donator of semantic and linguocultural changes within the meaningful content of the lexeme *икона* in the Russian language of the 2000s — the newest time period.

Methods and materials

Theoretical-and-methodological basis of the carried out study are laid in the works by Russian and foreign scholars — philosophers and philologists devoted to the analysis of both — the sacred and exoteric Anglosemantization [7–11]. The analysis used the methods of definitional, component, functional-and-semantic and

¹ Philosophy: Encyclopedic Dictionary (2004), A.A. Ivin (Ed.). Moscow: Gardariki. P. 226. (In Russ.).

contextual analyses The materials of the study were extracted from explanatory dictionaries of both the Russian and English languages, the National Corpus of the Russian Language and the open Internet resources.

Икона: historical-genetic and linguocultural aspects

The Russian word *икона* is etymologically of the Greek origin, wherein it has got the meaning of “image, portrayal”: “икона — Old Russ, Ancient Slav. (min. the year of 1096 and al.) from mid.-Greek εἰκόνα, Greek. εἰκών². According to the Orthodox-Slavonic language dictionary: *икона* — Greek. εἰκών = икона, образъ, изображение (‘icon, image, portrayal’): of 1) Христа, Богоматери и святыхъ; (‘Jesus Christ, God’s Mother and Saints’); 2) событий из священной и церковной истории (‘the events of the Holy Church history’)³. The V. Dahl’s Dictionary explains the meaning of the word *икона* as «ж. образ, изображение лица Спасителя, Небесных Сил или угодников» (lit.: “image, fem.; ‘the portrayal of Christ the Savior, Holy forces or Saints’)⁴.

The Encyclopedic definition characterizes the icon as “one of the main phenomena of the Orthodox culture on the whole, and Russian culture, in particular; the important category of the Orthodox religious and aesthetical consciousness”⁵. There are mentioned the following functions of the icon: 1) the narrative about the events of the Holy history; 2) the expression of the main moral Christianity principle — jen-humanity, love for men as a consequence of the love of God for people and human love of God, <...> 6) the function of the specific symbol possessing the real energy of the archetype; this is the source of sacred and miraculous icon’s functions; 7) the embodiment of the collegiality, communalism, the unity of the earthly and heavenly, the communion of all the creatures before the Creator, and so on⁶.

Commenting on the depth and width of the icon influence on the clerical, state, social and private life of a Russian man, V.V. Lepakhin enumerates 21 functions of the icon, and among those “devotional (prayers), miraculous, liturgical, historical, bethink, ancestral and aesthetic functions are the core ones”⁷.

The significance and multitasking functionality of the icon as well as separate stages of its history are reflected in the diachronic processes of word-building.

²Fasmer, M. (1987). *Etymological Dictionary of the Russian Language*: in 4 vols. Moscow: Progress. Vol. 2. P. 125.

³Dyachenko, G. (1998). *Complete Church Slavonic Dictionary*. Moscow: TERRA Knizhny club. P. 219.

⁴Dal, V.I. (1979). *Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian language*: in 4 vols. Moscow: Russian language. (In Russ.). P. 40.

⁵New Philosophical Encyclopedia (2001). Stepin, V.S. (Ed.). Moscow: Mysl’. (In Russ.). P. 92.

⁶New Philosophical Encyclopedia (2001). Stepin, V.S. (Ed.). Moscow: Mysl’. (In Russ.). P. 92.

⁷Lepakhin, V.V. *I con functions*. URL: https://portal-slovo.ru/art/35905.php?ELEMENT_ID=35905&PAGEN_1=3 (accessed: 21.02.2022).

While the family of words in the V. Dahl's Dictionary includes 22 derivatives, the Dictionary by A.N. Tikhonov fixes 12 derivatives⁸. It's worth mentioning that not a single one dictionary on word-building includes in the family of words sets widely used diminutive *иконка*. The fact to mark its absence could cause a surprise because the meaning of the word is not limited just to mean a small size of a definite referent (word collocations of the word *икон* with Russian adjectives *маленький*, *небольшой*, *миниатюрный* and the like re quite regular), but at the same time it signifies personal "mastering" of a sacred object by an individual, its conceptualization as an individual amulet or talisman, a sacred tutelary artifact. Such semantics directly follows the examples of using the diminutive in various historic epochs, e.g. in Russian:

Достала она иконку — родительское, видно, благословение — старинная иконка, небольшая, обложенная серебром, которая у брата всегда была при нем в левом, как просила мама, внутреннем кармане (NCRL)⁹.

У меня пропала маленькая иконка Преподобного Сергия, с которой я никогда не расставался, она была на мне, когда в 1932 году я тонул в сибирской тайге (NCRL)¹⁰.

Before the borrowed word *икона*, which dates back to the year of 1073, was included in the Orthodox lexicon, there was used in the same meaning the word of Common Slavonic origin *образ* (lit.: 'image'), and I.I. Sreznevskij dates it back to the year of 993 as the first example of using it in Russian: *Подпись на иконе Корсун Бож. Матери Начать образ писуць пьсати*. Different from the borrowed lexeme, the archetypal Russian word *образ* rendered a few meanings and I.I. Sreznevskij quotes those in Russian: 1) видъ, образъ ('view, image'); 2) видъ, подобие (view, similarity'); 3) призракъ ('phantom'); 4) изображение, икона, образ *εἰκόν* ('portrayal, icon, image'); 5) образец, пример ('pattern, example'); 6) знак, символ ('sign, symbol'); 7) чин, сан (rank, rite'); 8) способ, форма ('method, form'); 9) естество ('essence'); 10) грамматический термин ('grammar term'). In Ancient Russian memorial scripts the word *образ* meaning 'icon' is often accompanied with an adjective determinant, précising its sacred reference: *святой* ('saint'), *нерукотворный* ('achiropoeta'), *божественный* ('divine'). In some quotations both members of word collocations are written with the capital letter, e.g. (Russian): *Свершишиа церковь камену Святый Образъ*¹¹.

⁸ Tikhonov, A.N. (1985). *Word-building Dictionary of the Russian Language*. Moscow: Russian language. (In Russ.). P. 94.

⁹ NCRL — here and there on — The National Corpus of Russian Language. URL: <https://ruscorpora.ru> (accessed: 12.02.2023).

¹⁰ Sreznevsky, I.I. (1958). *Materials for the Dictionary of the ancient Russian language on written materials*. Moscow: Publishing house of foreign and national dictionaries. (In Russ.). P. 1087.

¹¹ Sreznevsky, I.I. (1958). *Materials for the Dictionary of the ancient Russian language on written materials*. Moscow: Publishing house of foreign and national dictionaries. (In Russ.). P. 541.

The 20th century explanatory dictionaries specify the sacred meaning of the noun *образ* as an independent homonymous one with the adjective lexeme. In speech, the discrimination of the homonyms takes place not only with the help of the Russian adjective *святой* (*святой образ; образ святых*), but also by means of the attached morphological marker of the plural noun form of the inflexion with the stressed *-а*:

Вопиеть лѣтописецъ. Святые образа безстыдно потоптаны! О горе! (NCRL).

A homonym also marks a derivative of *образок*, which represents the autochthonous doublet of *иконки*. Parallel diminutive forms of both words confirm the necessity of the dramatic nominative implication: to denote a small size of the signified, on the one hand, and the strife to personify a sacred object/ on the other hand. In the experience of a God believer, *образок* and *иконка* represent a special symbol to exteriorize the heavenly and sacred and, consequently, possessing real energy of the archetype, the capability to “conserve” and “protect” its possessor from earthly misfortunes, e.g. in Russian:

Я расставил иконы, как было раньше, задержал в своих руках образок своего ангела-хранителя — мученика Анатолия (NCRL).

According to the NCRL data, the word *образок* is much more often used (236 records, 373 entries), to compare with the word *иконка* (103 records, 132 entries). Among God believers, such priority of a Slavonic word over the lexeme of the Greek genesis one could estimate as an intuitive feeling of language bearers as to the greater applicability of a word of the native origin for the goals to nominate a private object so that in the sphere of sacrum to minimize the distance between the transcendental and ordinary, trivial, the heavenly and earthly, between the All-mighty God and off-dependent Self. As is known, icons and images were placed by Orthodox believers in the so-called “beautiful (sacred, apex) corners”, oil lamps were lightened in front of them, believers genuflected (knelt down) in front of them and offered prayers to the Saints portrayed on the religious artifacts. At the same time in relation to the sacred images in temple buildings, the lexeme *икона* is predominantly used as it’s specific to denote the icon paintings even while being a buy and sell object, e.g. in Russian:

Русская икона во всем мире признана одной из вершин живописного искусства (NCRL);
Если икона старая, ее можно загнать за крутые бабки (NCRL).

In fixed and codified by the Church names of various icons the word *икона* is a must requirement, e.g.: *Kazanskaya, Tikhvinskaya, Feodorovskaya* and others, *the God Mother icon, the Reverend Sergej Radonezhskij icon* and so on.

Therefore until the beginning of the 21st century, in Russian, the word *икона* (*иконка*) has got solely one meaning referring to the sphere of sacrum. Parallel functioning of the autochthonous lexeme *образ* (*образок*) bearing the very same meaning was and still is situationally and contextually marked.

The lexeme *icon* polysemy development in the English language

The 1912 Oxford Dictionary states the Greek origin of the word and mentions the only one meaning:

Icon, n.: «Image, statue (Eastern Church), painting, mosaic, of sacred personage, itself regarded as sacred»¹².

The first semantic transformations of this word started in the mid-20th century with the earlier introduction of the terms *icon*, *iconic* by Ch.S. Peirce, an American philosopher and semiologist, in the frames of the proposed triade of linguistic signs — symbol, index, icon: «Peirce thought that “representations” generate further interpretants in one of three possible ways. <...>. These he calls likenesses, but they are more familiarly known as *icons*»¹³. The scholar proposed to use a word as one of the basic terms of semiotics which was motivated with the general and common meaning of “similarity, image, portrayal”, and it doesn’t involve even implicitly any association with the icon as an object of religious art. Proceeding from the “desacralized” meaning of the Greek borrowing and appealing to the tradition to use Latin or Greek sources in order to create term, Ch.S. Peirce narrows the meaning of the word and assigns the quality of a terminological lexeme to it.

Similar type of semantic transformation takes place in the process to attach to the word *icon* the meaning which came into being in course of the development of computer technologies already in the 21st century. According to the dictionary, “icon: a small picture or symbol on a computer screen that you point to and click on with a mouse to give a computer an instruction”¹⁴. So the prototypical meaning of the Greek word had undergone the narrowing of a concrete referent, possessing the exterior objectivized correlation in proper graphical symbols or notes.

A little earlier, in the middle of the 20th century the noun *icon* got into the focus of attention of American experts in the field of mass-culture, who were actively inventing “selling” metaphors. The word began to be used in relation to a person who embodied some kind of perfectness and enjoyed great popularity among the people:

«Icon: a person widely admired especially for having great influence or significance in a particular sphere»¹⁵. It’s worth mentioning that the

¹² The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1912). Oxford: Clarendon Press. P. 402.

¹³ URL: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/peirce-semiotics> (accessed: 20.03.2023).

¹⁴ Cambridge Dictionary. URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

¹⁵ Merriam-Webster Dictionary. URL: <http://www.merriam-webster.com> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

metaphorization directed from an image or portrayal to a man has already had its linguocognitive precedents: thus/ the collocation *political figure* is widely used in various languages with the aim to denote the formation of features making up the portrait of a given politician. However, the use of the word *icon* in the innovational contexts *icon of style*, *fashion-icon* leads to the fact that the neosemantized noun starts unexpectedly to connect both — the array of bearer's features and a certain sacred sense initially belonging only to the meaning connected with the reference to the Orthodox culture artifacts.

It's necessary to underline that there's no strong reason to describe the appearance of this lexico-semantic variation as an effect of the meaning desacralization referring to an object of the Orthodox religious art. It's quite obvious that the given object stays in the periphery of the linguocultural consciousness of representatives of the Anglo-Saxon culture and doesn't involve those senses which could form the motivational base to develop new lexico-semantic variations of the word¹⁶. The act to nominate thinking movement in the direction from a portraying to a symbol seems much more approved while this symbol represents a certain sign to denote something. It's of no coincidence that the word *symbol* in its dictionary definition combines both the motivational and derivative meanings of the noun *icon*:

«Icon — 1. (computing) a small *symbol* on a computer screen that represents the program or a file. 2. A famous person or thing that people admire and see as a *symbol* of a particular idea, way of life, etc.»¹⁷.

Resorting to the nominators' idea on the symbol as a source of metaphorical derivational meaning of “a man-an icon” is also supported with the parallel functioning of such an important definition to identify a sex-symbol in modern American culture:

«Sex-symbol: a usually renowned person <...> noted and admired for conspicuous sex appeal»¹⁸.

The noun *symbol* is also often used in meta-reflexives of the Internet users who are giving their own definitions of the word *icon*:

«If you describe something as an icon, you mean that they are important as a symbol of something; `an icon of style'», and:

«An icon or celebrity, who everyone sees as sexually attractive»¹⁹.

¹⁶ I.V. Bugayev remarks that the English word *icon* doesn't possess any religious sense, and the sacred meaning is marked in graphics with the letter **k**: *ikon* [12. P. 18].

¹⁷ Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English (2000). Oxford: Oxford University Press. P. 671.

¹⁸ Merriam-Webster Dictionary. URL: <http://www.merriam-webster.com> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

¹⁹ Urban Dictionary. URL: <https://www.urbandictionary.com> (accessed 10.03. 2023).

Among the persons who are meant as icons or sex-symbols there are considered Marilyn Monroe, Grace Kelly, Kim Kardashian, Chris Pratt and many others. Resorting to such symbols of the past times as Marilyn Monroe and Grace Kelly is useful for their mythology and sacralization.

In the consumer society the producing of mass-culture icons is churned out; natural profane reality turns into the supernatural sacred reality, Similar to a religious icon, people pray the idols including their glossy pictures, they are revered, and the idols put forward a set of certain actions which are awaited from their admirers or fans. The icons are created and positioned not just as some best models of human beings, but also as an efficient marketing means increasing the sales of must-have things or ideas.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, famous people-icons are used to represent a certain set of beliefs and opinions or the way of life: «Icon: a very famous person that is used by society to represent a set of beliefs or a way of life»²⁰.

One of the types of a man-icon, the most important consumer society's axiological orientation makes the icon of style or fashion:

«*Style icon, icon of style*: fashion icon, a person that is very well known as being highly fashionable»²¹. Style icons are characterized as influential people who introduce new styles <...>, trigger new style which others may follow.

Mass orientation to impersonate some idols is formulated here by means of politically correct desirability modality. In fact, all creations bearing in themselves prototype content are created by business with the aim to cause admiration and give motivation to imitate and copy. Mass-culture leads to “resurrection of hypnotic means to influence consciousness and almost fantastic belief in rites and rituals of adoration cult of idols and gods of mass-culture” [13. P. 133]. In this connection, the opinion of E.L. Yakovleva, who includes the cult of modern icons in the sphere of *specific religion* called *Post / Neopaganism* seems quite reasonable [14. P. 91]. The great market mechanism elaborates the sacralization of personalities chosen to be the icons of style. In the course to create a cult figure, an idol there are involved modern “believers” themselves, who have the possibility of the interactive Eucharist and commenting of all activities. Multipliable fan-clubs together with the earlier emerged paparazzi also legalize the status-quo already established under the conditions of consumer society: discriminating the society into celestial dwellers living in the Paradise already here on the Earth and the crowds of admirers idolizing them. As a result, the new lexico-semantic variation of the noun *icon* codifies not only the word semantics, but its pragmatics as well to form “optimal necessary” instinct of copying to provide for commercial demand, and also necessary mass positive admiration to new idols to conserve security and social order.

²⁰ Cambridge Dictionary. URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

²¹ Collins Dictionary. URL: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com> (accessed 10.03. 2023).

Anglosemantization of the word *икона* in the Russian language of the newest times

It the end of 1990s Russia took the orbit of globalization which brought radical changes of linguocultural and axiological areas. After 70 years of material goods and benefits abstention the Russians obtained a chance to “get the Eucharist” to the diametrically opposite civilization, among those the icons which it produced during the period of social well-being. In Russia, getting more and more reach, there was quickly established the ideology of glamour, started to develop fashion industry, came into being the society positioning itself as a secular, high society⁴ there started to replicate foreign and emerge its own local icons of style and fashion, as well as sex-symbols.

As any other American mass-culture product, icons of style and sex are translated into Russian by means of calques of the lexical nomination data of the donator source language. Fashion magazines, formed according to western patterns include in the published articles both the terms themselves (*icon of style or fashion, fashion-icon*) and lavishly illustrated stories of the persons, “iconized” in the West or bred inside of a proper country (In Russian):

*Иконы стиля: от Мэрилин Монро до Анджелины Джоли. Женщины всего мира считают их эталонами стиля; Круче, чем Джоли! 5 российских звезд, ставших иконами*²² (Literally: “*The icons of style: from Merylin Monroe to Angelina Jolie. Women worldwide consider them to be the icons of style; Much cooler than Jolie! 5 Russian stars who became icons of style*”).

Besides the translation calques, in Russian, *the icon of fashion* or *icon of style* are regularly used with this meaning as transliterated or transcribed from English *фэшн-икона, бьюти-икона* or hybrid English-Russian analogue *fashion-икона*. In various sites such composites occupy strong position previewing the story about fashion patterns, sexuality and style, being used as a pragmatic trigger and meaning to overtake the attention of the targeted audience; in Russian:

*Ими восхищаются. Им подражают. Их гардероб признан лучшим в современности. Знакомьтесь, иконы стиля XXI века. Каждая из них обладает колоссальной властью над нашим стилем и формирует в нас свой, особый вкус*²³ (Literally: “*They are admired. They are mirrored. Their outfit is valued as the best modern one. Get to know the 21st century icons of style. Each of them has got a colossal power over our style and on us, they impose their own special style*”).

Together with the prepositional marker *бьюти-* (beauty-) the word *икона* (icon) quite often has got the prepositional affixoid *секс-* (sex-): *Секс-икону Саманту в сиквеле сериала „Секс в большом городе” заменит небинарный стэнд-ап*

²² URL: <https://discoverstyle.ru> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

²³ The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1912). Oxford: Clarendon Press. P. 402. URL: <https://sokolov.ru> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

комик²⁴ (Literally: ‘The sex-icon Samantha of the series sequel “Sex in the Big City” is going to be substituted by a non-binary standup comic’).

The American way to iconize something or somebody used to be extrapolated on the Soviet reality. The Internet is full of titles (In Russian): «Секс-символы советского времени, кино, кинематографа. Топ-10, 20, 30 секс-символов советского кино» (Literally: ‘Sex-symbols of the Soviet time: cinema and film-making Top-10, 20, 30 sex-symbols of the Soviet cinema’). As is stated, «... женщины того периода старались подражать голливудским секс-символам, при этом даже ни разу не посмотрев фильмов с ними. Для женщин музыкальная комедия „Карнавальная ночь“ стала настоящим откровением, а молодая дебютантка в роли Леночки Крыловой буквально в один момент стала иконой стиля»²⁵ (Literally: ‘women of that time tried to follow Hollywood sex-symbols, and at that, they’ve never seen even once the films with Hollywood sex-symbols. For women the musical comedy “Carnival Night” made a real revelation, and a young debutant playing the role of Lenchka Krylova has at once literally become the icon of style’). “A Komsomol member, a sportswoman, and just a beauty” — the precedential characteristics given in the Soviet history to the actress Natalya Varlej who unexpectedly acquired American features to make a “sex-icon Natalya Varlej”. Just a few sited pose a question if it’s proper to extrapolate onto the Soviet reality a lexical label of borrowed from the American environment (In Russian): Уместен ли вообще этот термин (секс-икона) по отношению к нашим актерам того времени?²⁶ (Literally: ‘If on the whole the term of sex-icon proper in relation to our actors of those times?’).

Using of the word *icon* meaning the body lower part which is put on the pedestal of the spiritual top could be unconditionally interpreted as a case of borrowing a homonym. However, semantics of homonyms at least in the historic prospect, tries to escape crossings of meaning, and keeping the distance in the target linguistic consciousness. If the *icon* meaning a “pictograph” doesn’t really interact with the meaning of the Orthodox cult object due to its referential distance, the *icon of style* or *fashion* which is admired and worshipped, couldn’t but evoke among the bearers of the Russian linguoculture a false linguocognitive interpretation and ill-feeling of the depreciation of the bases of the proper national worldview. Essentially, the functional role of an icon “to present an object of sacrum” stays at most the same, but the sphere of its denotation does cardinaly change. If the Orthodox artistic portrayal includes picturing the faces of Saints, in the “neo-icons” living personages are subjected to sacralization. If the meaningful content of the Orthodox icons reflect the sacred and synonymously reveals sacred, hidden, Holy, heavenly, supernatural, transcendent, eternal, truthful, and high, the meaningful content of the glamour

²⁴ URL: <https://chekhovdelo.ru> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

²⁵ URL: <https://dubikvit.livejournal.com> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

²⁶ URL: <https://dubikvit.livejournal.com> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

icons is revealed in the line of synonyms like profane, obvious, ordinary, earthly, passing, near-sided, low, sex-appealing, fleshy, material, non-spiritual, glamorous.

The connection between the new icons as the desacralized old ones is observed even by ordinary language bearers. Thus when Mr.R. Zakharuk, the Director of the Frankfort Museum of Icons added to the collection of Orthodox icon paintings some samples devoted to the sex-symbol Merylin Monroe, it arose justified doubts on the reasonability of their incorporation:

Икона освящает дом. Но в наши дни священные образы, созданные церковью, заменили «иконы» поп-культуры. Музей икон во Франкфурте показывает это на примере культа Мэрилин Монро²⁷ (Literally: 'An icon blesses a house. But nowadays sacred portrayals, created by the Church, are substituted by the pop-culture "icons". The Frankfort Museum of Icons demonstrates it on the example of Merylin Monroe's cult').

In fact, the incorporation of sacred icons with profane, earthly ones witnesses on the emerging idea of sex and style icons to present the modern analogue of religious icons. As Ms.B. Domb-Kalinowska writes: “The notion of the “icon” has undergone the degradation and vulgarization, and in the general apprehension, the borderline between the icons, belonging to the sacrum sphere, and equating them with mass-culture idols has been practically erased” [15. P. 7]. Current erosion of meanings is supported with the profane sacralization, typical for the glamour ideology, when “the classical sacralization” (uprising to God the Creator concepts being in the center of the world view) are easily substituted with the profane sacralization (the new time concepts that mounted Man the Creator in the place of God)” [16. P. 72]. The icons of style, fashion or sex result in the deification (theosis) of a Man as the Creator of his own success where outward features popularity, the highest salaries and living standards, beauty or sexuality — present the sacralizational simulacra.

Conclusions

Transformations and changes in the meanings of the Russian word *икона* demonstrate the result of semantic borrowing of the corresponding lexico-semantic variations of the English word *icon*. If the loanword terminological meanings as the type of a sign in semiotics and the graphic sign, pictograph function in the modern Russian language as homonymous units in relation to the religious meaning of the word, the implantation into the linguistic consciousness such linguoconcepts as style or fashion icon which position various sex-symbols as the modern icons evoke sensation of meaningful closeness of religious icon and profane, a more modern analogue, in the globalization period being implanted like fashionable, and progressive, and civilizational concepts. And though these brought from the outside

²⁷ URL: <https://www.pinterest.ie/pin> (accessed: 6.03.2023).

concepts could hardly become classical for the Russian culture, because they are not borne naturally to make a phylogenetic product, their active replication in modern discursive practices leads to semantic diffusion and axiological erosion of “Self” and “Alien”, and, as a result, to the desacralization of the icon notion in the national linguistic consciousness.

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