



Culture and arts in the context  
of cultural heritage

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CULTURAL HERITAGE IS INTENDED FOR THE MEMORY OF THE FUTURE

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## CULTURE AND ARTS IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

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**Oksana Myronivna Diachok**, Doctor of Architecture, Associate Professor, Professor of the Department of Fine Arts, Design and Methods of Their Teaching, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ternopil, Ukraine

ORCID: 0000-0002-5808-6826. ResearcherID: I-7798-2018

**Mykhaylo Petrovych Kuziv**, Associate Professor of the Department of Fine Arts, Design and Methods of Their Teaching, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ternopil, Ukraine.

ORCID: 0000-0003-1928-734X

**Svitlana Oleksiivna Volska**, Associate Professor of the Department of Fine Arts, Design and Methods of Their Teaching, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ternopil, Ukraine.

ORCID: 0000-0002-2775-5716

**Nataliia Mykhaylivna Datsiuk**, Post-graduate student of the Department of Design and Theory of Art, Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.

ORCID: 0000-0003-2548-3638

### **Protection of cultural heritage. Yazlovets Palace**

*Abstract:* The article examines the history of formation and architectural planning of the palace complex in the village of Yazlovets, Ternopil region. The monument of architecture and urban planning of national importance has partially lost its suitability for operation, needs urgent restoration and renovation, which is confirmed by field inspections. During its long history, the palace has undergone many reconstructions, prosperity, destruction and restoration, was at the centre of historical and political events in the region. Built as a defence complex, its buildings performed ideological, cultural, social, sacred functions. Today, the complex still has significant historical and cultural value, contains valuable artistic artifacts and attracts pilgrims and tourists from around the world. The palace gives ideological colour to the small town, is its bright dominant. The castle in the village of Yazlovets became part of the Ternopil Castles National Reserve. In the course of the research a historical reference about the object of cultural heritage was made, a recommendation on the use of the palace complex was given. The purpose of the article is to introduce into scientific circulation updated data on the valuable monument of urban planning and architecture of Ternopil region – Palace of the 17th and 18th centuries in the village of Yazlovets.

*Keywords:* Yazlovets, Ternopil region, cultural heritage, palace, castle, restoration.

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### **Introduction**

The level of development of society, its maturity can be determined by analysing its attitude to cultural heritage and preservation of its monuments. State policy of Ukraine in the field of cultural heritage protection defines a number of tasks for scientists, security organizations, including: implementation of comprehensive measures for accounting of cultural heritage sites, their scientific study, classification, state registration by entering in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine checking the condition (inventory) of objects in order to quickly respond to various threats to them. The most valuable attractions can be involved in national and international tourist routes.

In modern conditions, the requirements for information about the cultural heritage site, necessary for rapid response to the threat to the object during construction, reclamation, road,

earthworks in their protection zones, in the historical areas of settlements have increased. In this regard, there is a need for a continuous certification of cultural heritage sites (archaeological, historical, monumental art, architecture and urban planning, landscape and garden and park art), introducing an electronic form of storage of information about them, which will make the information about these objects more accessible.

The role of monastic complexes in the formation of silhouettes of cities and villages of Ukraine was studied by Rudnytsky A.M., Chen L.Ya. (2008), historical and architectural analysis of individual sacred monuments was conducted by Lohvyn H. (1968), Bevz M.V. (2001), Vechersky V. (2008), Vodzynsky, E. (1996). However, there is still no comprehensive modern study of the Yazlovets Palace Complex in art history. All of the above indicates the relevance of this work.

Among the valuable monuments of cultural heritage of Ternopil region, which require inventory and certification, is an architectural monument of national importance – the Palace of the 17th and 18th centuries in the village of Yazlovets, Chortkiv district (preservation No. 1575), which is the object of this study.

The purpose of the article is to introduce into scientific circulation updated data on the valuable monument of urban planning and architecture of Ternopil region – Palace of the 17th and 18th centuries in the village of Yazlovets. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to solve a number of tasks: to make an inventory of the monument, to supplement the historical information about the complex, to describe the object and its technical condition, to give a recommendation on the cultural heritage site.

A set of theoretical and empirical scientific methods was used to implement the tasks. In particular, analysis, generalization, description, photo fixation, dimensional drawings, etc. Research materials can be used for certification of cultural heritage sites, in tourism, teaching, in further research.

### **Main part**

The territory of the Yazlovets Palace Complex occupies the top of an elongated wooded hill with steep slopes, which is surrounded by a loop from the north, west and south of the Vilkhovets riverbed. The monument is an authentic example of the defensive and palace architecture of Podillya of the 17th and 18th centuries. In general, the palace has retained its shape and spatial structure. Some parts of the palace (corner rooms at the junction of the central part and the side wings) are rebuilt defensive towers of the Lower Castle of the 17th century, and the three-storey part with through passage – the former entrance gate. Significant historical and cultural value is the plastic carved stone decoration of the facades of the three-story central part in the Renaissance and Baroque style. These are portals, heraldic cartouches on the tympanums of the pediments, figured consoles of the balcony, a sculpture of the saint (*Diachok, 2018*).

However, today there are a number of negative factors that affect the monument. The inspection of the object revealed: the general technical condition of the central part and the southern wing of the palace is satisfactory; the northern wing of the palace is unsuitable for normal technical operation. The lack of appropriate landscaping is also obvious. The existing outbuildings next to the monument and individual buildings erected during the Soviet period

are dissonant. Thus, the monument needs restoration work for quality operation of buildings and elimination of threats to their existence.

### **Historical information about the object**

Yazlovets lies in a canyon covered with forest in the valley of the river Vilkhovets, 14 km southeast of the town of Buchach. Today it is a small settlement (in 2007 the population was 617 people), which belongs to the Buchach town community. However, for most of its history, Yazlovets had the status of a town. Yazlovets was first mentioned in documents of the first half of the 14th century. In the middle of the 15th century, due to its advantageous location near the trade routes between the Kingdom of Poland and the Principality of Moldavia, Yazlovets was a significant trade center (*Vodzynsky, 1996*).

The history of the Yazlovets Palace is inextricably linked with the Old (High) Castle, located on a steep hill next to the palace. This castle was first mentioned in 1436 as the residence of the noble family of the Buchach coat of arms Abdank, it was of such great strategic importance that it was considered the “Key of Podillya” (*Rybchynsky, 2005*). It is assumed that the first stage of construction of the Old Castle in Yazlivka falls on the second half of the 14th and early 15th century. At that time, it was a small pentagonal stone fortification, which initially occupied half the area of ruins that have survived to our time. Three walls of the castle (northern, southern and eastern) delineated the rectangular in plan area of the castle yard, on the west side of the two castle walls converged at right angles, forming a wedge. At the peak of the wedge a square tower in plan was built, which at that time was probably the only tower of the castle. The gate was arranged in the north-western wall. On three sides (north, west and east) access to the castle was hampered by steep slopes of the hill, on the east side a ditch that cut off the castle from the main massif of an elongated hill was dug.

In the first half of the 15th century, under Theodoric of Buchach-Yazlovets, the castle was rebuilt. The moat, which protected it from the east, was filled in to expand the fortifications. The rebuilt castle consisted of two connected pentagons – the old western and the new eastern. The thickness of the castle walls reached 2 meters. The wedge in the eastern part of the castle fortifications was also crowned by a square tower in plan. On the site of the moat and the old defensive wall, the need for which disappeared, a living space was built, which divided the castle into two courtyards – the western (old pentagon) and eastern (new pentagon). A new defensive moat was dug on the eastern part of the castle.

In the middle of the 16th century, the Grand Crown Hetman Yuriy (Jerzy) of Yazlovets carried out work on the modernization and reconstruction of old fortifications. On the south-western side of the castle, a new castle gate was built, to protect which a powerful pentagonal gate tower with carved Renaissance portals was built. Access to the castle was provided by a long sloping wooden bridge on the west side.

The next construction phase took place in 1644-1659, when the owner of the castle, Grand Crown Hetman Stanislaw Koniecpolski (1591-1646) and his son Alexander (1620-1659) modernized and significantly expanded the castle. During this period, Yazlovets Castle received a second line of stone fortifications, and on the western side the Lower (New) Castle was built, which was later rebuilt into a palace. A moat was dug on the outside of the western wall of the Lower Castle, over which the bridge leading to the gate tower was overturned. Thus, the

Yazlovets Palace was originally a casemate fortification of the Lower Castle with two corner bastions.

On January 9, 1672, Yazlovets was visited by a traveler from Friesland Ulrich von Werdum, who described the local stronghold in his diary as follows: “The castle rises to a cannon shot west of the city on a separate hill, which reaches across the mountain into a long valley. It is a large, well-built in Italian way with high walls, a flat roof and many chimneys, but already half-devastated.

In the same year, the Ottoman Empire started a war against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and invaded Polish-controlled lands. In September-October, the Turks captured Yazlovets and the castle, where a garrison led by Pasha Osman was established. Eventually, in the first days of December 1673, under pressure from the Poles, led by Jan Koniecpolski, the Turks were forced to leave Yazlovets (Yazlovets Palace).

The Buchach Peace Treaty of October 18, 1672, summed up the first stage of the Polish-Turkish War, but was not approved by the Polish Sejm. In fact, the Polish side refused to continue to comply with the terms of this agreement and therefore the war resumed. In 1675, a large Turkish army led by Pasha Ibrahim Shishman launched a large-scale offensive on Lviv, destroying castles along the way and devastating cities. During this offensive, Yazlovets was captured by the Turks and surrendered to the enemy without a fight. Yazlovets Castle, which became the main stronghold of the Turkish garrison, was maintained in good condition and even further strengthened.

The liberation of Yazlovets from Turkish occupation took place after the famous Battle of Vienna on September 12, 1683, during which the Holy League army led by Polish King Jan Sobieski defeated the Turks, who began to liberate the Ottoman lands of the Commonwealth. During this period, Yazlovets was also released (*Horodyskyy & Zinchyshyn, 1998*).

In 1699, the Karlovy Vary Peace Treaty was concluded between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy League (Austria, Venice, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the Muscovy), under which the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth officially regained control of Podillya. Yazlovets finally returned to the rule of the Poles. However, the damage caused by the war and subsequent Turkish occupation was irreparable. The city was no longer destined to regain its former influence and power. Yazlovets fell into disrepair, and with it the castle did (*Bevz, 2001*).

At the beginning of the 18th century Yazlovets Castle was still considered an important strategic point and a significant fortification. This is evidenced by the fact that in this castle in 1711 a meeting took place between representatives of the Commonwealth, the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate. This meeting summed up the centuries-old conflict, and since then neither Turks nor their Tatar vassals have approached the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rybczynskyy, 2005*).

From 1723 to 1745 Yazlovets and the castle were owned by the Lubomyrski family. In 1747, Yazlovets was acquired by the Cracow castellan Stanislaw Poniatowski (1676-1762) – the father of the future King of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth Stanislaw August (1732-1798). He did not restore the abandoned upper castle, but instead rebuilt the lower castle, turning it into a palace. The stone of the old fortress and the new brick were used for this purpose. Poniatowski completed two side wings, which absorbed the defensive walls of the lower castle. The residence turned into a U-shaped complex, which formed a courtyard-courier

in the direction of the castle. On the other side of the palace was a park, with which the courtyard was connected by a through arched passage located on the axis of the palace. This through passage in the 17th century served as the main entrance to the castle (*Heritage. Yazlovets. Castle*).

In the second half of the 18th century Yazlovets lost the status of a trading town. Since the main residence of the magnates was located in the palace, the Old Castle fell into disrepair. After 1777, it became the property of the Potocki family, and its last inhabitants left the Old Castle. The unattended stronghold was looted and left to fend for itself.

The next owners of Yazlovets Castle – Krzysztof Grudnicki in 1800-1815 and Victor Blazowski in 1816-1841 – also did not care about preserving the ancient building. And only the son of the latter, Krzysztof Blazowski, although he did not seek to restore the Old Castle, but renovated the palace of the New Castle and made many efforts to restore the trade and economic potential of the town. Finally, in 1863, Christopher Blazowski transferred the palace to the convent of the *Congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, which was founded in 1854 in Rome. Marcelina Darowska became the founder of the monastery in Yazlovets. Marcelina later bought the palace and it became the property of the monastery. A school for girls and a free school for local children were opened at the monastery. In 1862-1863 the ballroom of the palace was converted into a chapel. In 1883 a marble figure of the Immaculate Virgin Mary was brought from Rome and christened as “Yazlivetska”.

In 1873, a large underground chapel-tomb was built in the middle of the park, which has no analogues in Ukraine. 84 sisters are buried in the crypt, including the founder of the monastery Marcelina, who died in 1911. The chapel is rectangular in plan with a long corridor, covered with a cylindrical vault with light lanterns protruding to the ground. Several tiers of burial chambers are located on both sides of the corridor (*Dyachok, 2017*).

It is known that during the First World War a large part of the palace was adapted for a military hospital. In 1916 the front line passed through Yazlovets. During this period, the palace was occupied first by the Hungarian military headquarters, then by the headquarters of Russian military units, and later the Prussian units chose the palace as a headquarters. During 1918-1919, the castle palace witnessed several clashes between Ukrainians and Poles, conflicting on national grounds (*Dyachok, 2021:219-221*).

In the 1930 s, a well-known Polish specialist in the history of architecture, Bohdan Gerken (1904-1979), conducted thorough research on the territory of Yazlovets Castle. Based on these studies, a monograph was created that describes in detail the main stages of construction of the castle (*Fig. 1*).

The monastery existed in the palace building until 1947 and was closed by the Soviet authorities. The former monastery housed first a zootechnic school and later a regional pulmonology sanatorium.

In 1983, a group of architects from the Ukrainian Western Project Restoration Institute, based on historical information and architectural and archaeological surveys, developed a preliminary design for the restoration and adaptation of Yazlovets Castle buildings for a cultural and tourist centre. The project provided for the conservation and partial restoration of the Upper Castle, the restoration and partial reconstruction of the Lower Castle and the restoration of the castle park. The project was not implemented.



In 1996, a nunnery resumed its activities in the central part and south wing of the palace. The north wing continued to be used as a hospital. On November 5, 2008, according to the order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the castle in the village of Yazlovets became a part of the National Reserve “Ternopil Castles” (SHAR “Ternopil Castles”).

Today, the palace houses the convent of the *Congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. On the second floor of the monastery, there is the house church and museum of Blessed Marceline Darowska. After the closure of the hospital, the north wing of the palace has not been used. Therefore, the central and southern part of the monument, where the nunnery is located, is in a satisfactory condition, the northern part is unfitted for normal use. The old castle next to the palace has survived in ruins (*Fig. 2*).

*Object description.* The castle and the palace are bright spatial dominants in the development of the village of Yazlovets. The territory of the monument is partially fenced with a low stone wall. Between the palace and the ruins of the castle are a number of garages and outbuildings. To the west of the monument is a palace park with alleys, in the depths of which, above the edge of the cape, is the tomb of the founder of the Yazlovets monastery – Blessed Marcelina Darowska. The area of the protection zone is 3.77 hectares. (*Fig. 3*).

The palace is built of stone and brick, U-shaped in plan, symmetrical. The large front yard-courd'honneur opens towards the ruins of Yazlovets Castle of the 15th century. and is connected by a through passage with a park located on the axis of the palace. Most of the building is two-storey, covered with hip roofs of complex configuration. The central part of the building (above the through passage) has three floors, covered with a gabled roof and completed on both facades with triangular pediments with coats of arms and attributes of heraldic themes in the tympana.

The passage, which in the 17th century served as the main entrance to the castle, is covered with a semicircular vault with strips (*Fig. 4*). On the side of the main and park facades, it is decorated with portals that combine Renaissance and Baroque features.

The portal of the central entrance is decorated on the sides with pilasters, which have a relief image of a flowerpot. The archivolt of the arch is decorated with embossed leaf rosettes. The entrance arch is framed by fluted columns, the lower part of which is decorated with carved flowers and ovals. The columns stand on massive plinths decorated with stylized lion masks and floral ornaments (*Fig. 4*). The columns are completed with capitals decorated with stylized acanthus leaves. Consoles are figured above the portal of the courtyard facade of the palace, which are decorated with mascarons in the form of stylized male heads. The walls on the low plinth are finished with profiled cornices.

*The list of cultural values in the monument: the portal of the park facade (middle of the 17th century)* (material – sandstone), decorated with Renaissance and Baroque white stone carvings; *a sculpture of an unknown saint (18th century)* (material – sandstone), placed above the entrance portal on the park side, in a semicircular niche and depicts a man with a child in his left hand, a palm branch in his right hand; *heraldic cartouche (18th century)* (material – sandstone), located above the entrance to the palace from the park; *heraldic cartouche (18th century)* (material – sandstone), located above the entrance to the palace from the courtyard; *portal of the courtyard facade (middle of the 17th century)* (material – sandstone), decorated with Renaissance and Baroque white stone carvings; *consoles (middle of the 17th century)* (material – sandstone), located above the portal of the courtyard facade



of the palace, figured, decorated with mascarons; *wrought iron lattice (second half of the 18th century)* (material – Iron), located in the window of the southern building of the palace from the courtyard.

*The list of cultural values in the monument: the portal of the park facade (middle of the 17th century)* (material – sandstone), decorated with Renaissance and Baroque white stone carvings; *a sculpture of an unknown saint (18th century)* (material – sandstone), placed above the entrance portal on the park side, in a semicircular niche and depicts a man with a child in his left hand, a palm branch in his right hand; *heraldic cartouche (18th century)* (material – sandstone), located above the entrance to the palace from the park; *heraldic cartouche (18th century)* (material – sandstone), located above the entrance to the palace from the courtyard; *portal of the courtyard facade (middle of the 17th century)* (material – sandstone), decorated with Renaissance and Baroque white stone carvings; *consoles (middle of the 17th century)* (material – sandstone), located above the portal of the courtyard facade of the palace, figured, decorated with mascarons; *wrought iron lattice (second half of the 18th century)* (material – Iron), located in the window of the southern building of the palace from the courtyard.

### Conclusion

After analysing the history of construction and spatial planning structure of the Yazlovets Castle and Palace complex, as well as after the inventory, it can be stated that the buildings are still a valuable monument of urban planning and architecture in need of restoration and renovation.

For a long time, the buildings performed a defensive, later secular function, and after the transfer of part of the monastery buildings – sacred, cultural, political. Part of the palace was transferred to a hospital during the Soviet era and is in an unusable condition due to careless treatment to the monument. The palace contains valuable artifacts, is an important dominant in the development of the area, gives it an ideological colour and attracts pilgrims and tourists from around the world.

Recommended mode of use of cultural heritage site:

1. The use of the object should not harm the physical preservation of the object and should not reduce its historical and cultural value.
2. It is recommended to be used as a nunnery with unobstructed

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## Appendix



Figure 1. West facade of the palace, photo of 1939 from the archives of the Ternopil Regional Department of Construction and Architecture



Figure 2. Yazlovets Castle (foreground) and the palace (on the left), view from the southeast.  
Photos from open sources

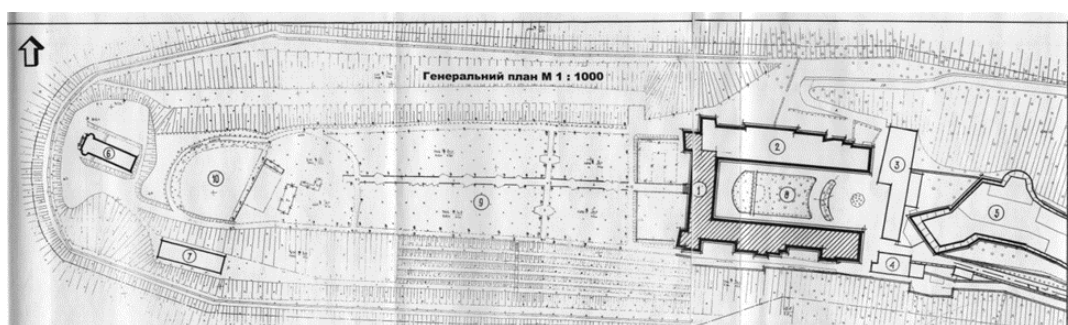


Figure 3. Complex of Yazlovets Palace:  
1 – nunnery; 2 – former hospital premises; 3 – utility rooms of the former hospital;  
4 – outbuildings of the monastery; 5 – the ruins of the castle; 6 – the tomb of Marcellin;  
7 – outbuildings; 9 – palace park; 10 – gardens



Figure 4. Through passage, view from the west. Photos from open sources

**Horia Salcă**, Doctor of Science, Researcher, Torquay, United Kingdom of Great Britain.

## **A recollection: early aircraft construction, the prerogative of wood craftsmen**

*Abstract:* In this article, the author tried to consider the place and role of wood processors in the early period of the aeronautical industry, approximately 1910-1940, when most aircraft were built of wood. The professions in this field and the woodworking tools or machines used at that time are brought back to attention. Starting from the accounts of a first-rate craftsman who worked during the WWII at the *Romanian Aeronautical Industry Plants* in Braşov, Romania (going through the hierarchy from carpenter to foreman) and from the way the *Bristol and Colonial Airplane Company* in Filton, United Kingdom works (as reflected in the aerospace museum from Filton), but also from a *technical regulation* imposed by the United States War Department on factories that produced and repaired military aircraft, the author tries to reconstruct the form of organization and work during the pioneering period of aviation and during the first factories in the field. It can be considered that this article is a tribute to these woodworkers, but also a reconsideration of how the aeronautical industry developed and a remember of its beginnings for those of today. The author also tries to give pertinent answers, in his opinion, related to the causes of wood replacement as the main material for the construction of aircraft. Later days steel and aluminium, then fiberglass, modern composites, and, nowadays, the nanomaterials have taken its place, but it can never be forgotten or ignored. This year is the half-centenary of the death of Henri Coanda (*Crystal, 1998:214*), a Romanian scientist, one of the pioneers of jet aviation, since 1910. This article is intended to be the first in a series of homage articles, designed to bring the work and personality to this genius.

*Keywords:* wood, aviation, aeronautical industry, woodworkers, woodworking tools, woodworking machines, Coanda.

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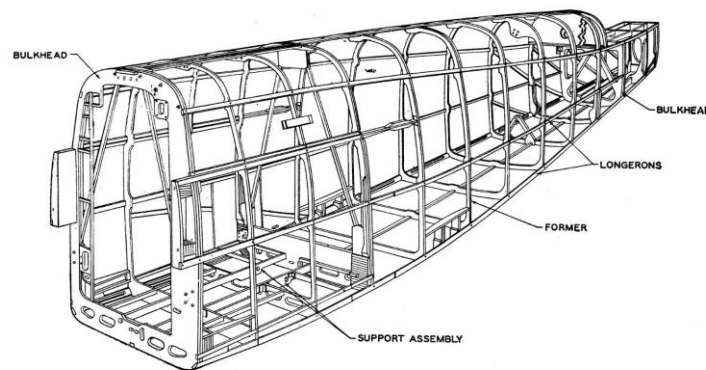
*The Half-Centenary of Henri Coanda's Death*

### **Introduction**

Few people know today that the first aircraft were made of wood; originally, the airframe/cell (*Barnes, 1964*) (the plane itself) was made of wood and was covered with canvas, before being made of metal components: the wood provided the structural function and the canvas provided the load-bearing medium. From Hiram Maxim (1840-1916), Octave Chanute (1832-1910), Otto Lilienthal (1848-1896), Clément Ader (1841-1925) to the Wright brothers: Orville (1871-1948) and Wilbur (1867-1912), Alberto Santos-Dumont (1873-1932), Louis Blériot (1872-1936) or the Romanians Traian Vuia (1872-1950), Aurel Vlaicu (1882-1913), and to the stage of setting up the first aircraft factories, as is the case with BCAC (*Salcă, 2006*) from Bristol, United Kingdom, but also IAR (*Covin, 1967*) Braşov, Romania, could not have been conceived otherwise. Even after overcoming the paradigm: lighter / heavier than air, aeronautical constructions constantly tried to use relatively light materials, and wood was the handiest of them; the same material was used for gliders. Until after the Second World War, wood occupied a privileged position, although both steel and especially duralumin had begun to replace it (in 1915 took place the first flight of an all-metal aircraft, the German Junkers J1, nicknamed the Blechesel, “Tin Donkey” (*Accueil a les origines l'evolution et es limites de l'avion en bois, 2016*); in the case of gliders, the place of the wood was taken by reinforced plastic using glass fiber or, in



short, fiberglass. The titanium alloys (the most widely used alloy today is Ti-6Al-4V ([Hunter, & Bryant, 1991](#)) and modern composites appeared much later, and, nowadays, the nanomaterials. It is, therefore, natural that a leading place among aircraft manufacturers should be occupied by woodworking specialists, and that factory jobs should be predominantly occupied by such craftsmen. This article explicitly covers a period of time between about 1910 and 1940 (because the airplanes remained of wooden manufacture until the end of the 1930s).



I would also like to complete with the idea that the last mass-produced wooden aircraft was the ‘*Mosquito*’, by De Havilland, a British bomber used in World War II. It is also known as ‘*The Wooden Wonder*’ or ‘*The Wooden Terror*’ due to its remarkable performance. This bomber features a birch and balsa wood frame. Its wooden design also makes it possible to minimize the use of strategic materials such as aluminium and steel, precious in times of war, and proves to be an asset when the first German radars appear, its wooden structure the making it difficult to detect, unlike metal structures ([Diorama at the Bristol Aerospace Museum in Filton, 2016](#)). There were 7,781 de Havilland planes built, 30 survive today, three of which are airworthy ([Iconic planes from the past, 2018](#)).

### Stages in the construction of an aircraft

The construction of the planes was done in the era we are referring to (as now, by the way!) in large factories, with *large hangars*. The *engineer* was responsible for the design of the aircraft and also developed and improved its structural features. At the time, he also dealt with the *strength* of the component parts, the choice of materials (i.e., type of wood or plywood) and the coordination of the manufacturing process; today whole teams of engineers specialized in different fields participate in the accomplishment of these stages, and all the processes are assisted by computers.

Manufacturing began with the production of wooden parts, but included the production of tools and devices and related activities. The fuselage subassemblies, doors and parts of the wing and tail coverings (outer surfaces) were in plywood, cut and profiled, and the rest was covered of canvas. All parts were cut and formed by hand or on several types of machines, such as those shown below. Aircraft assembly began with the assembly of components into subassemblies. The main subassemblies are the wings, the tail, the fuselage sections, the landing gear, the door and some interior components. The assembly of the wing is particularly delicate; a large number

of holes must be drilled precisely for the rivets or bolts that will be inserted later. During the final assembly, the fuselage sections were fastened together, then the engine (*Technical Manual of Aircraft Woodwork, 1942*), landing gear and avionics were installed. Various tie rods/wires were provided for reinforcement, mostly made of steel cables. The aircraft was subjected to a series of ground and flight tests, the latter of which were performed by the *test pilots*.

Those who are interested in the history of technology, especially with the history of industrial production systems know that in the first two or three decades of the 20th century, until the widespread use of electric motors, in many factories the power was still provided by a single motor or motor group, which could be operated by water, by a steam engine or, less frequently, by an electric motor and was transmitted by belts to *machine tools* (still little diversified), in this case the *woodworking machines*.

The *line shaft system* had a lot of disadvantages: the arrangement/layout of the machines depended on the location of the line shaft rather than efficiency; the systems were noisy, dangerous and dirty; they required frequent lubrication, which meant that the oil was constantly leaking everywhere. In addition, the air quality was deplorable, with the belts throwing and dust constantly circulating - right next to the worker using the machine. When the factories switched to electricity, the producers noticed an increase in productivity, but also an improvement in the health of the employees [1].

### **Aircraft factory employees in action**

The tasks listed in the *BCAC Time book* of 1911 show the variety of skilled and unskilled worker at the factory (*McVey, 2015*), in alphabetical order: Assembler, Caretaker, Carpenter, Clerk, Coppersmith, Deputy foreman, Draughtsman, Engineer Assistant, Engineer, Errand boy, Fitter, Foreman, French polisher, Gnome mechanic, Inspector, Joiner, Labourer, Leading Coppersmith, Leading trimmer, Mechanic, Mess room, Office boy, Packer, Painter, Propeller hand, Propeller hand leading, Sewing biplane fabrics, Storekeeper, Stores Assistant, Trimmer, Turner, Watchman, Welder, Wireman, Woodworker.

It is easy to see that some of these professions are specific to the woodworking industry: Assembler, Carpenter, Fitter, French polisher, Joiner, Leading trimmer, Painter, Propeller hand, Propeller hand leading, Trimmer, Turner, Woodworker.

For clarification for those unfamiliar with the field, here is a brief description of some of the lesser-known professions: *Trimmers* are responsible for controlling the finish wood parts. They may also shape, trim, and assemble wood pieces as well as alter and repair machines with hand tools; *French polisher* was in charge of polishing pieces, so-called *French polishing* which is a wood finishing technique that results in a very high gloss surface, with a deep colour and chatoyancy. French polishing consists of applying many thin coats of shellac dissolved in denatured alcohol using a rubbing pad lubricated with one of a variety of oils; *Propeller hand leading* and *propeller hand* were the people responsible for the production, maintenance, and inventory of the propellers.

And some other professions, such as coordination, supervision and control, were related to the woodworking industry (or, at least, required good knowledge of): Engineer, Engineer Assistant, Foreman, Deputy foreman, Inspector.

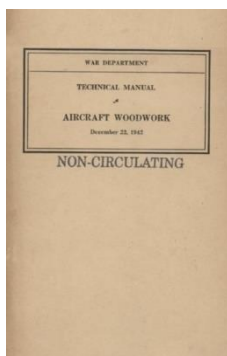


If we add the latter to the above, with obvious professions in wood processing, we reach a proportion of over 50%. However, if we take into account not only the nomenclature but also the number of people actually employed in similar positions, the balance is in favour of woodworking professionals, without taking into account the fact that the official responsible for ordering materials – *Clerk* and those who kept those who kept raw materials and usual materials in the warehouse – *Storekeeper* and *Stores Assistant*, could not have managed without solid knowledge in the field: types and qualities of *lumber*, *plywood* and *veneer*.

### Woodworking tools and machines

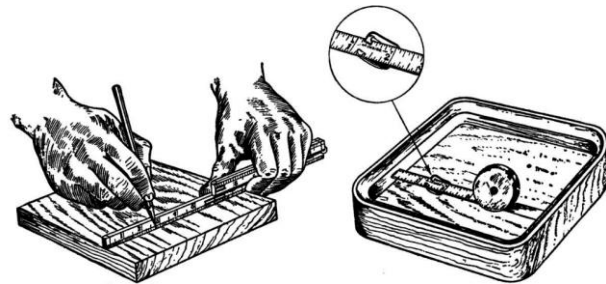
The bibliography is quite poor in this regard, but an unexpected chance led me to find a digital book, *Aircraft woodwork* (Ferrer, 2020), which is nothing more than a norm imposed by the War Department of the United States of America to those who produced and repaired airplanes and aviation parts, made of wood. From here we have extracted valuable information, able to provide the reader with an image as close as possible to the reality of woodworkers and tools: hand- or mechanized-tools (woodworking machines) that they used. Moreover, the book offers a series of suggestive images, which I used, being convinced that a picture is worth a thousand words (*A guide to the carpentry skills needed in historic aircraft construction*, 2014).

Another chance, which made possible the publication of this article, is the indirect knowledge of the life and activity of a modest and extremely hardworking man, a talented carpenter (but not only!), Gheorghe Viașu, who worked at the IAR Brașov Plants during the Second World War, in the production of airplanes. His stories and memories helped me to understand this activity *from the standpoint of the craftsman*. Gheorghe Viașu was born in Ilovăț Commune, Mehedinți County, on April 1, 1911 and died on July 6, 1997, in Brașov. He did his apprenticeship as a furniture carpenter in his native village and later, he worked since 1942 at the aircraft factory IAR Brașov, as a gifted carpenter and woodworker, then with some interruptions, probably for schooling, he returned as a metal modeller and toolman at the Tractorul Plant in Brașov, successor of the former IAR. He retired in 1971 (by retirement decision he received a pension of 1161 lei after 30 years of work). He is not limited to work; in his free time, he always worked: furniture, repairs of any kind, he could not sit idle. At the age of 80, when his legs could not hold him so well, he started making his famous frames, then manufacturing tapestry, gobelins type (in Romanian language ‘gobelin’ is synonymous for ‘tapestry’), what else... he was a character! Most of the furniture in his own and daughter’s house was made by him...



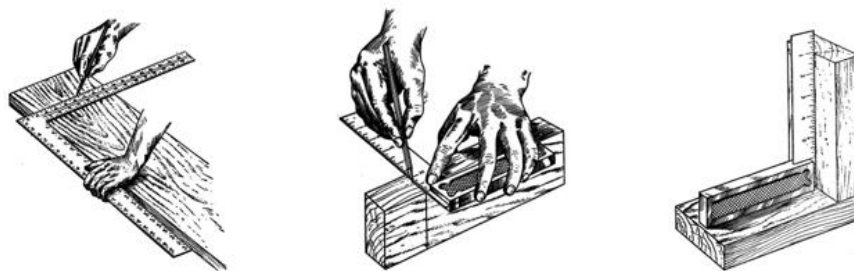
Woodworking tools:

1. *Rules and tapes* are graduated measuring devices and commonly included: straight rule, zigzag rule, folding rule, steel tape rule, and steel tape.

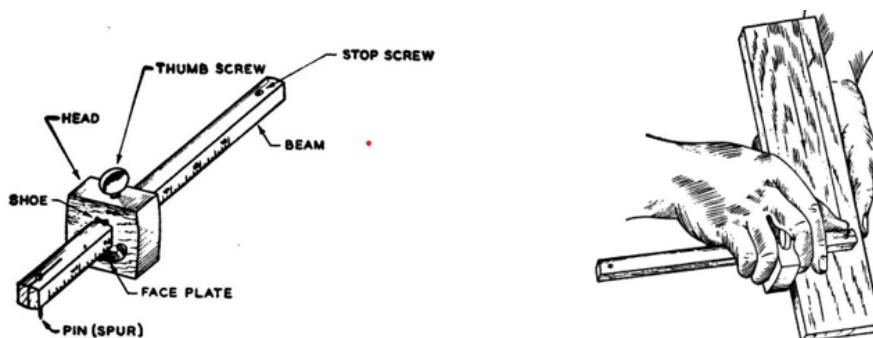


2. *Squares*:

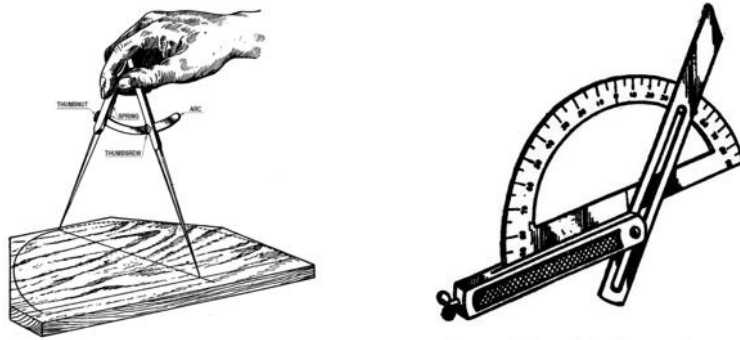
- The *framing square* used for level testing, testing squareness of large surfaces and assembled pieces, and for marking stock preparatory to cutting or assembling. It is also frequently used to lay out various angles other than right angles;
- The *try square* used for laying out and testing square cuts, testing squareness of small assemblies, and for general truing operations;
- The sliding T-level used for laying out and checking angles.



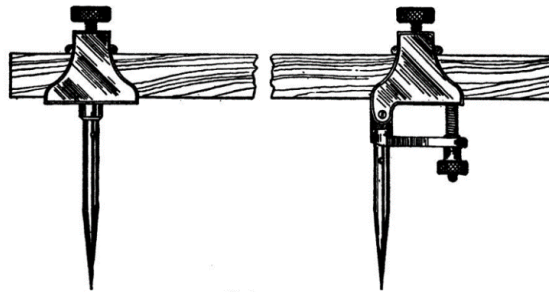
3. *Marking gage* was used for marking lines parallel to a surface of wood stock.



4. *Dividers and compasses* used for laying out circles and parts of circles.



5. *Trammel* consisted of a wooden bar to which trammel points are attached; the assembly was used in the manner of dividers or compasses.



6. *Scratch awl* is a pointed steel instrument used for marking lay-outs and locating points for nails, screws, hole centers etc. For marking lines, the awl was used as a pencil, scratching the wood lightly.

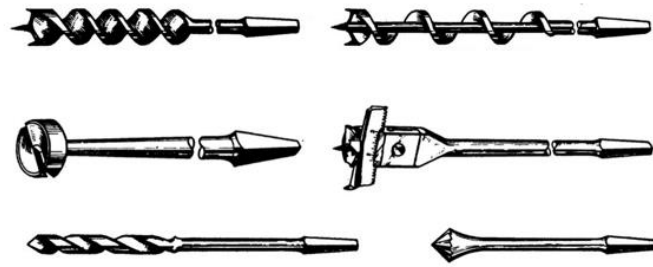


7. *Brace* was used to hold various wood bits, screw driver bits, and similar devices.

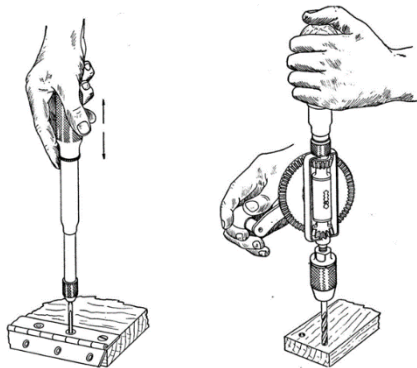


8. *Wood bits* used to bore and shape holes in wood to accommodate bolts, screws, nails, dowels etc. The usual types:

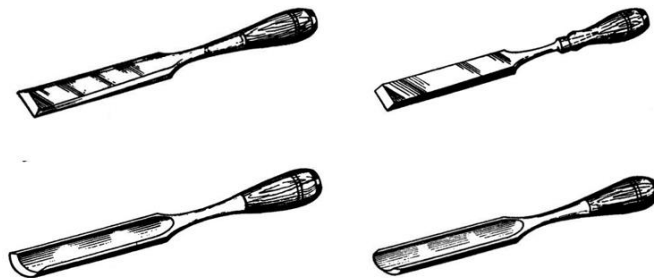
- Auger bits;
- Forstner bits;
- Expansive bits;
- Twist bits;
- Countersink bits.



9. Drills: holes smaller than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch are usually drilled with an automatic drill or small hand drill. These drills are faster and less cumbersome than the brace.



10. *Wood chisels and gouges* are used for various cutting and paring operations involved in chamfering, mortising, grooving, recessing etc.

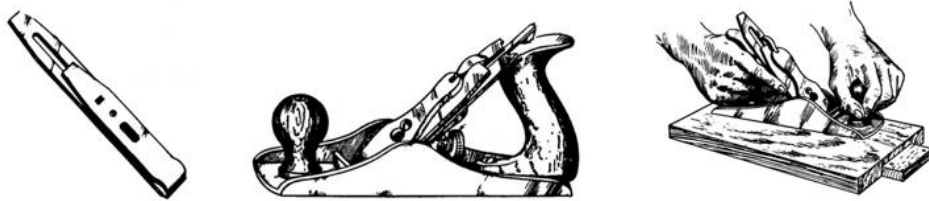


11. *Drawknife* used to remove surplus stock which cannot conveniently be removed by planing, sawing, or other means.

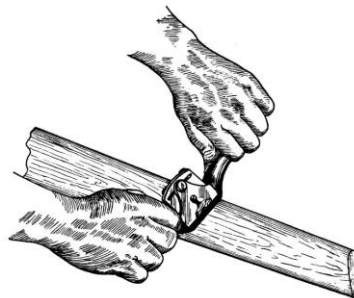


12. *Plane/hand plane* is used for smoothing, truing, and for removing excess stock. The common types:

- Smoothing plane;
- Jack plane;
- Block plane;
- Jointer.



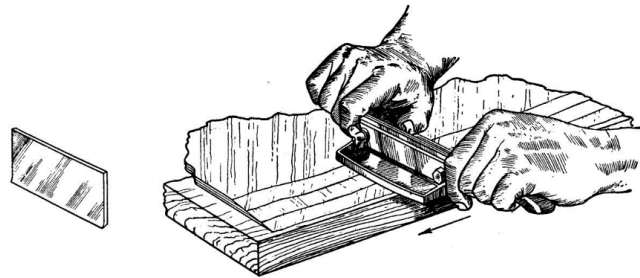
13. *Spokeshave* is a form of plane. It has a short bottom, enabling it to follow curves readily.



14. *Saws/hand saws* are used for a variety of cutting operations. Those most commonly used are:

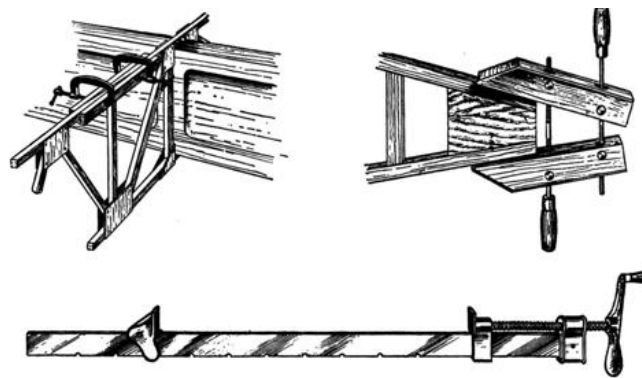
- Crosscut;
- Ripsaw;
- Coping saw;
- Back saw;
- Dovetail;
- Miter saw.

15. *Scraper* very useful in smoothing surfaces having the grain running in various directions, where a plane could not be used.



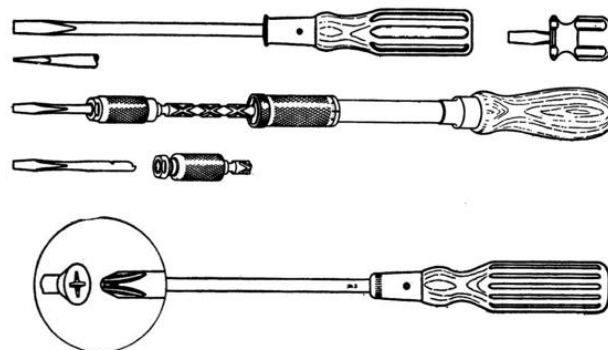
16. *Clamps* used extensively for temporarily holding stock when assembling, working etc., and especially for applying pressure to stock being glued. Types commonly used are as follows:

- Screw clamp;
- Hand screw clamp;
- Bar clamp.



17. *Screw drivers*. Types:

- cabinet screw driver;
- close quarter screw driver;
- spiral ratchet screw driver (for rapid driving).





18. *Wood rasp and file* are occasionally used in place of edge tools for removing excess stock or for finishing parts.



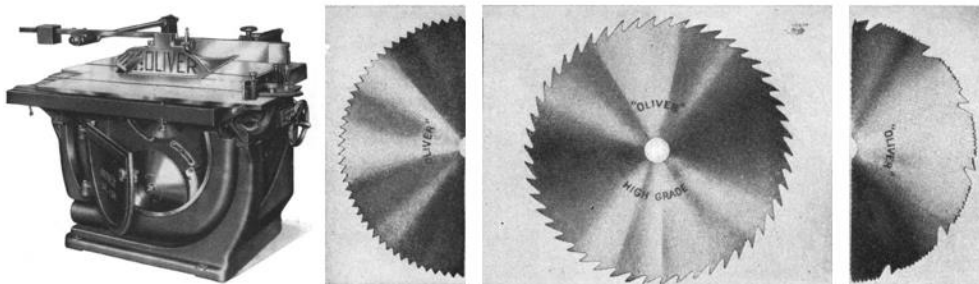
19. *Hammer*: the *claw hammer* was most commonly used for general purposes in the wood shop, adaptable for both driving and drawing nails.



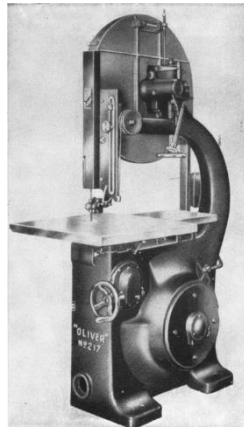
Although a wide variety of tools were available, only those most commonly used in the woodshop were described in the precedent paragraph. Most tools were designed for specific purposes and have been used as intended and properly maintained to provide good service. Woodworking tools, especially the edge of cutting tools, required special care and careful handling to keep them sharp and in good condition. To all the above standard tools were added various other tools produced by self-tooling and self-equipping, adapted to the immediate needs of the factory and produced on site, as a result of the practice, imagination and ability of adapters and innovators of their own staff.

Woodworking machines:

1. *Circular saw* was one of the most used machines in the shop. While it is employed principally for ripping, beveling, crosscutting, and mitering, many other operations, such as grooving, dadoing, rabbeting, molding etc., can also be performed, by using special attachments and set-ups. The most common types of circular saw: universal saw and variety saw.



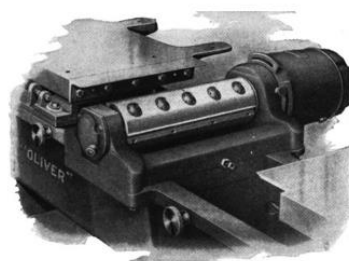
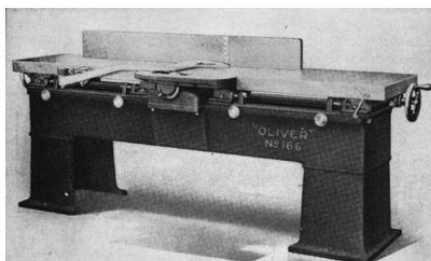
2. *Band saw* constructed in a wide variety of sizes and types depending on its use. The most adaptable for the wood shop is referred to as a band scroll saw, designed particularly for cutting curved outlines and lines not parallel to an edge.



3. *Jig saw* differs radically in construction from the band scroll saw although the type of work for which it is intended is very similar. It is more adaptable for cutting small, sharp curves because much smaller and finer blades may be used.



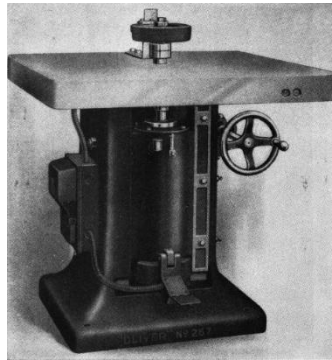
4. *Jointer/ hand planer* consists essentially of a frame, cutter head, tables, fence, and guard.



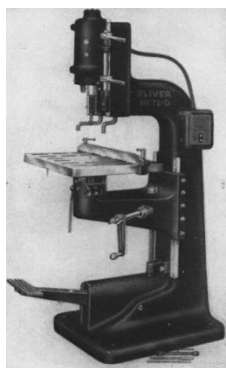
5. *Planer or surfacer* used mainly for finishing surfaces of flat stock and reducing stock to thickness. The more common type planes one surface at a time and is referred to as a single surfacer.



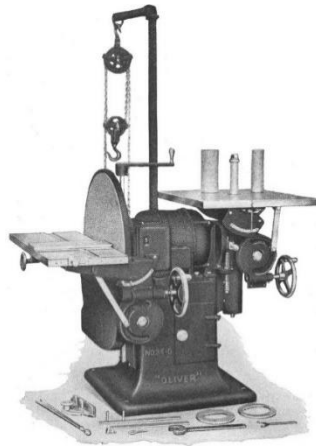
6. *Shaper* used mainly in trimming, shaping, and moulding stock irregular in outline. Various types were produced, a single spindle type being shown in next figure. The shaper consists essentially of a spindle, spindle top, cutters and cutter heads, table, yoke, and base.



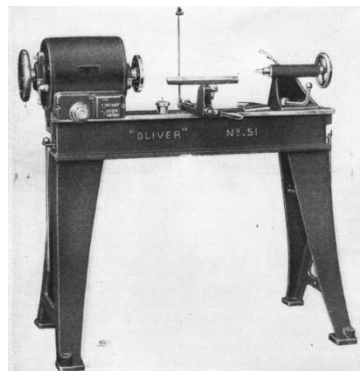
7. *Boring machine* was designed to hold and operate various wood bits. The single spindle manually operated borer is most adaptable for the general wood shop. It consists essentially of a frame or column, boring head, table, and various machine wood bits.



8. *Combination disk and spindle sander*, adaptable to the majority of sanding operations and is the type generally used in the wood shop.

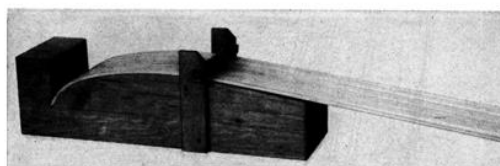
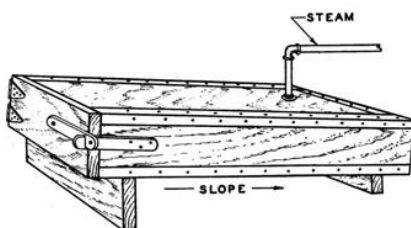


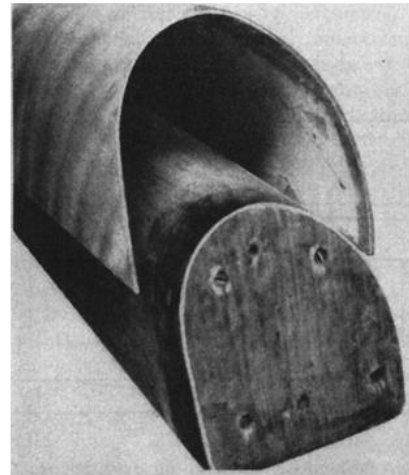
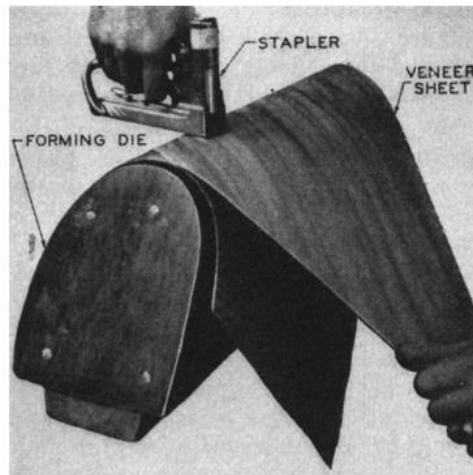
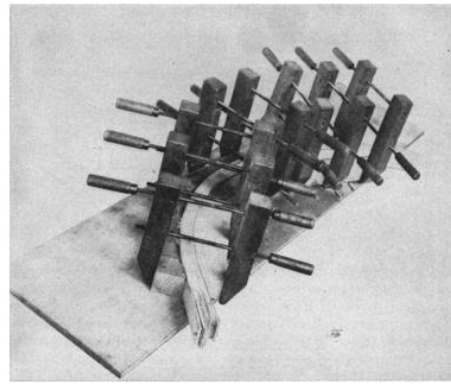
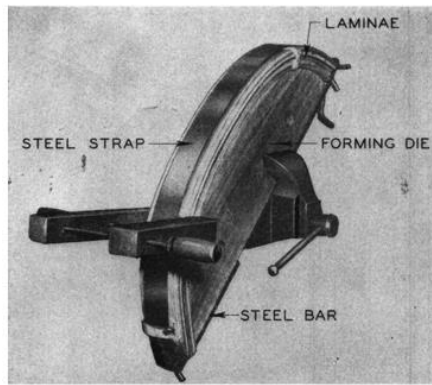
9. *Wood lathe* used for turning wood stock to shape. The motor headstock speed lathe was most adaptable for general wood turning and consisted mainly of the bed, headstock, tailstock, live and dead centers, tool rest, and tool rest holder.



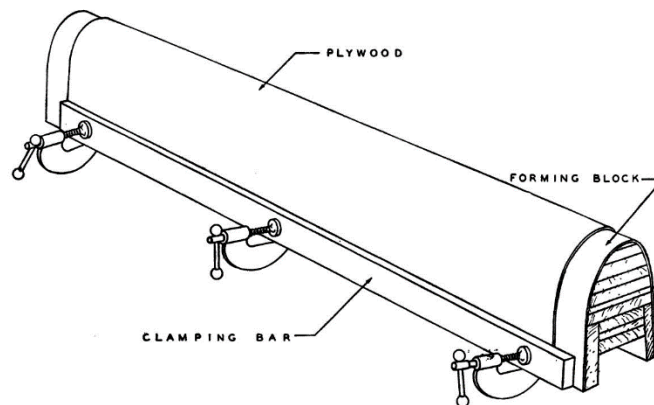
10. *Bending and steam bending accessories*: curved wooden parts of an airplane were either steamed and bent to shape, or laminated and bent without steaming or other preparation. The types commonly used are as follows:

- Steam frames;
- Forms for bending;
- Steel straps.





As in the previous paragraph, I also used images from the War Department regulations cited above to illustrate this paragraph. It is noted that all woodworking machines bear the mark of the manufacturer, Oliver [2].



### **And yet, why was the wood replaced?**

Over time, despite its light weight, the wooden plane ended up being used less and less in aviation. The culmination is that those properties that were initially attractive end up being abandoned because of its drawbacks. This chapter of the history of technology related to aviation and the wood used, wants to provide the reader with a conclusion about the abandonment of wood, so I have tried to summarize in the following lines some of the reasons that led to the replacement of wood as a basic material in aeronautical constructions.

An excellent indicator of the suitability of an aeronautical material is the *mechanical resistance/density ratio* (or the *specific resistance*), the values of which must be high. It must be taken into account that these properties must be maintained, whatever the operating conditions of the aircraft: on the runway of an airport, where temperatures can reach 40°C (approx. 100°F) in summer, in high humidity conditions, or during the flight, at an altitude close to 11,000 meters (approx. 36,000 feet), where temperature drops to -50°C (approx. -60°F). The wood used in aeronautics is a material sensitive to climatic variations. When there were very high temperatures in flight, the wood suffered cracks. It should also be taken into account that during their operation, structural elements are subject to radical changes in the distribution of loads. At the level of the embedding of the wings, for example, the areas of traction and compression are reversed: on the ground, it “supports” the wings; in flight, it “supports” the fuselage due to the lift generated by the wings. It is also necessary to take into account the vibrations to which the aircraft is subjected. The problem appeared from the first regular flights, because the materials used had not been chosen according to their resistance to fatigue and some planes presented many problems after years of good operation. With the evolution of materials within this sector, research has focused on two areas: increasing their specific strength and improving the feasibility of manufacturing aircraft and their components ([Ferrer, 2020](#)).

The most important piece of evidence that definitely influenced the decision was the “test of fire”: when it was used by the military in combat, both during World War I and the beginning of World War II, there were many situations in which the planes break in flight, especially during violent combat manoeuvres. In air battles, planes carried heavy payloads, such as weapons and ammunition, as well as missiles or bombs. The problem with the wood was that it was not strong enough and when the loads were too heavy the plane would break.

Although their density is low, some woods are quite resistant; however, this material is affected by biological action and reacts negatively to moisture.

## Conclusion

Early aeroplanes were simple machines by the *high-tech standards* of today, being mainly constructed from wood and cloth / canvas. This simple construction, though dangerous for the aviator, was a joy for the woodworker ([A guide to the carpentry skills needed in historic aircraft construction, 2014](#)). The behaviour of the wood material through the prism of factors such as: specific resistance, climatic variations, resistance to fatigue, sensitivity to biological action, but also the permanent concerns of researchers focused on two areas: increasing the specific strength and improving the feasibility, led to the replacement of wood the aviation industry: new, better materials have taken its place. However, an important chapter remains that of the period of pioneering and enthusiasm, when the specialists in wood processing were the aircraft builders. This article is dedicated to their memory, which wants to highlight their contribution and bring them back to the readers' attention. Today, this technique and the wood material are used in the repair and restoration of old surviving airplanes, in aero-modelling and for the realization of some experimental airplanes, i.e., at a fairly high level of amateurism. However, the question remains: will wood return to aviation on a large scale?



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## Notes:

- [1] Numerous oral reports by Daniela and Horia Şchiau, which kept alive the memory of Gheorghe Viaşu stories and activity as a woodworker: carpenter and foreman in the IAR aircraft plant, in Braşov, Romania.
- [2] The American company was originally founded by Joseph Oliver around 1890, under the name American Machinery Company, with factories in New Haven, Connecticut. He was a machinist by trade who developed his own version of a wood (miter) trimmer machine after selling another company's wood trimmer for a number of years, probably W.R. Fox's Fox Machinery Co. Oliver tried and eventually did make a better tool and he succeeded. Oliver's wood trimmer won him a gold medal for merit at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris. But it was just the first of many innovative woodworking products that would come from the Oliver Machinery Company. In 1907, the company built a new factory on Clancy Street in Grand Rapids, and then, in 1908, Oliver introduced a cylindrical cutterhead that would

eventually replace the square - and more dangerous - cutterheads commonly used in certain machines of the time. There was also his Straitoplane, introduced in 1923 as a combination jointer/planer, which could surface a warped board straight and flat in one pass. It is a design other companies would emulate in the years to come. From its factory in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Oliver also produced a variety of woodworking machines as well as other tools as the market presented new opportunities, cf. Jeff McVey, Early History of The Oliver Machinery Company, reproduced with the permission of the author at <http://wiki.vintagemachinery.org/OliverEarlyHistory.ashx>.

**Credit photo:**

Hayward, Charles H. (1971). *The Woodworker's Pocket Book. Recipes, Materials, Fittings, Tools, Geometry, Woodworking Data*, London: Evans Brothers Ltd.

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**Anda-Elena Crețiu**, Associate Professor, Doctor of Philology, Department of Theoretical Disciplines, Faculty of Decorative Arts and Design, University of Art and Design, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

Semantic Scholar: 119294068. ResearchGate: Anda-Elena-Cretiu. Academia: AndaElenaCrețiu.

### **William Blake. Artist, poet, visionary imaginarian**

*Abstract:* So many times, in humanity's history, a genius was mistaken for a madman, or, at least, a too eccentric person for the accepted standards of society. Posterity, though, brought the value of a genius to light since usually geni are also visionaries. So was William Blake. Some think of him as a poet; some say he was, in fact, an artist with a hobby for writing, and some understood the power of his creative force in both fields and beyond those. In his "Prefatory Memoir" to an edition of Blake's poems, W.M. Rosetti (1890, XI) called him "a glorious luminary." The purpose of the present study is to analyze how his verse interlaces with his fine artworks, as well as ways in which, through his artworks, he related to already existent cultural masterpieces, offering us a new approach to them. The study also aims to follow the light he cast to reach future generations and reveal how he enlightened future creators. His cultural legacy in poetry, music, art, philosophy, and religion is overwhelming, as is his huge personality.

*Keywords:* William Blake, poetry, painting, printmaking, cultural legacy.

**Anda-Elena Crețiu**, Conferențiar universitar, Doctor în domeniul filologie, Departamentul Discipline Teoretice, Facultatea de Arte Decorative și Design, Universitatea de Artă și Design, Cluj-Napoca, România.

Semantic Scholar: 119294068. ResearchGate: Anda-Elena-Cretiu. Academia: AndaElenaCrețiu.

### **William Blake. Artist, poet, imaginație vizionară**

*Rezumat:* De multe ori, în istoria umanității geniul a fost considerat nebun, sau cel puțin o persoană prea excentrică pentru standardele societății. Totuși, posteritatea a adus la lumină valoarea unui geniu, ținând cont că geniile sunt adesea și ființe vizionare. Acesta este și cazul lui William Blake. Unii îl privesc ca poet, alții spun că era de fapt un artist cu hobby-ul poeziei, iar alții i-au înțeles forța creativă în ambele domenii și dincolo de ele. În "memoriul-prefață" la o ediție a poemelor lui Blake, W.M. Rosetti (1890, XI) îl numește pe acesta "un glorios luminar". Studiul de față își propune să analizeze modul în care versul său se împletește cu operele plastice și cum, prin operele sale de artă, s-a raportat la capodopere culturale existente, pentru a ne oferi o nouă perspectivă asupra lor. Un alt scop al studiului este acela de a urmări cum lumina trimisă de el spre generațiile de creatori ce i-au succes și-a pus amprenta asupra lor. Moștenirea sa culturală în poezie, muzică, arte, filosofie și religie este covârșitoare, ca și personalitatea sa.

*Cuvinte-cheie:* William Blake, poezie, pictură, gravură, moștenire culturală.

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### **Introduction**

In his distinction between Talent and Genius, Schopenhauer (*Schopenhauer, 2016:2*) noticed that "Talent hits a target no one else can hit; genius hits a target no one else can see." Contemporary society often recognizes excellent talent. A genius, more often than not, is somewhat misunderstood or even ridiculed by its contemporaries, remaining to be fully

appreciated by its posterity, since, besides excellence (which s/he shares with the talent), a genius creates an entirely new vision of things. S/He is, therefore, an *imagianarian* [1]. People tend to ignore or even reject such new ideas, beyond their apprehension, trying to maintain a certain *status quo* of their realities, of their lives. Maybe this explains what the critic Northrop Frye notices about Blake's poetry, which "[...] is in proportion to its merits the least read body of poetry in the English language" (*Fry & Denham, 2006:11-12*). Generations later, his verse began inspiring a long-range of fellow poets, writers, philosophers, musicians, filmmakers up to this day.

In what follows, we shall try to unveil where the power and Genius of this multifaceted creator may stem from, focusing on his poems and the works as an artist. The powerful imagery present in both types of creation is another interest, especially the symbols that are instantiated in both words and images in his "illuminated" books. Historical and critical points of view blend in for the above purposes, including those of his biographer, Alexander Gilchrist, Northrop Frye's analytic vision [2] and Martin Day's, Albert Baugh's, George Sampson's, Andrew Sanders's, etc. historical approach(es). Opinions of John Ruskin, Michael Kerrigan, and Jonathan Jones about Blake's art have also been considered.

The last point of interest of the study concerns the ways in which Blake's legacy has been speaking to other creators and is still present today, proving that the power of a genius is timeless.

### **William Blake, the man and the age**

Not many things had been known about William Blake (November 28, 1757 – August 12, 1827) before his biographer Alexander Gilchrist published *Life of William Blake* (1863), revealing the greatness of his personality. After this, many writers, philosophers, art critics, etc., became more interested in the complex works he created. Gilchrist advised his readers from the start about the way they should approach Blake's creation, since he "neither wrote nor drew for the many, hardly for work'y-day men at all, rather for children and angels; himself 'a divine child,' whose playthings were sun, moon, and stars, the heavens and the earth." (*Gilchrist, 1863:3*)

His contemporaries (and even later generations) have often considered him a mad man. Wordsworth confesses, explaining why Blake was not understood when reading his poems, that "There was no doubt that this poor man was mad, but there is something in the madness of this man which interests me more than the sanity of Lord Byron and Walter Scott." (*Alexander, 2000:219*)

Son of a London "moderately prosperous" hosier living on Broad Street, Soho, with little conventional education, his knowledge, beyond reading and writing, was self-acquired. He soon became a "new kind of boy," spending "half his time in dream and imaginative reverie" (*Gilchrist, 1863:5*). As a child, he reportedly saw a tree full of angels. As a young man, he wandered into the nearby countryside, enjoying the rural beauty, which became "a lifelong reminiscence [...]" and stored his mind with lifelong pastoral images" (*Gilchrist, 1863:7*), or, when at Westminster Abbey, he had visions of ancient kings (of whom he later drew spiritual portraits) (*Baugh, 1948:1129*).

For seven years, the young Blake was an apprentice to an engraver, Basire, in Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. The initial idea to become a painter's apprentice proved too expensive for his father and was not guaranteeing future living. In his master's workshop, he did drawings of Gothic monuments. He became in love with the Gothic, rejecting any "pursuit

of fashionable models, modern excellencies, technic and superficial, or of any but the antiquated essentials and symbolic language of imaginative art.” (*Gilchrist, 1863:17*).

After some academic art studies, Blake became an independent engraver, making a living out of it. He came to know such artists as Henry Fuseli (artist and man of letters himself), John Flaxman, and Sir Joshua Reynolds (he would later reject the classic style of the latter). There was an abundance of artists’ studios and homes in Blake’s neighborhood (Broad Street), and he made the most out of it.

Blake’s first artwork publicly exhibited, *Death of Earl Goodwin* (a drawing), appeared in the catalog of the now fairly established Royal Academy’s Exhibition for 1780, side by side with names like Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mary Moser, R.A. Gainsborough, Angelica Kauffman, R.A. Cosway, Louthembourg, Paul Sandby, Zoffany, Copley, and Fuseli (*Gilchrist, 1863:34*).

Most of his time and energy, during his twenties, went into perfecting his art: he undertook “the indispensable effort to master the difficulties of Design, with pencil or in watercolors. With the still tougher mechanical difficulties of oil – painting he never fairly grappled; but confined himself to watercolors and tempera (on canvas), with in after years a curious modification of the latter, – which he daringly christened ‘fresco’” (*Gilchrist, 1863:36*).

He unwillingly took part (was taken by the mob) in one of the riots of that time of anarchy and violent outbursts, when the Newgate prison was attacked and some 300 inmates freed. The consequences were tragic. Some hundreds of the young rioters were hanged when the law was established again. Blake escaped that fate due to a drunken soldier who recognized him.

He lived in London almost all his life. He was happily married to Catherine, “A bright-eyed, dark-haired brunette, with expressive features and a slim, graceful form, [that] can make a young artist and poet overlook such trifles as defective scholarship” (*Gilchrist, 1863:38*). Catherine’s loyal nature, open mind, and her capacity to assimilate good teaching, together with the significant influence of her husband, turned her into an educated woman and skillful artist and made her a good company for him.

An illustrator and drawing teacher, Blake managed to write as well, along with his artistic endeavors. After his friend Flaxman introduced him to Mrs. Mathew, a learned and generous lady-patron of the arts, he began frequenting her salon. Blake brought his drawings to be seen and recited (actually sang) his verses (some from *Songs of Innocence*). Witnesses admit that he was also a good singer and composer, without any knowledge in the art of music. His tunes were ‘most singularly beautiful.’ It appears that some music teachers present then would note down his music, although none such notes have been found. (*Gilchrist, 1863:47*). His visits to Mrs. Mathew’s house stopped suddenly when the audience understood that the strongly opinionated Bard did not accept to be taught the conventional ways of society and art. A prodigious creative path was open then in front of him.

He died, according to one of his friends, singings “Halleluiahs and songs of joy and triumph,” which his wife described as “truly sublime in music and in verse,” performed with “ecstatic energy” (*Sanders, 2000:353*).

*Therefore*, after dedicating his young age to learning the skills of a good artist as an apprentice and befriending other fellow artists, after experiencing with drawing, painting, and engraving as well as with poetry writing (and singing), Blake came to realize that he did not want to follow the old path. From then on, the long journey of the visionary poet and artist began, and the shape of the Genius kept growing.

### Blake's Poetry

"Every poem must necessarily be a perfect unity," according to Blake (*Frye, 1973:77*). A poem, Fry argues, in his turn, must be understood as a whole, our perception of it trying to unite all symbols into an on-the-whole meaning. Literature works in time (like music) and space (like painting). "We listen to the poem as it moves from beginning to end, but as soon as the whole of it is in our minds at once, we 'see' what it means" (*Frye, 1973:77*). We have a vision of that meaning. Fry first mentioned the idea in 1947, when he produced a first complex study on Blake: from shortest lyric to the longest prophecy should be taken as a unit and judged by the same standards (*Frye, 1969:5*). Blake defines poetry as an "allegory addressed to the intellectual powers" (*Frye, 1973:94*). We live in a world governed by external compulsions on action (or law), thinking (or fact), and feeling (or pleasure). Another power ruling the world of Imagination includes morality, beauty, and Truth, without being subordinated to them. That kind of power is free and can create a new vision and recreate man (*Frye, 1973:94*).

Rhetorically, Blake's *Prophetic Books* "tackle conversational rhythm in verse and they do it so that many wonder whether they are poetry or not. He believed that the longer line is more suited for an educated colloquial speech in verse." (*Frye, 1973:270*). Moreover, the layout of the poetry texts is pictorial; the poet-artist engraves the lyrics; images absorb words. The movement is called imagism, and "many imagistic poems could almost be described as a series of captions to invisible pictures" (*Frye, 1973:274*).

Thus, we may easily understand that Blake's conception of poetry writing aligns with the principles of Romanticism while offering a personal interpretation of those principles. The particular characteristic of his poetic works is that they must be looked upon in direct connection to his graphic works and the illustrations he adds so many times to his poems. Blake's creations must be seen as a unity of verse and image.

### The illuminated books

A difficult poet, he became "the most discussed English poet in the 20th century" except for Shakespeare, scrutinized under many approaches, sometimes oversimplified (*Day, 1963:285*). However, his verse must be considered a unity in conjunction with his illustrations. A lot is lost otherwise. All his works should be regarded as a unity because only together do they suggest that brilliant vision: "The earlier poems clarify the later works, and the last poems bring depth to the earlier." (*Day, 1963:285*)

His *Songs of Innocence* (1789), for which he wrote the verse, drew the illustrations and printed the books using metal plates, colors, and his engraver skills are "among the most remarkable books ever issued" (*Day, 1963:284*). Then, after *Innocence and Experience showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul* (1793), Blake was considered an engraver with some proclivity for verse by his contemporary literary world. According to his peers, his poetry was quite eccentric, if not downright insane.

The *Introduction* to the illuminated book *Songs of Innocence* is a short essay in verse on poetry. In Blake's vision, poetry stems from the divine command to sing (the first step is the piper's song); its matter is innocent bliss "he [the boy on a cloud] wept with joy to hear," while its form adds melody to the word: "Piper sit thee down and write/In a book that all may read" (*Blake, 1988:7*). Everything is generated by Imagination. The poems of this volume model for the reader-viewer a world of innocence, populated by pastoral shepherds, echoing green, infants, a little black boy, laughter, mothers crooning infants, nurse's song, children going to the church,



chimney sweepers, embodiments of Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love, pleasant dreams of a Golden Age, when the lion will lie down with the lamb, compassion. Laughter, happiness, innocence, and the joy of a primordial unity seen through the eyes of a child threads through all the poems.

Some Romantic traits present themselves in the sense of wonder, in the contemplation of nature with fresh eyes, the awe in front of other varieties of existence, the sensibility imbued with Imagination, the perception bathed in a halo of beauty and mystery, the cadence of natural music.

*Songs of Experience* (1794) opens with the voice of the Bard, “Who Present, Past, & Future sees/Whose ears have heard/The Holy Word/ That walk’d among the ancient trees.” (Blake, 1988:18). The Bard had gained experience and has now a vision (replacing the one of the children before) of a world in sufferance. Inhumanity and injustice had caused the fall of man inducing grief and prompting rebellion. However, Blake considers this state of things as natural and necessary in the cycle described by the wheel of destiny. Navigating through this world of terrors, and through bitter experiences, man will get a rich, active life in the Creative Imagination. *Earth’s Answer* to the gray despair and darkness of the world is a call for a release of humanity from the chains it is repressed by. On the *Holy Thursday* in this volume, children do not joyfully go to St. Paul’s, singing (like in the previous book), but suffer from cold and hunger (“Babes reduced to misery/ Fed with cold and usurious hand?”); *The Chimney Sweeper* is not happy with his job and his life, in spite of his joyful appearance. His parents and the church repress his childhood. Some poems counter the ones with the same titles in the previous volume. The nurse (*Nurse’s Song*) meditates upon the fate of childhood innocence replaced by adulthood’s hypocrisy and inhibitions. *The Tyger* (one of the most popular poems, highly appreciated for its musicality) counters *The Lamb*. Although people tend to favor the lamb, the tiger, with its apparent malevolent fierce power, is part of the unity of God. It is the symbol of unchained energy. Wrath is the fruit of *A Poison Tree*, and the bright fruit on its branch references the restraints of the Garden of Eden. The sunflower (*Ab! Sun-Flower*), with its roots in the ground and the head following the sun, symbolically mirrors the desire of man to reach freer, higher spheres while still chained to the ground by its limitations. Blake’s London is entirely different than the city depicted by his contemporaries, as a prosperous and free one. In just sixteen verses, Blake offers an appalling picture of a city of sorrow and terror, where children work and cry, the soldiers are hapless, the young harlots curse, marriages are plagued; it is a city of slavery. *Countering The Divine Image, the Human Abstract* speaks about the hypocrisy that leads to tyranny.

However, the two books must not exclusively be seen as opposite since their songs interrelate, not just oppose. The fall suggests a possibility of progress towards a Christ-inspired innocence and the promise of regaining Paradise. In contrast, the “*Songs of Innocence* frequently suggest the challenges and corruption of the innocent state” (Sanders, 2000:354-455).

Thus, we may conclude that the first cycle of his creation mirrors two states of humankind: the first one is the age of innocence, the second, the age of experience. Blake puts them face-to-face; they display the same symbolic characters and facts, revealing how innocence is perverted by experience. The reader takes part in the journey of the Bard himself. The second cycle lets the reader long for the first. Still, Blake suggests that it is a natural and necessary step to fulfilling the Wheel of Destiny and gaining the Creative Imagination.

### The prophetic books

Blake's "prophetic books" apply his mythology to what was happening around him. The first one in the cycle, *Tiriel* (1789), is the allegory of a dying world soon to be replaced by a new one. Tiriel (the character) signifies the old religion "Mistaken father of a lawless race my voice is past" (Blake, 1988:285). He is usurped and later replaced by his children because of his tyranny. Worth mentioning is that the masses seem to support the old religion as they are reluctant to accept the new.

*The Book of Thel* (1789) ponders upon the dilemma of whether the opposites can or cannot be reconciled. Thel does not think this is possible, but Blake advocates for the necessity of this reconciliation. He also believes that it is possible. The character, Thel (Gk. *thelos*, meaning 'will,' 'desire'), is an unborn soul, a young female virgin, reluctant to come into the world of the living humans and subject herself to the fate of these and to the cycle of life. She decides to remain in the Vales of Har (Paradise), the neoclassic picture of life, orderly, calm, serene, ideal (-ized) and not assume any other mature experience outside of it, for fear of death and a too-short existence: "A land of sorrows and of tears where never smile was seen" [3].

*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (probably 1790-93) is the book in which he opposes Swedenborg by refusing to accept his view according to which evil must be eliminated and good must be restored. Here he denies the validity of the moral law. The God of Sinai is jealous and evil, while Satan symbolizes "energy, desire, and will. Action is good; slave-morality is sin" (Baugh, 1948:1131). Blake believes that the two moral concepts must be accepted as symbolizing two states: passivity and energy. They complement each other to create a full life. The book consists of a series of texts, prose, and poetry, some written in free verse (maybe the first one in English literature), printed by the artist after a series of etchings; it also offers the reader a long range of proverbs, reminding of the Biblical ones, but written according to Blake's Romantic revolutionary view on life. They are meant to shock the reader out of his commonplace notion of what is good and what is evil: "The voice of Devil" apparently is the poet's voice, favoring Energy over Reason: "Exuberance is Beauty." The poet's visit to Hell (like Dante's or Milton's) convinces him that the place is the source of unrestrained energy, as opposed to the authoritarian Heaven. The creatures of the proverbs embody such concepts as creativity (as a quality of Genius = the Eagle), while the Lions symbolize Revolutionary Imagination and the Viper, Reason. From the necessary conflict between Reason and Imagination, creativity is born. The figure of Christ suggests energy and inspiration opposing the classical tradition of passivity and reason. Blake adopts the epiphanic or oracular point of view by using parody proverbs (Frye, 1973:298).

*The Book of Ahania* (1789, 1795) and *The Book of Los* (1795) present the same story of the universal creation, of the conflict between father (Urizen) and son (Orc/Los), between Reason and Energy (poetry), darkness and light; the story is told from the perspective of each of the two.

*The Song of Los* (1795), consisting of two parts, *Africa* and *Asia*, conclude the cycle of the four continents, Africa being the symbol of Beulah, of the primitive innocence of man, where Urizen tyrannically intervenes to establish reason and Asia being the symbol of error. The kings of Asia call for tyranny, but Orc is again rising against Urizen.

*The Four Zoas* [4] (1797-1804), the crown of the prophetic books, contains some "poetry of coruscating splendor unmatched by other verse of Blake and almost without equal in any English verse" (Day, 1963:303). Left unfinished, the book was meant to be a kind of epos;

each Zoa symbolizes a faculty of man as well as a cosmic law: Tharmas is the flesh of man as well as the cosmic law that makes things happen; Luvah is the instinctive emotion as well as natural copulation; Urizen is rationality and wisdom, while Los (Urthona) is the creative Imagination. The four principles need to work together both in man and society, although they naturally oppose each other. The fall of one and the prevalence of others leads to the split of the human being and the cleavage of society. (Frye, 1973:302). Structured in nine Nights, the poem is also a history of humankind: in Night I, Tharmas falls, bringing about the end of the Golden Age; in Night II, Luvah falls, and the Silver Age ends, then Urizen, ending the Bronze Age. In Night IV (corresponding to the Iron Age, contemporary with the poet's time), Los (we met him in *The Book of Urizen*) tries to reinstall some order and put an end to the chaos; Orc (in Night V) is chained to the Rock of Decalogue, but his revolutionary spirit remains free; Urizen (like Satan) explores the darkness of his caves to forge his dire Web (of Religion); Night VII has two versions: in the first one, the building of Golgonooza, the City of Art supports the consolidation of Truth. However, the opposed Error (the Shadowy Female) fights back with secrecy, deceit, repression; in the second version, Error takes the shape of the Industrial Revolution, together with its repressing institutions. Night VIII speaks about sacrifice (the crucifixion of Luvah on the Tree of Mystery), the enslavement of humanity (by Urizen's powerful institutions), and a bit of hope brought about by Enion's song that begins to awaken the sleeping giant, Albion. The final Night IX, or "The Last Judgment," sets in motion the necessary apocalyptic revolution: the Tree of Mystery is burned, all the kings and tyrants are thrown, justice facilitates the unity of the Four Zoas, each taking up its role and responsibility in the maintaining of the unity. Now Albion can manifest his whole lively creativity.

*Milton* (in three copies) appeared in the same year (1808) as the illustrations Blake did for Milton's *Paradise Lost* to respond to the fellow poet. In Blake's book (in two volumes), Milton becomes Blake (the Bard) to correct some of his errors and assert the Truth (about the real motive of the fall of Satan – hypocrisy, rigid moral judgment, and rationalism and the real core of poetry, which is Imagination)

Considered by many scholars Blake's masterpiece, *Jerusalem, the Emanation of the Giant Albion* (dated by the poet 1804, but published 1818, extant in only five copies, of which only one is in color), offers the richest image of his vision. A hundred engraved plates accompany the verse. His symbolism and terminology gather here, with the addition (as a result of personal experience, being wrongly accused of sedition) of the *Sons of Albion* (symbolizing man's cruelty to man) and the *Daughters of Albion* (emanations of the Sons and embodying women's cruelty to man). The general theme of the poem is the Fall of Man, as a necessity for his regeneration to complete. With the help of Inspiration, the cycle will be completed and reach perfect harmony in Eternity. The poet assumes the role of opening "the immortal Eyes of Man inwards into The Worlds of Thought."

Also, among the "prophetic books," *A Song of Liberty, America. A Prophecy* and *Europe* are further discussed below.

Thus, *The Prophetic Books* are considered the culmination of Blake's visionary poetry. They need to be approached as a unity to understand the vast theosophy he created and decipher the keys to his philosophical and religious concepts almost always embodied in life-like or myth-like creatures. Many of them move from one book to the other, like in a vast epopee, the epopee of humanity.

### Blake's art

Trained as an engraver, Blake joined the written verse with images fixing them on etched copper plates, then printing them and coloring them by hand, or sometimes printing them in color from the start, using his invented technique. Image and text inter-relate; they do not follow or precede each other. This arrangement leads to speculative interpretation, and the result must be seen in its unity. The image signs may complement the verse or sometimes even contradict; however, image is meant to enrich the meaning of the unity (*Sanders, 2000:353-354*).

His artworks are gathered in collections scattered all over the world, such as Tate Gallery, V & A Museum, British Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, Melbourne, Metropolitan Museum (New York), The Huntington Art Museum (San Marino, California) (*Murray, 1959:28*).

“Rich and delicate, ethereal and muscular the art of William Blake is as fascinating as his philosophies, threading through his poetry and his prophetic works” (*Kerrigan, 2018, book cover*). Just like his poetry, his art may seem obscure to the ordinary eye, but this “obscurity is assumed and necessary, because, Blake says, ‘What is grand is necessarily obscure to weak men [...] That which can be made explicit to the idiot is not worth my care’” (*Kerrigan, 2018:6*). Blake's art is built on contraries, just like his philosophy and poetry. The images may seem straightforward, but they are deep and mysterious.

The written word was from the beginning a source of inspiration for Blake's art, starting with *The Bible* (*Eve Tempted by the Serpent*, 1799-1800; *The Nativity*, 1799-1800, *Job's Evil Dreams*, 1825), or Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (*Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims*, 1810), Dante's *Divine Comedy*, William Shakespeare (*Oberon, Titania and Puck with Dancing Fairies*, 1786 based on *A Midsummer's Night Dream*; *Pity*, 1795, based on *Macbeth*; *Queen Katherine's Dream*, 1825, based on *Henry VIII*), John Milton (*Satan Calling Up His Legion*, *Satan Arousing the Rebel Angels*, *Paradise Lost*, 1808).

In his illustrations of Dante's *Divine Comedy* (commissioned by his last patron John Linnell, and consisting of 102 drawings, 1824-27), “glorious culmination of his art,” Blake needs to also comment upon the visions of the former, especially concerning Dante's Catholic view upon evil: “Dante saw devils where I see none” (*Google Art & Culture, 2022*); this again comes from Blake's approach to religion and the moral law; according to him good and evil are not clear-cut concepts. Evil/Satan may bring the energy humanity otherwise lacks.

His most significant artworks are 21 large watercolors illustrating *The Book of Job* (engraved in 1826), the 102 illustrations to Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and his color-printed drawings including *Elijah in the Chariot of Fire*, the *Hecate*, the *Nebuchadnezzar*. After an early Neoclassical style, he changed everything according to his visionary conception, abandoning logical arrangements in space and using color, light, and form in a highly subjective way (*Murray, 1959:28*).

While advocating for symbolism in art and regarding the grotesque images, John Ruskin believes that the grotesque should only be left imperfect, only slightly sketched or expressed. He thinks Blake's black etched grotesque illustration of *The Book of Job* is perfect, but the artist fails when adding color (*Ruskin, 1987:331*).

His *Songs of Innocence and Experience* are richly decorated, but his prophetic books are inspiringly illuminated, more like medieval manuscripts. Later on, he developed his own technique (some call it “relief etching”), a solution he found for combining text and image on the same plate, not very far from *intaglio* but reversing it. Then he would use an acid-resistant varnish to trace the desired design on a copper plate. The text had to be written “in a mirror,” surrounded by illuminations. Then he etched the rest of the plate with nitric acid. After cleaning

the remains of acid and varnish, the text and images would stand in some relief, then they will be printed by ink and finally colored by hand (*Kerrigan, 2018:21*).

Interestingly enough, Kerrigan notices (*Kerrigan, 2018:24*) that his prophetic books might be more easily approached by the new generation of consumers of fantastic and imaginative realms of virtual reality and books, movies, and computer games situated in these different realities. The new reproductive techniques seem to be extremely helpful in bringing Blake's works much closer to the reader-viewer than the techniques he once used. For his paintings, he used watercolor, but the color was washed over graphite or pen and ink designs; the result is considered at least eccentric by his contemporary fellow artist and critics. The same technique adjusted by modern technologies seems to be quite appealing nowadays to the image consumers.

Kerrigan proposes a possible division of the artworks into four significant groups, according to their main theme(s). The Gothic works are inspired by his experiences with medieval literature and art; they include Biblical scenes, Chaucer-inspired images, and Dante's *Divine Comedy* images (e.g., *The Harlot and the Giant*) (*Fig. 1*). This approach allows him to free his Imagination from the classically ordained conventions. (*Kerrigan, 2018:29*). A second group includes the prophetic and mythological works. Here he experiences with the myths the way he feels we all should: not as with ideas and concepts, but by living them, by feeling them, by letting our emotions intermediate that experience. His approach also has the prophetic dimension because he teaches humanity some cosmic and divine truths (e.g., *Frontispiece to Jerusalem* [5]) (*Fig. 2*). The Biblical group comprises works dealing with Biblical themes and imagery, filtered through his Imagination (e.g., *Eve Tempted by the Serpent*, 1799-1800) (*Fig. 3*). The fourth group contains the visionary works, the products of his extravagant Imagination: "As a man is, So he Sees" (Blake, 1799) (*Kerrigan, 2018:101*) (e.g., *Newton* [6], 1795) (*Fig. 4*).

Jonathan Jones, the contemporary art critic, considers William Blake to be "far and away the greatest artist Britain has ever produced" (*Jones, 2019*). In his review of the Tate exhibition of William Blake (September 11, 2019 – February 2, 2020), Jones places at the core of the artistic creation of the artist-poet the depictions of the divided human nature, an idea also present in his poetry. Although the exhibition poster may seem to some a bit too modern in characterizing Blake as a "Rebel, Radical, Revolutionary," the critic asserts that these qualities may appropriately be attributed to him. Jones goes even further, adding some qualities like "pacifist," "anti-racist" (for the portrait of an enslaved person), and, yes, "feminist" (for illustrating Mary Wollstonecraft's book about women's rights and for the frontispiece to *The Daughters of Albion*). Speaking about the illustrated books, Jones considers that the images "come as a free gift" with the verse, as a result of an "infernal" technique the artist said he received from the ghost of his brother (copper plate etching). In Jones's opinion, the Tate exhibition comes to prove those critics who consider Blake's art not so great incredibly wrong; for that purpose, the gallery decided to put aside the verses for the exhibition despite many protests. By doing so, the Genius of Blake as an artist also comes forward. The exhibited works introduce the viewer to an apocalyptic world, impregnated with hellish monstrous images. *The Evil Red Dragon* (who may be, in fact, any one of us) (*Fig. 5*) is placed by *The Good and Evil Angels* (*Fig. 6*). Eve takes a pear from the Serpent's mouth; all kinds of monstrous beasts (reminding of Goya) surround the viewer. Blake projects, according to Jones, the terrors and turbulences of his time to cosmic dimensions. Paradoxically, when approaching the small-scale engravings and looking closely at those images, they gain colossal status due to their blasting symbolism. The exhibited works oppose tyranny and slavery, freedom, fulfillment, engaged in a battle that reveals our divided



nature. Despite the terrific imagery, there is still hope for humanity transcending from Blake's works. Jones's final appreciation of Blake's art as seen in the reviewed exhibition, but not just there, is that "Blake blows away Constable and Turner – and that's with his writing hand tied behind his back." That is to say that Blake's art may be readily appreciated in itself, not necessarily in relation to his poetry.

However, even though one may consider Blake's art separately, his drawings, paintings, engravings are in very close connection either to his poetry or to other literary productions. Meanwhile, they also reflect his vast Imagination, his more or less extravagant philosophical and religious approaches, his social attitudes. Although a researcher of Blake's total work may need to treat the two separately for some structural purposes, they only regain their on-the-whole meaning when joined back together again. The reader-viewer may experience synesthetic pleasure when approaching them as a unity.

### **Philosophy, religion, vision on society**

The influences often recognized by scholars in his works are mainly *The Bible*, Plato, Milton, *The Cabala*, Spencer, Emanuel Swedenborg [7], Behmenism, Rosicrucianism, Gnosticism, Druidism. Out of all these, and flooding everything with his unrestrained Imagination, he built his mythology, filled with esoteric symbolism and profound humanism.

Although in his first works, *Poetical Sketches* [8], Blake appeals to classical mythology (bringing such figures as Apollo, Mercury, Minerva, or Pan to life again), he rejects any classic influences and Classicism in the later works. His mythology, free of any patterns, is populated with strange characters like Rinthrah, Ololon, Palambron, Bromion, etc. (in his prophetic books). However, the central figure of his creation is Albion, the archetype of all humankind and all mythology.

He believed that all myths have a common origin and were created by kindred minds because, in the beginning, men received those symbols directly from God and were the key to following His guidance. They encapsulated the universal unconscious of mankind. In Jungian terms, Blake's mythology is not about outside forces but inner ones. He explores his own psyche, teaching people how to know themselves better. According to Martin Day ([Day, 1963:287](#)), in the first period of creation (1789-93), his inner struggle is fought by Inspiration and Reason. In the second (1793-97), the conflict continues, involving characters from his mythology, while in the last (1797-1821), the conflict increases, bringing in opposition, not just Inspiration and Reason, but also Emotion and Senses. As a result, a number of twelve battles are fought. Before Jung designed his chart of the human psyche (with the four cardinals: Intuition, Emotion, Sensation, and Thought, all revolving around the Conscious and the Unconscious mind), Blake offered his own chart of the human mind, with quite the same arrangement: the four cardinals were Los (Inspiration), Luvah (Emotion), Urizen (Thought), and Tharmas (Sensation). Blake's Anima is Jerusalem, while The Self is Albion, the sleeping giant. Personal balance is attained when the giant awakens and unites with Jerusalem (at the end of the same poem). There is an Anima (Emanation, in Blake's terms) for each of the psyche's functions (Blake gives them names), as well as a Shadow (Specter) opposing each cardinal function. In his works, Blake tries to balance his psyche (as well as humankind) by fighting Reason with Inspiration, then reconciling them, while at the end under Inspiration's watch, trying to bring the opposing forces into a kind of harmony. ([Day, 1963:287-290](#)).



The mythical vision of Blake (mainly in his *Prophetic Books*) creates an original cosmology where concepts (metaphysical, religious) are imbued with life and are given a form, a name, even becoming personages. These personages oppose each other in time and space, and their cosmic interplay dictates the destiny of humanity. The artist, the Seer, and the thinker blend into one person who moves through a maze of forms and ideas. An idea may develop through a series of signs and symbols, quite often hard to interpret. In English Romanticism, the encyclopedic tendency leads to constructing a mythologic epic, where the myths represent psychological or subjective states of mind (*Frye, 1973:60*). This is the case with Faust (also in Blake's prophecies).

In *Jerusalem*, Blake suggests that the spiritual world is the real world and that God dwells in each individual; in one of his first illuminated books, as an *Application* to the principles stated before, which demonstrated that "there is no natural religion," Blake offers a glimpse into how we should perceive divinity: "He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God. He who sees the Ratio only sees himself. Therefore, God becomes as we are, that we may be as he is" (Blake, 1998, p. 3). Men were misguided by Sensation and Thought into perceiving a dual universe, divided into good and evil, when, in fact, the Universe is a unity, and what may be perceived as evil is, in fact, power, energy (*Day, 1963:291-292*).

The state of innocence poems are not just beautiful, delicate, musical verses. Under their apparent simplicity, some moral, ethical, and social truths hide. Then, the songs of experience cast a shadow on that state of good and purity. Good and evil are not the concepts Christians were accustomed to; in fact, Blake's God of Sinai is what we might call evil, while Satan is the one who brings energy. The proverbs of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* themselves astonish an unprepared reader through their unusual "misplacement" of good and evil: "Prisons are built with stones of Law/ Brothels with bricks of Religion/ The pride of the peacock is the glory of God. The lust of the goat is the bounty of God./The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God./The nakedness of woman is the work of God" (*Blake, 1988:36*).

An admirer of the French and American revolutions (*America, Europe*), seen as freeing the natural man from the constraints of the social, religious, political laws. Departing from the religious definitions of good and evil, he believed that, since life is energy, whatever releases man's energy must be good, while whatever refrains it is bad. The human body is and works as a unity; what is natural is holy; there is no use to blame sexuality

His idea on what marriage should look like is a revolutionary one, as well. In his *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793), he insists that everyone should be entitled to an ideal union without unnecessary chains and restrictions. These unions often become perverted by jealousy, hypocrisy, and persecutions by the authoritarian society. The actual crime that brings suffering comes from these severe persecutions and restrictions, not natural sex impulses.

The revolutionary outbursts in Europe reflect in *A Song of Liberty* (1793), announcing the imminent overthrow of tyranny. Orc, the rebellious (in this poem, Urizen's son, Fuzon), will soon overthrow Urizen, a bearded old man. Urizen is the architect holding the tools for creating webs of law and conventional society, conventional nationalism dictated by reason. For the moment, Orc is defeated, and laws (in the form of the Ten Commandments) are imposed upon the people of Israel. The revolutionary ideas are developed in *America* (1793), where the embodiment of the American colonies, Orc, the rebel, makes The Angel of Albion (King George) tremble with fear. Blake calls this volume "a prophecy" and an "illuminated" book. He created 18 etchings (some in color) for its print. It is no longer a historical narrative but a symbolic essence of all revolutions, disregarding any chronological order. Revolution is part of

the cycle of society's life; it is a natural human impulse to rise against oppression, and that fight also leads to the renewal of society. In *Europe* (1794, also "illuminated" by 18 colored plates), Orc is now the spirit of the French Revolution, freeing himself from the rule of Asia (the Mosaic code).

His idealizing attitude toward slavery, whose cruelty he did not accept, is present in an illustration *Europe Supported by Africa and America* (1796), one of the many illustrations to a book on this theme by John Stedman. It is believed that Blake's illustrations may have contributed to the abolitionist feeling in England. There, Europe is flanked by two darker-skinned young women, and the whole picture gives the impression of harmonious unity. In his *Songs of Innocence*, the little black boy has a white soul, even though he is black "as if bereav'd of light."

Thus, as the poet-artist himself noted, his whole work, in verse and image, was meticulously founded on his visionary thought and Imagination. These received some palpable forms as words and images engraved on metal plates and then printed with unbound energy and enthusiasm for his fellow humans to learn and enjoy.

### Blake's legacy

Somewhat obscure and nonconformist, the last part of his creation was ignored and even considered the product of a mad man. It was not until Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake* (1863) that the interest in this colossal creator resurged. In the middle of the nineteenth century, a new interest in Blake's vision manifested as The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (especially Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Algernon Swinburne) approached his works as an alignment to their "carnal mysticism."

In recognition of the genius artist William Butler Yeats edits a Blake collected works volume in 1893. He became acquainted with Blake's vision quite early and was familiar with the idea of conflict (*Emanation* and *Specter*) and the thesis of the necessity of contraries for the advancement of humanity. Yeats built his vision of the Apocalypse starting from his predecessor.

The similarities between Blake's vision of the human psyche and Freud's and Jung's psycho-analytic philosophies cannot be neglected. However, Jung believes that "Blake [is] a tantalizing study since he compiled a lot of half or undigested knowledge in his fantasies. According to my ideas, they are an artistic production rather than an authentic representation of unconscious processes." (*Library of Congress Exhibitions*, 2022). His *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* has been exerting a particular fascination in a significant number of philosophers, estheticians, theologians, psychologists, etc., up to this day, due to its unexpected vision of the dynamic relationship between the two concepts.

In the 20th century, a genuine scholarly interest in Blake was born. Worth mentioning is the first substantial book on William Blake, by the Canadian critic Northrop Frye, *Fearful Symmetry* (1947). This book opened a wide window to understanding the poetry, ideas, and the whole vision of Blake.

The British Surrealist artist Paul Nash created his early works inspired by poems and images Blake produced. He was indebted to Blake also in finding his subjects, not in nature or the real world, but in the realm of Imagination, of the human psyche, capable of producing images as solid as the real ones. Later, Nash was obsessed with Blake's poem *Ab! Sun-Flower*, which led him to create a series of enormous sunflowers, imbued with the melancholy feeling of Blake's poem. The Neo-Romantic British printmaker and painter Graham Sutherland is also indebted to Blake's pastoral images when creating his landscapes.

The Composer Benjamin Britten decided to set Blake to music and created his *Songs & Proverbs of William Blake: The Nurse's Song*, 1930, for soprano & contralto & pianoforte; *A Poison Tree*, 1935, for medium voice and piano; *A Cradle Song: sleep, beauty bright*, 1938, for soprano, contralto & piano, etc. In 1931, British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams found his inspiration in *The Book of Job* to create the music for a ballet. Sir John Tavener created beautiful liturgic choral, reminding of medieval church chants, based on *Songs of Innocence* (*The Lamb*, 1982, *The Tyger*, 1987, *Eternity's Sunrise*, 1997, inspired by *Auguries of Innocence*, and dedicated to the memory of Princess Diana, *A Cradle Song*, 2010).

The musicality of Blake's verse kept challenging other composers and singers. In 1971 The National Theatre Company staged the musical *Tyger. (A Celebration Of William Blake)* by Adrian Mitchell (lyrics) and Mike Westbrook (music). Then parts of this musical were later used in a 1977 Thames TV drama, *Glad Day*, on the 150th commemoration of Blake's death. Mike Westbrook gave another version of some of the songs in the musical, appearing on 2 C.D.s accompanied by a booklet, *Glad Day (Settings of William Blake)*, 1999, including jazz style musical versions, full of energy, of *Songs of Innocence and Experience: Holy Thursday, A Poison Tree, The Tyger and the Lamb*, as well as passages from the prophecies. (*Milton, Jerusalem*).

Martha Redbone, "vocalist/songwriter/composer/educator, [...] known for her unique gumbo of folk, blues, and gospel" (*Redbone, 2001*), was inspired by Blake's poetry, too when singing *The Garden of Love: Songs of William Blake*, 2012 a collection of hollered melodies, lullabies, and folky mountain takes on Blake.

U2, the Irish rock band, released *Songs of Innocence*, 2014 followed by *Songs of Experience*, 2017, an ambient production reflecting the British political climate and "a brush of mortality" (derived from Bono's life experience). The progressive rock group Emerson, Lake & Palmer released a vinyl single including *Jerusalem* (1973), and *Tangerine Dream* released an L.P. titled *Tyger* (1987).

Steve Davis, host of *Neptune Currents*, a program hosted by a community-sponsored radio station, KKUP, from San Jose, California, proposed a whole playlist of Blake-inspired music (*Davis, 2011*).

Patti Smith, the American singer and songwriter, musician, author, and poet, sang *Ask the Angels* (1976), inspired by Blake's *The Angel*. She also wrote a song about her attraction to Blakean poetry (*My Blakean Year*, written at a difficult time when she felt as unappreciated as Blake might have felt during his lifetime). She knew Blake from her childhood, ever since she got a 1927 edition of his *Songs of Innocence*, faithful to 1789 original, and she spent long hours mesmerized by the perfect interlace of word and image. About *The Tyger*, another song she sang, she confesses: "And then I wound up singing 'Tyger, Tyger,' because whenever I read it, I hear the music. But William Blake was known for his singing voice, and I'm sure he sang these poems, but we don't have any record of it. But his music is infused in his words, because where else would I have gotten it? So, I hope that answers your question." (*Smith, 2015*)

For the 250th Blake anniversary (2007), she edited a selection of his verses which she titles simply *Poems*, intending it as "a bit of Blake, designed as a bedside companion or to accompany a walk in the countryside, to sit beneath a shady tree and discover a portal into his visionary and musical experience." (*Popova, 2018*) Her preface to the volume is poetry in prose, in its turn, a sincere homage to the great Genius.

She read from Blake to his dying friend, Allen Ginsberg, the beatnik poet, from a volume he had thoroughly annotated before. They both shared the Blakean passion. Apparently, Ginsberg had had a vision of the Romantic poet back in 1948, when Blake recited him in his

East Harlem apartment. That experience immediately made him think about setting the verses to music. In 1969, he recorded an album based on *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, featuring simple folk melodies, accompanied by jazz musicians, released in 1970 and 2017. He, too, was convinced that Blake intended his verses to be sung. Ginsberg created his poems responding to many of Blake's poems in a more introspective manner. He confesses that what the great predecessor taught him was a new mythology, a new sense of the Universe, a prophetic view on poetry; "they [the poems] are capable of summoning up in me, the sensation of eternity" (*Ginsberg & Morgan, 2008:50*); he also learned from Blake to write his poetry for music and even published it together with the respective scores (*A Western Ballad, Father Death Blues, Gospel Nobel Truths*) (*Ginsberg, 2006*).

The Blakean influence was a common feature of the counterculture of the 1960s poets and singers. Bob Dylan wrote *Every Grain of Sand* influenced by William Blake's poem "Auguries of Innocence." The end of innocence is also present in other songs and a vision of life after death, of America as a modern Babylon (still needing to wake up like Albion). Jim Morrison wants to open *The Doors* to "break on through to the other side" or criticizes youth's submission to the systems which control their perception. The "cleansing [of] the doors of perception" might as well be attained using LSD, which Morrison experienced to touch the infinite. This connection to Blake's ideal of internal liberation is noticeable in Morrison's book *The Lords* (1969).

Jim Morrison named his group after Aldous Huxley's book *The Doors of Perception*, a philosophical essay first published in 1954, after experiencing with mescaline. Huxley, in his turn, was influenced by Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*'s well-known quote, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern." His psychedelic experiences with the cleansing range from the "purely aesthetic" to "sacramental vision." His next volume, *Heaven and Hell*, 1956, ponders on some philosophical and psychologic implications of his previous experience. Both titles are a direct reference to Blake's works and ideas.

Many scholars consider Blake's *Jerusalem* a major influence on James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce was familiar with Blake's poetry. Starting with the shared cultivated ambiguity, or even obscurity, the unconventional approaches to different subjects, their belief in the primacy of art, their plunging of uncharted nonrational territories of the human mind, they also shared the status of the marginalized incomprehensible Genius. Blake deals with *eternity* (seen as atemporality), and Joyce speaks about a cyclical, eternal time where past and future are simultaneous *forriver*. Joyce's HCE is in many ways similar to Albion, the universal human being (fractured into reduced pieces of consciousness, who, after a series of dream-like nine nights, becomes a complete spiritual entity. HCE is also broken; his consciousness is fragmented into independent beings that seek reintegration. In both cases, the original undivided unity needs to wake up after a long period of amnesia. The Four Zoas are the four cardinals of the human mind (creativity, Imagination, reason, emotion). HCE is also spread, divided, to the four corners of the earth, the four *dimmansions* of space and time. Both authors use language in a perplexing manner to suggest contraries in the same word; they use humor (Joyce prefers puns, while Blake the irony). While in Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, the roles of Satan and God seem ironically reversed, in Joyce, the two contrary entities, Shem and Shaun. Shem, the disinherited other, embodies those scary, unacknowledged bits of HCE and is the gatekeeper of art, spirit, and enlightenment. Shaun represents the repressive consciousness. They need to somehow reintegrate into the Universal Man (*Smile, 2013*).

After WW II, Blake's works made their way into the popular culture, too, in music, film, and graphic novel. His illuminated books may well be considered the first of the kind and the predecessor of the artist book, a form adopted by contemporary artists. The book has become the object of art combining images and text.

Martin Scorsese's 1973 film *Mean Streets* has been associated with Blakean themes and concepts. The film displays an urban inferno (Little Italy, led by the Mob). The main character, Charlie (Harvey Keitel), a devout Catholic, starts asking himself what exactly is the role of the church: "you don't make up for your sins in church. You do it in the streets. You do it at home. The rest is bullshit and you know it". He is a conflicted soul, trying to find some meaning: his dark side prompts him to advance on a criminal career path, but he can also be kind, unselfish, loyal, which are traits coming in contradiction with the career he seeks. Charlie feels like it is his moral obligation to take care of the psychotic and reckless Johnny Boy (Robert De Niro), the character creating tension around him and adding a bit of humor and exuberance. A particular scene of the movie features a character, Tony, entering a cage with a wild feline. The dangerous animal seems to love him, and they seem to get along well. He confesses he wanted the animal for its complex exploring qualities. The scene has been considered a reference to *Tyger* in its ambivalence. The moral ambiguities pervading this film also remind one of Blake.

*The Tyger*, 2022, directed by Giorgio Fraccon, is a short film inspired by the homonymous poem by Blake. It uses some archival materials of the poem set to music by Allen Ginsberg. IMDb lists 19 short films, videos, even video games, documentaries inspired by Blake. A reference to *America* is made by Roy Batty, a kind of Orc, (Rutger Hauer) in the 1982 *Blade Runner* (directed by Ridley Scott). The 1995 Jim Jarmusch western, *Dead Man*, features Johnny Depp as William Blake; there are a lot of references to the themes and poems of the Romantic poet. Nobody (an American Indian) saves William Blake, convinced that he is the poet, and even recites some Blakean verses. *Manhunter* (1986) and *Red Dragon* (2002) (versions of the novel *Red Dragon*, by Thomas Harris) both allude to Blake's *Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed in Sun*. The main character wears a tattoo image of Blake's Dragon. "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom" (from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*) is clearly displayed in one of the scenes of *Shivers*, 1975, by David Cronenberg. *The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys* (2002) (directed by Peter Care and based on a novel by Chris Fuhrman) is about the rebelliousness of a group of Catholic school students. One of them, Tim, argues with the schoolmistress, Sister Assumpta over *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. The nun believes that Blake was "a very dangerous thinker." At Tim's funeral, his friend, Francis, reads *The Tyger*.

Interestingly enough, the dedicatory hymn "And did those feet in ancient Times" from his book *Milton*, a pastoral Christ image and also a revolutionary cry prompting humanity to end the materialistic era and replace it with a perfect one, became a hymn [9]. Known as *Jerusalem*, it has been sung many times, by different people: by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, as a national anthem, by the working people at the end of the General Strike in England in 1926, by the crowds flooding the London streets, after the Labour Party's victory of 1945, by the British national rugby team, by many religious congregations, by rock bands, also used in film, television, and theater, as a most popular patriotic song. This incredible popularity is one more proof that Blake's ideas and verses broke through time to speak to future generations of not just writers or any other type of artists, but ordinary people, too, loud and clear.



Thus, the legacy of this colossal creator covers a vast span of time and cultural areas. Somewhat, not surprisingly, many musicians used his verse to set on music, since his poems exhale that musicality; writers, too, found his vision most appealing, both in themes, concepts, and style. Philosophers and psychologists may consider him a predecessor of specific thought schools. Art, in general, has benefitted from his ideas and techniques and still is. His works have known great popularity, and a widespread, once modern printing techniques and new media became usual in our society.

### Discussion

Blake assumed the role of the Genius, of the artist-poet, of the Seer and Prophet to facilitate his fellow humans a closer experience of the ineffable, of the divine, of the mysteries of life and eternity. The first four lines of a longer poem included in his *Songs of Innocence*, lines often quoted for Blake's colossal vision, in a nutshell, reveal what he thought his role was in that respect:

*To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour. (Blake, 1803)*

With the fresh perception only the innocence allows, the Seer can reveal to us the enormity of the world in just one grain of sand, the heavenly joy and happiness in just one wildflower. The Prophet can experience such concepts as the infinity of space and the eternity of time, and the mysterious realities behind them. The Artist-Poet is the facilitator between these ideas, mysteries, ambiguous experiences, and humanity. His visionary constructs (in verse and images) reveal to us something we otherwise may miss, do not understand, or are not able to perceive. In our turn, we need to decipher the meanings behind his symbols, allegories, and metaphors. We might be able to do that if we find the right keys.

### Conclusion

In one of the earliest studies on Blake, George Saintsbury downplays Blake's greater part of the *Prophetic Books* as a mere curiosity; he considers his critical opinions (in art and literature) as only sometimes inspired, but mainly one-sided, prejudiced, and even ludicrous. However, Saintsbury cannot help but recognize some "flashes of genius," some of them (in *Songs*) of "extreme simplicity [and] unearthly music, [...] elfin music." (*Saintsbury, 1966:592*)

Especially in his last "prophetic books," Blake announces the inevitable victory of the new forces in the world. Still, he believes humanity will gain primordial unity and live again in a new "golden age". His vision could not be understood and therefore accepted by his contemporaries. Later, in the 20th century, the rich significances of his vision came to light, and the artist-poet received the recognition he always deserved, that of a visionary, way ahead of his time. In Blake's vision, the role of art was essential in helping humanity regain the "Lost Paradise." For this purpose, art had to become militant and expose the lie, while prompting humanity to emancipate spiritually, so that it regains a clear vision of its destiny and the Universe.

A solitary figure, both in art, and literature, because of his extreme originality and lack of compliance to any rules or conventions, and because he reinvented and re-created them all as his own, Blake is now being revealed as a poet dealing in the most subtle symbolism, an artist of unique vision, and an intuitive philosopher visiting the realm of the Absolute.



It is often maintained that we live in the era of the power of the image over anything else (especially the word). Blake might be a perfect guide for all of us (students of art and letters, or not) to bringing and bridging the two human creations together and reshape a possible lost unity.

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### Notes:

- [1] Rare noun; person concerned with imaginary things; a fantasist. Early 18th century; earliest use found in Edward Taylor. From imagine + -arian. <https://www.lexico.com/definition/imaginarian>
- [2] When he published his book *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake*, in 1947, a cardinal study on the subject, leading to a better understanding of it, Frye noted that Blake’s works are to be understood only in the historical and social context of their creation.
- [3] Blake, available on My Poetic Side, retrieved Febr. 10, 2022.

- [4] The full title: *The Four Zoas, The Torments of Love & Jealousy in the Death and Judgement of Albion the Ancient Man*; the original title was *Vala*: the book was not published by Blake, but later, by Yeats, in 1893 and was extensively revised ever since; apparently, there is no definitive text.
- [5] Los, shown as a night watchman, prepares to enter the interior of Albion, through a Gothic gate; in his right hand there is a sun-like lantern that might help him reveal some mysteries of the sacred world.
- [6] Newton is presented as a Renaissance nude, at the bottom of the sea, that is, far from the world. His well-formed muscles may speak of the man, but his pose, crouched over some geometrical instruments and concentrating on some scientific truths, reveal the rationalist (vision).
- [7] A Swedish Christian theologian, scientist, philosopher and mystic, writer of a number of alchemical and astrological works, especially known for his book on the afterlife, *Heaven and Hell*, 1758.
- [8] A collection of poetry and prose, written between 1769 and 1777, published 1783.
- [9] The poem is best known as the hymn *Jerusalem*, sung to music written by C. Hubert H. Parry in 1916.

## Appendix



Figure 1. *The Harlot and the Giant*. 1824-27



Figure 2. Frontispiece to *Jerusalem*. 1804-20





Figure 3. Eve Tempted by the Serpent. 1799-1800

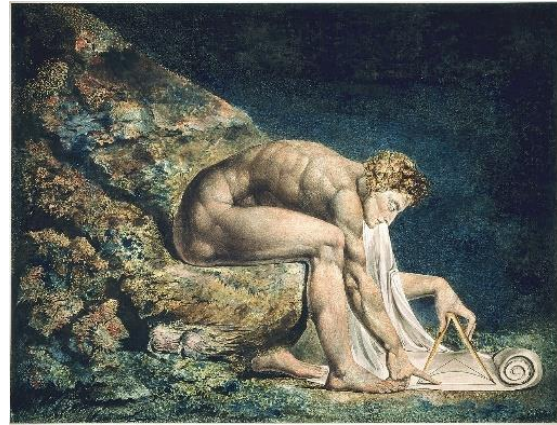


Figure 4. Newton. 1795. Collection Tate Britain



Figure 5. The Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun. 1805-10



Figure 6. The Good and Evil Angels, cca. 1790

#### Image Sources:

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5. WikiArt. Public Domain: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/william-blake/the-red-dragon-and-the-woman-clothed-with-the-sun-1805>
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**Natalia M. Fomicheva**, artist-restorer of gilding of the highest qualification, artist-restorer of works of decorative applied art, art critic, art expert, honored worker of culture, St Petersburg honorary restorer, St Petersburg, Russia.

### **Comprehensive conservation and restoration of two frames for the temple icons of the Sampson Cathedral in St Petersburg**

*Abstract:* The article is devoted to the restoration of two carved gilded frames to the temple icons of the 1760s in the Rococo style, during the work on which the techniques of conservation, restoration, reconstruction and recreation associated with the severe physical condition of the objects of church decorative and applied art received in the restoration were comprehensively applied. The study purpose was to return the expositional appearance of church objects of decorative applied art as monuments of the cultural heritage of our country. Thanks to the well-coordinated and consistent conservation and restoration processes carried out on the monuments, professional craftsmen managed to turn the shapeless, heavily polluted fragments of two frames to the temple icons back into frames. After a comprehensive restoration of two frames, it was possible to return them to their former expositional and aesthetic appearance, prolong their life and preserve these monuments of church art for contemporaries and descendants, and then place them in the temple in their former historical places, i.e., to fulfil the main task of professional restorers to preserve the cultural heritage of Russia.

*Keywords:* conservation, restoration, reconstruction, recreation, carved wooden ornamental and sculptural decor, gilding, frames for temple icons, rococo style, church decorative and applied art, silvering, gilding tinting.

**Наталья Михайловна Фомичева**, художник-реставратор позолоты высшей квалификации, художник-реставратор произведений ДПИ, искусствовед, арт-эксперт, заслуженный работник культуры, почётный реставратор Санкт-Петербурга

### **Комплексная консервация и реставрация двух рам к храмовым иконам Сампсониевского собора в Санкт-Петербурге**

*Аннотация:* Статья посвящена реставрации двух резных золочёных рам к храмовым иконам 1760-х годов в стиле рококо, в ходе работ над которыми были комплексно применены приёмы консервации, реставрации, реконструкции и воссоздания, связанные с тяжёлым физическим состоянием поступивших в реставрацию предметов церковного декоративно-прикладного искусства. Цель исследования заключается в возвращении экспозиционного вида церковным предметам декоративно-прикладного искусства, как памятников культурного наследия нашей страны. Благодаря слаженным и последовательно проведённым на памятниках процессам консервации и реставрации, мастерам-профессионалам удалось превратить бесформенные сильно загрязнённые обломки фрагментов двух рам к храмовым иконам снова в рамы. После комплексной реставрации двух рам удалось вернуть им прежний экспозиционный и эстетический вид, продлить их жизнь и сохранить эти памятники церковного искусства для современников и потомков, а затем разместить их в храме на прежних исторических местах, то есть выполнить главную задачу профессиональных реставраторов – сохранять культурное наследие России.



*Ключевые слова:* консервация, реставрация, реконструкция, воссоздание, резной деревянный орнаментальный и скульптурный декор, золочение, рамы к храмовым иконам, стиль рококо, церковное декоративно-прикладное искусство, серебрение, тонирование позолоты.

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### Introduction

The topic relevance lies in the fact that nowadays a huge number of monuments of church decorative and applied art, which lost their original appearance in the years of timelessness and persecution of religion, need competent, scientifically based conservation and restoration, which will prolong the life of these monuments and revive them for contemporaries and descendants.

The study's purpose was to return the expositional appearance of church objects of decorative and applied art as monuments of the cultural heritage of our country.

Based on the purpose of the study, the following tasks were set:

- conduct scientific research on monuments;
- pick up archival documents on the history of the creation and restoration of the monument in previous years;
- choose the most appropriate methods of conservation and restoration. as well as the sequence of restoration processes;
- realize all planned restoration measures and return the monuments to their exposition appearance.

In the study course, a comparative analytical method was applied in combination with a historical approach, both in terms of identifying the techniques, technologies and methods of work of masters of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries used in the creation of the subject, and in terms of the use of finishing materials characteristic of such works of decorative and applied art, which restorers of different professions have to work on.

When researching the history of two frames received by restoration workshops, technologies of their manufacture and finishing in previous periods, as well as documents containing information about their restorations, the researcher had to turn to two main historical documents: the “Jubilee album” of A.P. Aplaksin 1909 (*Aplaksin, 1909*) and the historical reference of Yu.V. Trubinov 1976 [8] that most fully reflect the most important aspects of the upcoming work.

In addition to text sources, photographs from 1908-1909, made by the famous St Petersburg photographer K.K. Bull, played a huge role. Technological aspects and the formulation of the old masters' compositions were studied in the books of V.A. Antsov, K.A. Kaznacheev, A.S. Nikolaev, M.K. Nikitin and E.P. Melnikova, P.P. Sumarokov, V.V. Filatov (*Antsov, 1911; Kaznacheev, 1890; Lavras, monasteries, and temples in St Petersburg, 1908; Nikitin & Melnikova, 1994; Nikolaev, 1949; Sumarokov, 1799; Filatov, 1986*), and also in the scientific works of the author of this article when developing methodological recommendations on similar monuments of St Petersburg of the 18th century (*Fomicheva, 2014a; Fomicheva, 2014b; Fomicheva, 2014c; Fomicheva, 2005; Fomicheva, 1999; Fomicheva, 1990; Fomicheva & Rayevsky, 2013*).

## Results

Two frames for the temple icons “Nicholas the Wonderworker in the Life” and “Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior” were brought to the restoration workshops from the Sampson Cathedral alternately with an interval of one year.

It was simply impossible to call the wreckage brought in bags frames. They were dirty, shapeless pieces of old wood, decrepit from time and lack of storage conditions. By the way, these fragments were listed as fragments of once gilded frames, but under the thickness of the dirt layer, no traces of the former gilding were even visible.

It would occur to an ignorant person to throw it all away and not waste time, but restorers, fortunately, are not such people. They understand the value of antiques and bring back to life even the most seemingly hopeless in technical condition monuments of decorative and applied art.

The restoration task received from the Inspection for the Monuments Protection read, “To restore the base of the frames, make up for the loss of sculptural and ornamental decor, as well as their decoration in the form of decorative gilding.”

The restorers’ team needed to understand and understand what exactly was meant by the points of this Task. To begin with, it was necessary to figure out what kind of “inheritance” the masters got and what could be done with it.

The creative team of restorers who performed this large and complex work: woodcarvers Vyacheslav Gennadievich Karabanov, Vadim Sazonov, Fufaev Yuri Ivanovich, Valery Sergeevich Antonov, Alexey Valeryevich Antonov, sculptor and woodcarver Viktor Vasilyevich Larionov, sculptor Elena Viktorovna Stepanenko, restorers of gilding Margarita Alexandrovna Zavgorodnaya and Tatiana Nikolaevna Kozhukhar, gilder Irina Yuryevna Rybalko. The head of the group was Natalia Fomicheva, an artist-restorer of gilding of the highest category, chief specialist of the company, head of the project of frames restoration for temple icons, author of Methodological Recommendations.

## Historical background

The chief specialist of the restoration company, an artist-restorer of gilding of the highest category (familiar with this monument from other works at an earlier time), first turned to the “Jubilee Album”, published in 1909, and written in the form of a detailed scientific and technical report of the period of the previous restoration in 1908-1909 in the Sampson Cathedral of St. Petersburg by the architect, author of the restoration project, Andrey Petrovich Aplaksin (*Fig. 1*).

This is a serious scientific work, one of the early 20th century documents, in which the temple restoration project author described in detail the technical condition of the monument before the restoration, explained the causes of its destruction in the absence of proper operation, heating, ventilation, stable microclimate, and even pointed out the role of the human factor and its importance for the preservation of the monument associated with the history of Russia, its victories in the Northern War, in honour of one of which, the Poltava Battle of 1709, and this temple-monument of military glory was built.

1908-1909 large-scale restoration works were timed to coincide with the 200th anniversary of an important historical event and the construction of the church in the name of St. Sampsonius, the Pilgrim, built-in 1709 by the personal Decree of Emperor Peter I.

In the report “Anniversary Album”, the architect described in detail all the restoration work carried out with justification to use various restoration methods for each type of work. The album also contained information concerning the restoration of works of church art made of wood with gilding and their restoration methods, including two frames for temple icons (*Fig. 3*).

In the archive of the scientific department of the SNPO “Restorer”, there was a “Historical reference” written by researcher Yu.V. Trubinov in 1984 on the eve of the cathedral restoration by the specialists of this scientific and restoration association. The “historical reference” was compiled based on rare archival materials and supplemented the “Jubilee Album” by A.P. Aplaksin with earlier historical information very significant for the restorers of the 21st century too. This information was necessary to understand the periodicity of restoration processes in the temple, to identify the causes of destroying wooden carved and sculptural gilded decor and its decoration in the form of combined gilding. Unfortunately, the earlier archive of the temple was only partially preserved, many important documents for the restorers were missing, since some of them died in a fire, and most of them were lost during the years of iconoclasm.

From the “Historical Reference” by Yu.V. Trubinov and the text of the report in the “Anniversary Album” by A.P. Aplaksin, restorers learned that the first wooden church, laid in honour of the victory of Russian weapons during the Battle of Poltava, held on June 27, 1709, quickly deteriorated. A new stone temple was later erected next to it, retaining its name and part of the decoration in the form of two small iconostases. The main chapel, erected later, was decorated with an iconostasis created by Russian craftsmen from traditional linden wood, possibly under the guidance of a foreign architect, whose name has still been disputed by art historians. This iconostasis was illuminated in 1740 and dates back to the reign of Anna Ioannovna, i.e., the Anninsky Baroque style.

The temple icons frames, which would be discussed, were created later, only in 1761. They were made in the Rococo style. The icons for them were painted by Yaroslavl icon painters.

These two framed icons were ordered specially for the temple by the nephew of the cathedral’s curator Mikhail Yakovlevich Lapshin-Gryaznovsky, who was engaged in the “landscaping” of the cathedral after his uncle, Ivan Andreevich Lapshin, a Yaroslavl merchant, whose efforts built and decorated this stone temple for many years. The icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* was dedicated to him, the first ktitor, and was presented to the temple. It is signed, which is rare in this genre of painting. On the reverse side of the icon, it is written, “The great icon painter Trofim Bazhenov painted this holy image of the Kostroma province of Salt Posad in 1761 on the 13th day of July.”

On the eve of the restoration, in 1908, a Jubilee Committee was created, which in turn entrusted the restoration of the temple to a member of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, diocesan architect, archaeologist, writer, civil engineer, Andrei Petrovich Aplaksin, and control over the restoration processes was entrusted to the architect-restorer, archpriest, P.P. Pokryshkin, who was also a member of the Imperial Archaeological Commission.

For these purposes, a local Scientific and Restoration Council was established on the monument, which supervised the restoration work, set specific tasks for the masters, monitored their implementation and gave its recommendations. In addition to A.P. Aplaksin and P.P. Pokryshkin, the Council included well-known specialists in various fields of restoration, architects, and historians in St Petersburg. The clergy and the entire clergy of the temple are (Fig. 1-2).

To this day, the Minutes of the meetings of these Councils, in which the tasks and the persons responsible for their execution were spelt out, have been preserved in the archive. P.P. Pokryshkin, as the curator of the temple restoration project, was at the facility every day, kept his short notes, which were also miraculously preserved in his notebook. They are written with abbreviations, and not every person will be able to decipher them if he is not connected with the restoration of monuments of such a plan. These documents are carefully kept in the fund of the Imperial Archaeological Commission of the St Petersburg branch of the Institute of World Culture, which before the revolution of 1917 was engaged in the construction and restoration of temples in Russia, including St Petersburg.

It became known from the album of A.P. Aplaksin that the work on the restoration of the main iconostasis was carried out by the master gilder Alexey Kalmykov, and the restoration of gilding on the frames to the temple icons was carried out by the French master Antonio Jessel, who had his workshop in St Petersburg at 45 Gorokhovaya Street. He was a supplier to the Imperial Court and had his trademark, which he pasted on the back of his works.

The restoration of three iconostases and all the frames to the icons in 1908-1909 was realized by thirty masters who coped with the difficult work in just seven months.

After studying the sources of information and obtaining information about what work was realized on these two frames by predecessors, masters of the early twentieth century, restorers needed high-quality illustrative material, which was revealed even earlier in the archive of film and phono-photo documents (SPBFAKFFD) in the Flour Lane of St Petersburg.

These were genuine negatives of the period of the last restoration of the Sampson Cathedral, made by the famous photographer of the early twentieth century, Karl Karlovich Bulla (1855-1929). He was a portrait painter and a well-known master of documentary photography in St. Petersburg, a hereditary St Petersburg honorary citizen. He opened his studio in 1875. In 1886, he received permission from the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the right to produce photographs outside the home, which allowed him in 1894 to establish the printing production of postcards in the standard of the Universal Postal Union. Since 1897, K.K. Bulla published his photographs in the popular mass magazine "Niva", and since 1908 – in the magazine "Ogonyok". At the same time, he opened his workshop at Nevsky, 54. K. Bulla's talent is multifaceted: he shot architectural facades, interiors, factories, shops, cars, monuments, etc. I went out to shoot anniversary celebrations (Fig. 4).

So, in 1908, at the invitation of the Jubilee Committee in honour of the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Poltava and the construction of the monument church of Sampson Cathedral, he performed a photo-fixation of the decoration of the temple, in particular its three iconostases and other church utensils, taking pictures on large-sized glass negatives, which today allowed them to get prints with the greatest accuracy, so necessary for restorers of carving and gilding. For his active participation in the restoration of the famous temple on May

25, 1910, Karl Karlovich received the jubilee medal “In memory of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Poltava”. Photographic materials on this historical and cultural monument are invaluable both for art historians and especially for restorers (*Fig. 6-7*).

One of the photos from 1908 shows a workshop of gilders who restored two frames for temple icons. It clearly shows the frames in disassembled condition and details of the carved Altar Canopy of the main altar of the cathedral. After the restoration carried out in the workshop of A. Jessel, both of the aforementioned frames to the temple icons returned to their rightful places in 1909. Photos of these two frames to the temple icons after their restoration were placed in the anniversary album of A.P. Aplaksin. They have served their service for the restorers of the 21st century as invaluable iconographic material. 95 years after that historical restoration in an extremely disrepair, the terrible and shapeless fragments of these frames were brought to the restoration workshop. It was impossible to say that these were once gilded frames because of the layer of thick dust and dirt caked over decades, which had become ingrained in the surface of the once gilded frames to the icons (*Fig. 5*).

### **Conservation and restoration of icon frames**

In parallel with scientific research and the selection of iconographic material, experimental work was carried out on the fragments of the monument on the selection of compositions, their concentration, and the technology of applying them to the surface. The masters had to decide on the sequence of work by profession, analyze all the results of the experiments, then choose the optimal solution and make “Methodological recommendations for the conservation and restoration of the foundation and decorative gilding in the form of a combined finish of two frames for temple icons.” After a short time, the studies were completed, the Methods were written and approved by the GIOP and the Customer.

The work began to boil. In the woodcarvers' workshop, all the furniture, that is, workbenches were placed along the walls to make room on the floor for the upcoming painstaking work. Woodcarvers received enlarged copies of photographs of frames from 1909 for work. They enlarged the drawings of the frames even more with millimetre paper, then reshaped the contours of the drawings on tracing paper, on which they made the contour borders of the frame in full size, and began to disassemble the fragments like puzzles, laying out the author's fragments on historical sites to determine the exact number and size of the losses of the base of the frames (*Fig. 8, 9, 20*).

To recreate the losses of carved and sculptural decor in linden wood, it was first necessary to perform models of specific losses in a soft material - plasticine. The carvers performed modelling of the loss of sculptural and ornamental decor together with the sculptors (*Fig. 27, 36-38, 42-43*).

After presenting the soft models to the commission, the missing fragments of the frames were transferred through moulding into gypsum, and then the losses in the authentic material of the monument, the wood of the linden tree traditional for this type of work, were glued together using natural fish glue (*Fig. 10, 14, 17, 25-29, 35, 45*).

The work on the most difficult detail of the frame composition – the upper leaflet consisted in duplicating the base with new wood due to the dilapidation of the historical foundation and a large number of losses. There were a lot of foundation losses, they were shapeless pieces with

oblique chips and the loss of connecting fragments of the foundation wood. It was not possible to simply glue them together because of the loss of numerous small connecting fragments. Quite a lot of fragments of carved decor were deformed because they lost contact with each other, and many fragments from the influence of dampness and temperature changes over a long period received deformations and structural destruction of the wood base such as uneven looseness and shrinkage along with the fibre.

The wood of the historical fragments was dilapidated and weak from time and lack of operating conditions, having lost all its strength characteristics, for further exposure in the walls of the temple, complete with icons painted on boards of large size and weight, it required duplication on a new basis. In connection with this circumstance, it was decided to duplicate all the frame sheets on a new basis.

The carvers prepared a veneer of linden wood of the required thickness (about 3 cm) to perform this technological operation. On a new basis, gradually complementing the missing recreated fragments of the frame to the preserved historical elements, all the leaves of the frame were collected dry, the fragments were fitted tightly to each other at the glueing sites, and only after that, the elements were glued to the new base and to each other to give the composition mechanical strength. So, all the sheets of the two frames were duplicated (*Fig. 39, 44*).

The frames had huge dimensions: (3.5 x 2.4) meters and considerable weight along with icons written on the boards. They consisted of four parts sheets each, which were fastened together with forged iron corners from the back of the frame at the corners. For the frames' suspension on the cathedral walls, special plates with forged rings were previously attached to the vertical panels, which would withstand heavyweight. All these fittings were also lost. According to the trace prints on the back of the frames, the necessary fittings were calculated and made of black metal and later installed in place during the assembly of the frames.

The restorers did not do without discoveries and finds. On the backside of a fragment of one of the frames, namely on the frame to the icon “Nicholas the Wonderworker in life”, during the restoration of the carving of the right vertical listel, a branded paper label of the A. Jessel's company was found in a very good state of preservation. We first learned about A. Jessel's participation in the restoration of these frames from the Anniversary Album of A.P. Aplaksin and the same fact was later confirmed by the company label discovered during the restoration during the work at the beginning of the 21st century. Not every job was branded, but this one - he was! (*Fig. 19*).

After the restoration of the carving and the fitting of the listels dry to each other in the disassembled state of the listels, the frames alternately entered the gilding restoration workshop to realize the conservation of the partially preserved historical ground-levkas with traces of gilding from 1909.

The gilding restorers had a difficult job to preserve the historical and make up for local losses of the ground-levkas (it was very thin and fragile), like to make up for the losses of decorative gilding associated with the loss of fragments of the base and its decorative combined gilding with glossy and matte areas combination according to the 18th-century technology, as the restorers thought before starting work on the frames.



In 1909, combined gilding was performed on both frames, which combined traditional high-gloss gilding on a polymer and matte, but this time the masters had lacquer, and not traditional glue, as in the 18th century.

Restorers were also alarmed by the fact that on the historical ground-levkas of the fragments of the front side of these frames there was no lining at all, i.e., the carving on the ground-levkas, adopted in the 18th-century decoration, and the soil, which did not allow technically to flatten the lining on it, was very thin; a thicker layer of soil was needed. The reason for its absence was unclear: was it lost in 1909 during the next restoration? Or the restorers of this period repeated the finishing of the frame that appeared before them before its restoration in 1908 when the masters removed the old levkas and replaced it with a new one due to the extremely emergency state of preservation. In the early 20th century, there was no such thing as the conservation of leucas. In case of poor preservation, it was simply removed from the parts along with the remaining gilding and applied a new primer and then new gilding was. So, the restorers of gilding had to restore the historical gilded levkas of the early 20th century, and not the author's 18th century (*Fig. 9-12, 14, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25, 26*).

The technique of conservation and restoration of both frames was similar and justified by the technical condition of the base and its finish, the presence of strong persistent surface contamination that covered both the exposed wood of the originals and the decorative finish of the ruined frame panels.

The differences in the upper listels of the frames consisted in the loss of small sculptures of angels in the upper part of the listel of the frame to the icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior*, attached to the part with the help of small hanging consoles.

However, the preservation of historical gilding on the vertical listels of this frame was better than on the frame for the icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life*.

After removing some of the light surface contaminants in the form of dust and dirt, the preservation of the historical soil with the remains of gilding was realized using a weak solution of natural mezdra [1] glue of the Extra brand, which in strength characteristics exceeds similar characteristics of sturgeon glue, and at a much cheaper price, which is important when performing a large amount of restoration work. The restoration glue was prepared according to traditional technology added the antiseptic Katamin group A-B, used in the modern restoration of levkas and gilding.

An aqueous solution of warm glue, used in the conservation process, the excess of which was removed from the surface with moistened in distilled water and well-pressed cotton swabs of medium size and density, making it possible to remove most of the strong persistent surface contaminants from the surface of the historical gilding. Additional sampling of contaminants in individual recesses of the relief was realized using enzymes that slightly moistened micro-tampons on toothpicks.

All the frame panels were not the same in their technical state of preservation. This is seen by the amount of historical gold on them after clearing the surface of the listels from persistent contamination and by the amount of replenished soil. Historical gold, after the soil conservation and removal of surface persistent contaminants, came to life and sparkled with a new lustre, as if its masters of the early last century performed only yesterday (*Fig. 35, 40, 42, 43, 45*).

Simultaneously with the historical soil preservation, a three-time sequential impregnation of the bare author's base and newly performed restoration inserts of the lost wood of the frame base was realized with the same aqueous glue solution of different concentrations.

At the junctions of the old and new wood, the joints were pasted with a cotton cloth (calico) to strengthen the joints of the multi-time base and prevent further destruction of the gilt-plated levkas during operation.

A traditional levkas was prepared from the ground chalk and an aqueous solution of the same mezdra glue "Extra". The soil in a warm form was applied layer by layer to the areas of the restoration wood with bristle brushes at intervals for drying layers. Levkas was applied to the surface of the plots just above the author's layer in height, and then almost dry, only slightly moistened with distilled water, was cut with scalpels and steel hooks to the level of the historical layer.

Shikhtanovka (skinning-grinding) of the surface of the restoration levkas was realized dry with the help of a water-resistant emery cloth of medium and fine grain. To control this operation quality, the areas of the restoration levkas were previously covered with a suspension of the pigment "ochre light" on the water in one layer. The working area surface during the mixing was constantly thoroughly dusted with a vacuum cleaner and a small medium-hardness brush (*Fig. 11, 12, 15, 21, 23, 40*).

The trace remains of the historical poliment on the preserved historical fragments, knowledge of the laws of the 18th-century style, the technologies of the old masters helped modern masters to determine the traditional areas of glossy gilding. After applying several layers of new polymer to the replenished restoration and historical levkas areas, glossy gilding with gold leaf, weighing 2.5 g in a book, polished, according to tradition, with agate teeth to the shine of cast metal, was made.

All other sections of the restoration levkas were successively coated with alcohol shellac varnish three times with drying of each layer, and then a gulfarba was applied to them. It is a multicomponent oil composition applied to areas of matte gilding before applying gold in one layer. After the appearance of the "working impression" on the lacquer layer, matte gilding with gold leaf was performed, but with the book weight already 1.25 g.

All the historical gold of the frames during the preservation of the historical soil was preserved and served as a colour standard for subsequent tinting in areas of recreated matte (lacquer) gilding. This tinting was performed on the areas of the new gold coating to match the colour of the preserved history by applying a tinted matte protective solution, which included alcohol extracts of their bark, plant roots and exotic resins (*Fig. 13, 16, 22, 24, 26, 32, 34, 41, 46*).

The matte solution was applied to the areas of new gilding on a well-dried surface, 21 days after gilding in a warm form with a squirrel flat brush-a large shovel without levelling. It is very significant to pay special attention to this operation since repeated exposure to the tinted surface can lead to the loss of the cover protective film of the matte solution and distort the colour scheme.

To protect the wood from contamination and fluctuations in air humidity, the frame backside was glued with mezdra glue and painted with a composition of the pigment "ochre light" on the same aqueous solution of mezdra glue.

Painted on wooden boards, both icons originally had niches in which small icons were previously inserted. In the hagiographic icon of St. Nicholas, there was his image of the 17th century in a small frame, which was lost during the oblivion of the temple, but the image itself miraculously survived. It was decided to recreate the frame to the preserved icon, which was done by master woodcarvers, who first made a life-size model of soft material based on a photograph of K.K. Bulla, then after its adoption by the commission, transferred this model to plaster and executed it in the authentic material of the monument (*Fig. 27-33*).

The gilding restorers, in turn, recreated the ground-levkas on natural mezdras glue and performed combined gilding with a combination of glossy and matte gilding, as it should be according to the technology of the large original frame for the icon. For the new frame not to differ in colour from the historical preserved, albeit partially, gilding of the early twentieth century, it was tinted with a coloured coating matte solution, sampled with vegetable dyes.

There was also a niche on the icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior*, but, unfortunately, the original objects were not preserved: neither the image of the *Vladimir Mother of God* nor the frame to it. In this situation, the commission decided not to restore this fragment due to the lack of historical artefacts. In such an unfinished version, the icon with a frame was hung in the main chapel of the temple opposite the icon of Nicholas the Wonderworker in the Life.

All types of work were constantly monitored and accepted by the customer and the representative of the GIOP with a high assessment of the performance of works on conservation, restoration and recreation of individual elements, about which the relevant documents were drawn up. The assembly of frames and their hanging on historical sites was realized already in the cathedral.

### Conclusion

The sculptures and wood carvings handed over to the restorers, as well as the gilding restorers of the frames for temple icons have gone through a difficult technological path: all the missing fragments of the base were modeled in soft material and filled in the authentic material of the monument made of linden wood, the base of the frames was duplicated on new wood; the historical ground with gilding was strengthened, that is, preserved, persistent multilayer surface contamination was removed, areas of local preservation of historical gilding were identified and preserved; it was also revealed local silvering under gilding on the ribbon in the lower part of the lower leaflet, this type of finish was repeated by the masters of the 21st century on this part of the frame; locally the ground-levkas was filled and locally made on it, corresponding to the historical variant, the type of decorative gilding on the polymer and the codpiece; restoration gilding was tinted to match the color preserved on the frames using a reversible matte solution with natural dyes.

The success in this work is due not only to their professional experience and skill but also to the wonderful informative iconographic material that helped the restorers to bring back to life and preserve two beautiful monuments of the history of church art of the 18th century, created by the hands of Russian serfs, preserved by the hands of restorers of the early twentieth century and almost died irretrievably in the dashing years of timelessness.

All tasks assigned to the team of restorers of various professions were carried out in full. The step-by-step photo fixation of the restoration processes shows how modern masters of

restoration artists brought two monuments of church decorative and applied art back to life from the dirty wreckage.

To the delight of the restorers, justice to these two unique 18th-century works triumphed. So, two frames, together with the icons, returned to their rightful places to delight their contemporaries and descendants with their beauty and uniqueness, to teach them a careful attitude to the work of, often nameless, masters of the past, to remember the need to preserve cultural heritage (Fig. 41, 46).

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## Notes:

[1] Mezdra is a layer of subcutaneous tissue on untreated skin, animal skin.

## Appendix



Figure 1. Diocesan architect-restorer, civil engineer, artist, archaeologist, historian of Russian architecture, writer, member of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, author of the restoration project of the Sampson Cathedral in 1908-1909 – Andrey Petrovich Aplaksin (1879-1931)

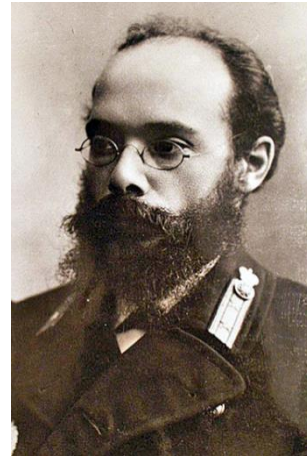


Figure 2. Architect-curator of the restoration of the Sampson Cathedral in 1908-1909, teacher, archpriest of the Russian Orthodox Church, member of the Imperial Archaeological Commission – Pyotr Petrovich Pokryshkin (1870-1922)



Figure 3. Anniversary album about the restoration of the Sampson Cathedral in 1908-1909, published for the 200th anniversary of the Victory in the Battle of Poltava in 1709



Figure 4. Karl Karlovich Bulla - portrait painter and master of documentary photography, hereditary honorary citizen of St Petersburg (1855-1929)





Figure 5. Details of the frames for the temple icons and the altar Canopy of the Sampson Cathedral in the process of restoration in the workshop of A. Zheselya. 1908.



Figure 6. The frame and the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in the Life* of the Sampson Cathedral after the restoration of 1909. Photo by K.K. Bulla



Figure 7. The frame and the temple icon *Mikbail Malein and John the Warrior* of the Sampson Cathedral before the restoration of 1909. Photo by K.K. Bulla



Figure 8. The frame for the icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* before the restoration of the foundation in the process of disassembling the disparate elements of the frame and identifying their historical places in the composition in the restoration workshop of wood carvers





Figure 9. The upper listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* before the restoration of the foundation was lost in the process of identifying their historical places in the composition of the upper leaflet of the frame



Figure 10. The upper listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after recreating the loss of sculptural and ornamental decor in the authentic material of the monument – linden wood



Figure 11. The upper listel of the frame to the temple icon "Nicholas the Wonderworker in life during restoration: local reconstruction of the loss of levkas and removal of persistent surface contamination with preservation and preservation of the historical gilding of 1909



Figure 12. The back side of the upper leaf of the frame of the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* in the process of dubbing historical fragments on a new basis and the process of recreating the lost ground-levkas



Figure 13. The upper listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after performing a full range of conservation and restoration work



Figure 14. The lower listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after the preservation of the historical run before the removal of persistent surface contamination, after the restoration of the loss of carved sculptural and ornamental decor in linden wood



Figure 15. The lower listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after the preservation of the historical run, local replenishment of its losses and removal of persistent surface contamination



Figure 16. The lower listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after a full complex of conservation and restoration work



Figure 17. The fragment is the center of the lower listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after the preservation of historical levkas and gilding, after the restoration of the loss of ornamental and sculptural wood carving



Figure 18. The fragment is the center of the lower listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* in the process of recreating the decorative decoration with a silver gilt lining on the ribbon, as an analogue of the historical decoration



Figure 19. The label of the company A. Jessel, discovered during the restoration of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* in 2004



Figure 20. The left listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* before the restoration of the base loss with characteristic strong persistent surface contamination of the base and historical gilding when identifying the loss of the composition



Figure 21. The left listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* in the process of preserving the historical levkas and local reconstruction of its losses with the control clearing of the surface from intense persistent contamination (in the center) from the historical gilding of 1909





Figure 22. The left listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after the preservation of the historical levkas, the local reconstruction of its losses and the local reconstruction of decorative gilding of two types



Figure 23. The right listel of the frame to the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* in the process of preserving the historical levkas and local reconstruction of its losses, with clearing the surface of persistent contamination of historical gilding



Figure 24. The right leaflet of the frame to the temple icon *St. Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* after the preservation of the historical gilt frame, local soil replenishment, the restoration of two types of gilding and tinting of the restoration gilding to match the color of the preserved historical



Figure 25. General view of the frame for the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* in the assembly after a comprehensive restoration of the foundation and the reconstruction of ornamental and sculptural decor. preservation of historical levkas with gilding and partial clearing of the surface of historical gilding from strong persistent surface contamination



Figure 26. General view of the frame for the temple icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* in the assembly after a comprehensive restoration of the base and decorative decoration in the form of gilding



Figure 27. Reconstruction of the lost small frame to the image of *Nicholas the Wonderworker* of the 17th century based on the photograph of K.K. Bulla in 1909. Execution of the model in a soft material



Figure 28. The transfer of the model from soft material to plaster to continue working in the authentic material of the monument – the wood of the linden tree



Figure 29. Execution of the frame to the image of *Nicholas the Wonderworker* of the 17th century according to the model in the authentic material of the monument – the wood of the linden tree



Figure 30. Reconstruction of the ground-levkas on the recreated frame to the image of *Nicholas the Wonderworker* of the 17th century. Application of primer-polymer to the places of glossy gilding



Figure 31. The execution of glossy gilding on a polymer on a recreated frame to the image of *Nicholas the Wonderworker* of the 17th century and the coating of areas of future matte gilding with alcohol shellac varnish



Figure 32. The execution of glossy gilding on the polymer and matte on the codpiece, followed by toning of the restoration gilding on the recreated frame to the image of *Nicholas the Wonderworker* of the 17th century to match the color of the icon *Nicholas the Wonderworker in Life* preserved on the large frame





Figure 33. The image of *St. Nicholas the Wonderworker* of the 17th century in a recreated frame inserted into a niche on the icon of “*Life*”, based on a photograph by K.K. Bulla in 1909



Figure 34. The frame for the temple icon after a comprehensive restoration of the base and decoration in the form of decorative combined gilding and reconstruction of the lost frame to the image of *Nicholas the Wonderworker* of the 17th century



Figure 35. General view of the frontside of the frame to the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* in the process of assembly after conservation and reconstruction of sculptural and ornamental decor



Figure 36. The upper listel of the frame to the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* before the restoration of the losses of carved and sculptural decor with losses made up in soft material-plasticine



Figure 37-38. Reconstruction based on a photograph of two sculptures of angels made in a soft material-plasticine for the upper listel of the frame for the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior*



Figure 39. The backside of the upper listel of the frame to the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* after duplicating the original carving of the 18th century on a new foundation



Figure 40. The upper listel of the frame to the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* after the restoration of the loss of carved and sculptural decoration, preservation of the historical ground with gilding, local reconstruction of the lost ground-levkas



Figure 41. The upper listel of the frame to the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* after the restoration of the loss of carved and sculptural decoration, local recreation of the levkas and locally decorative gilding: glossy on a polymer and matte, with tinted restoration gilding to match the color of the preserved historical



Figure 42. The left listel of the frame to the icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* in the process of modeling the loss of carved and ornamental decor



Figure 43. The left listel of the frame to the icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* in the process of modeling the loss of carved and ornamental decor



Figure 44. General view of the backside of the frame to the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* in the process of duplicating the base and dry assembly of the frame



Figure 45. General view of the frontside of the frame to the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* in the process of restoration - restoration of carved and sculptural decor and preservation of the historical levkas with gilding in 1909



Figure 46. General view of the temple icon *Mikhail Malein and John the Warrior* in the frame after a comprehensive restoration of carved ornamental and sculptural decor with restored gilding of two types

**Kostadin Buradzhiev**, Professor, Doctor of Musicology and Music Art, Vice rector “Learning activity”, Academy of Music, Dance & Fine Arts “Professor Asen Diamandiev”, Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

### **Bulgarian musical folklore in the creativity of the composer Ivan Spasov (in Bulgarian)**

*Abstract:* The national folklore wealth of Bulgaria is great. Today, the Institute of Musicology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences stores more than 260,000 Bulgarian folk songs, about 30,000 folk melodies, over 4,000 dance instrumental melodies, about 6,000 filmed folk dances and customs accompanied by music, the Bulgarian National Radio has recordings with Bulgarian folk music, of which 3,000 titles are authentic, unprocessed music, etc. An analysis of the works of Bulgarian composers clearly outlines their different approach in their work with Bulgarian musical folklore. Their activity, in its entirety, has significantly contributed to the development of processing and original music based on folklore. Each of the examined composers outlines his own path in the development of the genre, giving a new direction to the young composers. The study object is folklore in songwriting by the composer Ivan Spasov. The study purpose is to research some of the folklore-based songs and their significance for the development of choral art in Bulgaria. The main methods used in the study are comparative analysis and synthesis. Approach them in a theoretical-cognitive, analytical aspect, the basis of the price of synthesis between poetry and music.

*Keywords:* composers, musical folklore, compositional technique, songs for choir.

**Костадин Бураджиев**, професор, доктор по музикология и музикално изкуство, Заместник ректор „Учебна дейност“, Академия за музикално, танцово и изобразително изкуство, “Проф. Асен Диамандиев” – Пловдив, Пловдив, България.

### **Българският музикален фолклор в творчеството на композитора Иван Спасов**

*Резюме:* Националното фолклорно богатство на България е голямо. Днес в Института по музикознание при Българската Академия на Науките се съхраняват повече от 260.000 български народни песни, около 30.000 народни мелодии, над 4.000 танцови инструментални мелодии, около 6.000 филмирани народни танци и обичаи, придружени с музика, Българското Национално Радио притежава записи с българска народна музика, от която 3.000 заглавия са на автентична, необработена музика и т.н. (*Брашованова-Станчева, 1981:11-12*). Чрез анализ на творчеството на българските композитори ясно се очертава различният им подход в работата им с българския музикален фолклор. Дейността им, в своята цялост, е допринесла значително за развитието на обработката и авторската музика на фолклорна основа. Всеки един от разгледаните композитори очертава собствен път в развитието на жанра, давайки нова насока на младите композитори. Обект на настоящото изследване е фолклора в песенното творчество на композитора Иван Спасов. Цел – да изследвам част от песните на фолклорна основа и значимостта им за развитие на хоровото изкуство в България. Основните методи, използвани в изследването са сравнителен анализ и синтез. Подходите към тях са в теоретико-познавателен, аналитичен аспект, основаващ се на синтеза между поезия и музика.

*Ключови думи:* композитори, музикален фолклор, композиционна техника, песни за хор.



## Въведение

След Освобождението от турско робство, младата българска демократична общност е искала по-бързо и по-дълбоко да опознае изкуството и културата на европейските народи, вземайки всичко, което е необходимо и имащо значение в определения исторически момент. Същевременно е било и огромно желанието да се покаже на света най-голямото национално богатство – самобитната българска народна песен, многогласно претворена и обогатена от първите музикални творци, в опората на която те виждат разцвета на българската музика.

Националната, „народностна линия“ проявява забележителна устойчивост и се превръща в трайна тенденция за професионално музикално творчество. Съчетаването и със стремежа към овладяване достиженията на европейската музика довежда до създаването на майсторски образци във всички музикални жанрове, на основата на богатите ни музикално-фолклорни традиции. (Г. Попова 2005)

Обект на настоящото изследване е фолклора в песенното творчество на композитора Иван Спасов.

Цел – да изследвам част от песните на фолклорна основа и значимостта им за развитие на хоровото изкуство в България.

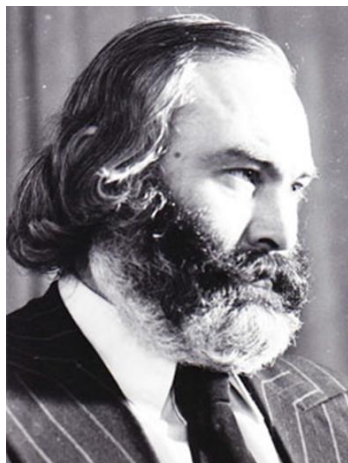
За постигането на тази цел конкретизирам следните задачи:

- Живот и творчество на композитора;
- Специфични похвати в песенното творчество на Ив. Спасов;
- Значимост на песенното творчество на композитора.

Основните методи, използвани в изследването са сравнителен анализ и синтез. Подходите към тях са в теоретико-познавателен, аналитичен аспект, основаващ се на синтеза между поезия и музика.

Композиторът Иван Спасов е роден в София през 1934 година, но трайно свързва живота и творческата си дейност с Пловдив [1]. Той е една от най-авторитетните фигури в града, ярък представител на съвременното българско творчество, и е човек, за който може да се каже, че музиката е единствено и неотменно призвание.

## Основна част



Фигура 4. Композиторът Иван Спасов (1934-1996)



Композиторот Иван Спасов е роден в София през 1934 година, но трайно свързва живота и творческата си дейност с Пловдив [1]. Той е една от най-авторитетните фигури в града, ярък представител на съвременното българско творчество, и е човек, за който може да се каже, че музиката е единствено и неотменно призвание.

Срещата му с композитора Панчо Владигеров е повратен момент в неговия живот. Обучението при световноизвестния маестро става фундамент за по нататъшното му израстване като композитор. Овладея до свършенство не толкова правилата и механизма на композиционния процес, колкото някои важни принципни позиции по отношение на творческата реализация. Личната свобода на средствата остава неограничена за постигане на виртуозна игра със звуковите комплекси и като стремеж за най-точно предаване същността на замисъла.

Втори важен момент за младия композитор се явява обучението му по композиция във Варшава при Томаш Шикорски и Кшищоф Пендерецки. Във Варшава Спасов разбира, че съвременното творчество е способността на художника да мисли в съвременни категории, да настрои своя пулс към времето, в което живее.

1969 година бележи нов момент в творческото развитие на автора, със „Събор-надпяване“ за 22 духови инструмента. В тази творба Спасов свързва още по-ясно интонационните особености на българската народна музика с развитието на композиционната си техника, в което ясно личи отношението му към фолклора, но по-скоро като национална обаятелност, като налагаща се атмосфера, отколкото трайна връзка с народопесенните интонации. Това най-ясно личи в произведенията му „Движения“ за 11 струнни (1966), „Събор-надсвирване“ (1969), „Български напеви“ (1968-1969). *„Само използването на фолклорни елементи още не прави произведението национално“* – тази своя мисъл композиторот творчески доказва през целия си живот.

Той е всепризнатият новатор при работата с фолклорния материал – използване на нови технико-изпълнителски изразни средства, характерни за съвременната българска музика; нови начини на изписване на партитурата; използване на определени по-малки или по-големи ритмични модели, върху които се пее кантиленна мелодия, която обикновено е и основният напев на песента – автентичната народна мелодия. Това ясно личи в неговите преки фолклорни образци – песните по народен текст (*„Мехметъ, сева голема“*, *„Жена-разделница“*, *„Два тъпана бият“*, *„Защо ма, майчо, не даде“*), създадени през втората половина на 70-те години на XX в. – са в пълния смисъл на думата съвременни, творчески и в същото време – дълбоко национални образци на ярка художествена мисъл.

За песните на фолклорна основа на Иван Спасов Константин Илиев пише: *„Такова, свежо, оригинално, дълбоко, неизкушено от професионални спекулации и същевременно майсторски професионално, като техника, пресъздаване на неподражаемия свят, който нашият музикален и поетичен фолклор носи, е може би най-голямата творческа победа на композитора. Вярно почувствал психологията на пеещия българин, трансформация на звука от ехото на балканите или безкрайната шир на полята, социалната сила на тази песен, сплотила и запазила нашия народ през годините на тежките изпитания, са белезите, които поставят обработките на Иван Спасов на особено място между стотиците подобни опити. С дълбокото проникване в звучащата душа на българина и много далеч, както по време, така и по техника и естетика, Спасов е друга творческа индивидуалност, друго поколение.“* (Илиев, 1981)

Неговият стилово-индивидуален универсален тип техника е алеаториката, като индивидуален начин на изразяване. Нейният основен принцип – случайността, успешно кореспондира с някои похвати от народното многогласие: хетерофония, нестабилно движение на бурдонния глас, острите секундови съчетания при диафонията и др. Разчупвайки все пак стеснените рамки на народния хор, той постига народностна звукова атмосфера посредством полифонично съпоставяне на самостоятелно и различно протичащи в метроритмическия параметър мелодически линии. Тази композиционна техника бе възприета от редица по-млади автори, които много умело я използват не само в песни за народен хор, но и произведения за народен оркестър.

Иван Спасов за първи път в българската музика на фолклорна основа (1972 г.) прилага съвременни композиционни похвати при работа с фолклорния песенен материал в песента *„Мехметъ, сежда голема“*. Той има предпочитание към народните песни с драматични текстове – *„Димано, либе Димано“*, *„Айшинко, пиля шафено“*, *„Азминко“* и др. Неслучайно драматичните солови партии често пъти звучат като оплакване. В тези песни срещаме съзнателния отказ на автора от лесните ходове, превръщането им в ритуали, драми, които провокират слушателя. *„Една рафинирана и сложна композиторска техника ни отвежда към напреднали стадии на алузията за пълно сливане на музиката с афектния говор“*, така определя песните на Спасов Ценка Йорданова (*Йорданова, 1984*). Да вземем типичното за Спасов разлагане на песенната материя (*Мехметъ, сежда голема*) на лаконични мотиви и тяхното алеаторно наслагване – метод, който се превръща в интензивна структурираща сила. Подобни похвати могат да се видят и в началните епизоди на други негови песни – *„Два тъпана бият“*, *„Жена-разделница“*, *„Защо ма, майчо, не даде“*, за разлика от *„Да ти са падни, майчу“* и *„Айшинка“*. На прегледа „Нова българска музика '84“ творбата на Иван Спасов *„Маринко, мое дощеръ“* се приема като нова страница в неговото творчество и дава повод за размишления върху третирането на народната тема в авторската музика. Затова песента е приета като нова, неочаквана за автора творческа сполука (*Тодоров, 1984*).

Посредством съвременните композиционни похвати – серийна техника и алеаторика, песните му разрешават огромна свобода по отношение на интерпретацията. Принципът на контрастност той търси най-вече в отношенията бързо-бавно, тихо-силно, статично-динамично, противопоставяне на тембри и др., и може да се забележи във всичките му песни. Самият Спасов сам определя песните си за народен хор като съвременни български хорови песни на фолклорна основа, както и това, че той не робува на *„изискванията“* на специфичното за отделните фолклорни области. *„Аз пиша музика, а не трактат – в 99% от случаите съм търсил драматико-трагичното звучене, човешката драма, драмата на отделната личност, а не нацията като цяло.“* (*Ангелов, 1994*)

Иван Спасов определя песните си за народен хор не като „обработки“, а *„хорови песни по народни текстове“* (*Спасов, 2004*). Словото, както пише изследователят на музиката на Иван Спасов Ангел Ангелов (*Ангелов, 1994:143*), е организиращ елемент в песните му. То определя и техническите средства, които са в услуга на художествените намерения на композитора. *„Винаги отделям по-голямо внимание на смисловото съдържание на текста, даже търся възлови, „фатални“ думи. Всеки език има своите особености, които композиторът е длъжен да познава, когато става въпрос за претворяването им в музиката.“*

Композиторът Константин Илиев, говорейки за хоровата песен казва, „*че след Добри Христов и Любомир Пипков, песните на Спасов са нов, трети етап в развитието на българската хорова музика.*” (Ангелов, 1994) Използването на сонорни и алеаторни похвати, импровизации, клъстери, „ехо”, полифония, достигаща на места до 12 гласа, индивидуалния композиционен маниер в творбите му „*Да ти са падне, майчо*”, „*Родо, бела Родо*”, „*Жена-разделница*” и „*Защо ма, майчо, не даде*” трудно биха го определили като автор на обработки в тесния смисъл на думата. А последната песен на композитора „*Хубава Мавруда*” би слисала всяко международно жури [2] (Фиг. 2). В тази творба авторството е надделяло над фолклорното начало.

Самият композитор признава, че не се чувства фолклорист и че не е „изучавал” научно българския музикален фолклор. И макар песните да звучат напълно естествено, фолклорно, автентичният материал, който композитора използва е минимален. Най-често оригиналната мелодия се изпява в средата на песента. Всичко останало е авторско, в характера на народната песен и характерните фолклорни прийоми. И все пак Спасов е голям познавач както на народната песен, така и на изпълнителските възможности на човешкия глас, за него той е най-съвършеният инструмент. „*Под съвършен разбирам не неговите технически възможности, не диапазона му, а способността му да изразява най-фините, най-дикретните нюанси на човешкото чувство, способността да постига дълбочина на преживяването, каквато дори и най-знаменитият инструменталист-изпълнител не може да постигне.*” (Ангелов, 1994:141) Свободата в процесуалното разлагане на звуковата идея и в боравенето с тембъра дават онази възможност за различни творчески решения. Но единствено алеаториката се свързва с мисълта му на национален композитор. Самият строеж на народната песен предполага многопластово изграждане, каквото в определен смисъл представлява алеаториката.

Изключителното творчество на композитора Иван Спасов значително изпреварва развитието на жанра на обработката на народната песен, но оказва силно въздействие със своята лична и дълбоко сакрална естетика с неотклонно постоянство и никакъв морален и творчески компромис, постоянно търсещ хармония между чисто земното и духовното, между скромността и достойнството. За първи път български фолклорни елементи съжителстват, органически претопени в една модерна форма, проведени с една абсолютно съвременна композиционна техника.

Накрая искам да завърша с думите на Иван Спасов: „*Може би последната ми композиция ще бъде само един единствен тон. Дано да бъде красив тон. Ако остане нещо от мен, от моята музика – дори една песен, една молитва – ще бъда щастлив да наблюдавам Оттам.*” (Спасов, 1995)

### Обсуждение

Националното ни песенно фолклорно наследство е огромно. Не малка част от фолклорните ни песни, обработени от най-талантливите ни композитори, станаха достояние на света чрез народните ни хорове, създавайки явлението мистерия на българските гласове. Всъщност, хармонизирането на народните мелодии като лично творчество е продължаване на фолклорните ни традиции. Развитието на жанра „Народни хорове и ансамбли“ през последните 70 години дава възможност за обширно изследване на процесите в него. Естествено изследването задължително трябва да

обхваща два компонента – българският музикален фолклор и творчеството на българските композитори. Чрез анализа на творчеството им ясно ще се очертае различния подход в работата с фолклорния материал.

### Заклучение

Песенното творчество на фолклорна основа на композитора Иван Спасов е само част от огромното му творческо. В изследването ясно се очертават основните композиционни похвати прилагани от композитора в песните му, използването на алеаторика и полифония за определено драматургично изграждане и превръщане на обработката на народната песен в авторско произведение.

Исключителното творчество на композитора Иван Спасов значително изпреварва развитието на жанра на обработката на народната песен, но оказва силно въздействие със своята лична и дълбоко сакрална естетика с неотклонно постоянство и никакъв морален и творчески компромис, постоянно търсещ хармония между чисто земното и духовното, между скромността и достойнството.

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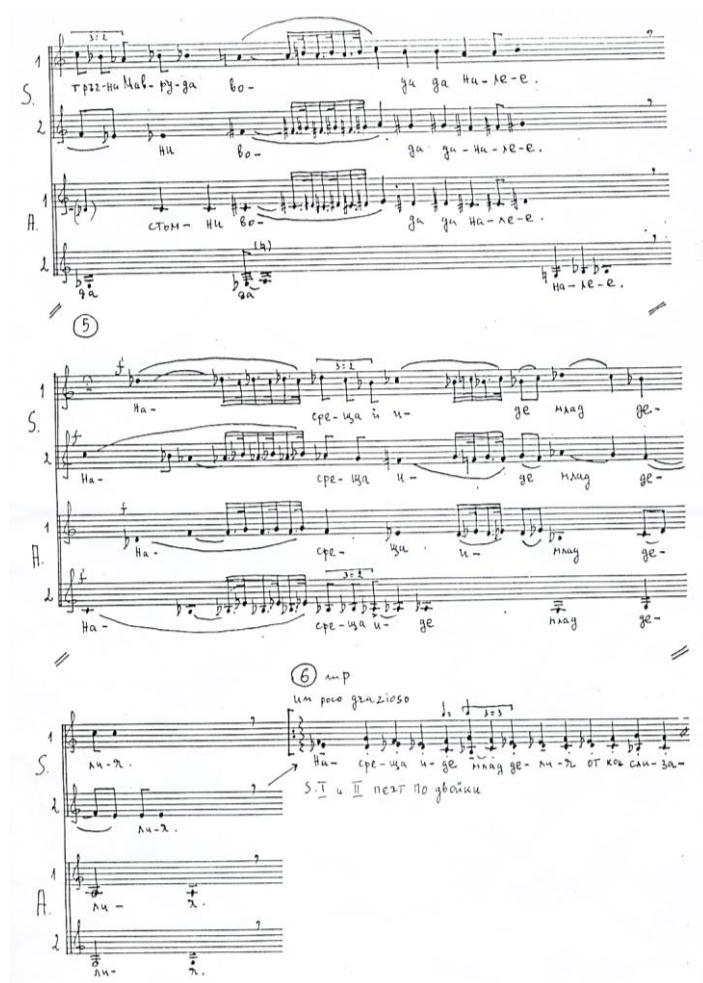
### Примечания

- [1] Вчерта. Днес” (кн. 3, 1995) на въпроса „Винаги сте стояли далеч от „центъра” – от София, от Музикалната академия в София, от Съюза на българските композитори, защо е така? Имате ли нещо против „центъра”?” Иван Спасов разказва: „Никога не съм се стремил съзнателно да стоя далеч от „центъра”. Просто животът ми се стече така. Кolkото до музикалната академия – някога, сигурно преди двадесет години, незабравимият Здравко Манолов, тогава беше декан, ме покани да водя курс по серийна техника. Проведох само две лекции, а по този повод Здравко едва не го

уволниха. И до ден днешен единствено в Академията в Пловдив се изучава тази основна за съвременния музикант дисциплина. И, с извинение, още малко по този въпрос: това, че съм стоял далеч от „центъра“, просто ме е предпазвало от безконечните котерийни борби за влияние, за мощ в Съюза на композиторите, в Радиото или Балкантон. Вместо да си губя времето в подобни боричкания, аз го използвах за самоусъвършенстване. Мисля, че сега ми завиждат за тази моя позиция. Нека им бъде простено.”

- [2] Това твърдение получи своето потвърждение на 5th World Choir Games проведени през 2008 г. в Грац, Австрия. Песента направи силно впечатление на жури и публика. Тя беше една от четирите конкурсни песни, с които се представи на този най-голям в света хоров конкурс Академичният народен хор при АМТИИ с диригент проф. д-р Костадин Бураджиев, спечелвайки първия за България „Златен медал“ и званието „Световен шампион“ в категория „Фолклор“.

## Приложение



Фигура 2. Факсимиле от песента "Хубава Мавруда"



**Luca Mixich**, PhD Assistant, Department of Visual Arts, Specialization “Photography – Video, Computer Image Processing”, Faculty of Arts and Design, West University Timisoara, Timișoara, Romania

### Exploration of Time in Jeff Wall's Photography

*Abstract:* Conceptual photography, since the 1960's, has developed a different approach to photographing than any other photographic genre. Its main focus was on the concept behind the image, on its idea. However, my aim, in this article, is to analyze a variation of conceptual photography, more precisely the narrative one, its history and aesthetics, but also how it was explored by Jeff Wall (b. 1946) and how the Canadian artist approached and integrated time in his photographs. The main purpose of this article is to understand Jeff Wall's place in the history of staged photography and to understand how he developed a creative type of visual narration and its relationship to time. This aspect will be seen in relation to the idea of fiction because the imaginary narration is closely linked with the progression of time. Also, this analysis could be particularly relevant in the context of photographic studies because it focuses on an aspect that has quite psychological and aesthetical depth but it is not present in the field of artistic academic research, namely the connection between fiction and photography. It can also be seen trans- and interdisciplinary.

*Keywords:* conceptual art, conceptual photography, Jeff Wall, time, fiction, tableau, narrative photography, staged photography, ambiguity, transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary.

**Luca Mixich**, Asistent Doctorand, Departamentul de Arte Vizuale, Specializarea Fotografie-Video procesare computerizată a imaginii, Facultatea de Arte și Design, Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara, Timișoara, Romania

### Explorarea Timpului în Fotografiile lui Jeff Wall

*Abstract:* Articolul propune o înțelegere a locului ocupat de Jeff Wall în istoria fotografia construite dar și o analiză a structurii narative elaborate de canadian și a relației acesteia cu timpul. Acest aspect va fi raportat la idea de ficțiune întrucât narațiunea imaginative, prezentă la Wall, se află într-o strânsă legătură cu ideea de progresie temporală. De asemenea, această analiză poate fi relevantă în contextual studiilor academice fotografice pentru că se concentrează pe un aspect care are o profunzime psihologică dar și estetică semnificativă dar nu este frecvent întâlnită în cercetarea academică artistică, și anume legătură dintre ficțiune și fotografie. Poate fi privit trans- și interdisciplinar.

*Keywords:* artă conceptuală, fotografie conceptuală, Jeff Wall, timp, ficțiune, tablou fotografic, fotografie narativă, fotografie regizată, fotografie construită, ambiguitate, transdisciplinaritate, interdisciplinaritate.

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### Introduction

Conceptual photography, since the 1960's, has developed a different approach to photographing than any other photographic genre. Its main focus was on the concept behind the image, on its idea. However, my aim, in this article, is to analyze a variation of conceptual photography, more precisely the narrative one, its history and aesthetics, but also how it was

explored by Jeff Wall (b. 1946) and how the Canadian artist approached and integrated time in his photographs.

Firstly, the following distinction should be made: not all conceptual photography is narrative. For instance, photographic artists such as Bernd and Hilla Becher, John Baldessari, Edward Ruscha or Andreas Gursky (just to offer a few examples) most certainly can be considered conceptual (because of their constant subordination of the image to a particular idea) but they are not developing any form of narration (ambiguous or not) through their images.

Secondly, it should be nuanced how narrative structure can manifest itself in photographic images. Henri Cartier-Bresson's "decisive moment" can be perceived as a type of photographic narration. It is formulated by the artist himself in the following manner: "the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance on an event as well as of a precise organization of forms which give that event its proper expression." (*Cartier-Bresson, 2014: 191*) This type "of story" present in the works of other modernist photojournalists like Jacob Riis or Dorothea Lange (and many others) reflects and respects as much as it can, objectively, the social and cultural reality of the photographer. There is almost no intervention in this instance, only technically and visually but not conceptually. The theory of progressive directing formulated by A.D. Coleman is particularly relevant here but will be present in greater detail in the method section and in the analysis of Jeff Wall's art.

However, on the other hand, artists such as Duane Michals, Cindy Sherman or Arthur Tress (just to name a few) explore and develop a different type of visual narration, one that is directed, constructed, with an assumed point of view. It should not be confused with the previous type mentioned before. More precisely these artists are characterized by staging their images and by elaborating a type of narration, an ambiguous one usually, because photography is not cinema or literature and it cannot develop stories using time and words. In film there are hundreds or thousands of sequences (which are themselves formed of many frames) that create a particular duration, which aims to develop a type of fiction. In theatre a story can be told by exploring both the spatial and temporal dimensions. But photography has a temporal limitation, it must limit itself to one image, or more rarely, a few images linked together, as we can see in Duane Michals or Mac Adams serialism (as a personal note, I analyzed the serialist aesthetic and these two artists in a previous article in more detail) (*Mixich, 2021*).

However, the focus in this analysis will be placed on Jeff Wall. The Canadian artist is extremely influential in the contemporary art scene. His work is both conceptual and narrative and it displays a unique and imaginative relationship with time, which will constitute the focal point of this analysis. Also quite significant is his approach to contemporary social and political issues explored in his oeuvre: feminism, racism, poverty, alienation which are constantly staged in particular ways (more precisely described in the following sequences).

## Methods

Regarding the research methods it can be remarked that in this article, I planned on using a qualitative type of research method, hermeneutics, which will be helpful when interpreting Wall's photographs, the narrative inquiry will also be helpful at this stage because an image will be interpreted according to its meaning which is connected to the depicted story. And, finally,

the historical research method will also be useful when analyzing the evolution of staged photography and Jeff Wall's place in it.

### Historical context of the staged photography

This is a complicated genre that requires a well-developed analysis, in this section, however, my purpose was to only identify the main historical and cultural points of references in relation to staged photography.

Photographic critic Erin Garcia noticed that fiction has accompanied photography almost since its inception; Robert Adamson and David Octavius Hill can be considered to have been amongst the first creators of this kind, by elaborating between 1843-1847 the series *The Antiquary* inspired by a Walter Scott novel ([Garcia, 2010:6](#)). I would add that even earlier, in 1840, can be found traces of staged photography in Hippolyte Bayard's self-portraits, especially in *Self-Portrait as a Drowned Man*.

The Pictorialist movement represents another impactful moment in the history of staged photography. They were amongst the first photographers to have put forward questions relating to the potential artistic nature of photography and its subjectivity ([Garcia, 2010:8](#)). Julia Margaret Cameron, Oscar Gustav Rejlander and Henry Peach Robinson are amongst the most prominent artists of this period, that created images using different forms of manipulation and a significant degree of staging. Seeing Cameron's *The Parting of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere* (1874) or Rejlander's *The Infant Photography Giving the Painter an Additional Brush* (1856), one can notice how the allegorical structure played an important part in the staging of these images.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the modernist "purists" of photography (like the *F64 group*) were more concerned with the intrinsic qualities of photographic language (light, tonal contrast, framing etc.) and not on the extrinsic aspects (social, political or psychological issues). They were firmly against any type of staging. However, William Mortensen is an important artist from this period that developed a unique approach to staging by combining grotesque elements with an occult symbolism.

Afterwards, at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, especially starting from the 1960's, postmodernism influenced the photographic arts strongly. All new artistic expressions, such as Minimalism, Conceptual Art, Performance Art, Land Art and so on, represented a significant influence in elevating the status of photography as an experimental art (nuanced the relationship between visual arts and photography in this period) ([Grundberg, 2021:2-3](#))

Liz Welles compared the modernist and postmodernist approaches in photography in the following manner: "Modernist theory had focused on the medium. By contrast, Conceptual Art stressed ideas. Artists were concerned to draw attention to the manner or vocabulary of expression." ([Welles, 2015:318](#)) From here the concrete origins of staged photography can be pointed, even though, as we have seen, traces of it can be observed since photography's inception, but the programmatic aesthetical origin of this genre is closely linked to this period.

Duane Michals and Arthur Tress are amongst the first ones to have actually created conceptual staged photographs. Anne Hoy defined the photographic "tableaux" as being "distinguished from other art photography and from photojournalism by their ambiguities and by their strongly personal emotional force" and that it "reveals an unabashed artifice, making it

plain that the sets were constructed in the studio” (Hoy, 1987:9). Starting from that period this genre evolved in every decade on multiple levels, aesthetically, technically, but to analyze it would take a significant amount of space and time. My aim in this section was to present the context of staged photography up until the appearance of Jeff Wall.

### **Relationship between time, narration and photographic space in Jeff Wall’s art**

Jeff Wall is an influential conceptual photographer. His approach can be characterized by combining the aesthetic of the snapshot, which consists of an apparent realism, almost documentary, and that of the staged photography, which implies a significant degree of directing. Because of his education, he has a PhD in Art History, Susan Bright identified, besides these two poles, a different one but equally important, namely the cultural one: he created a visual dialogue with nineteenth century painting (Bright, 2005:79), which was a source of inspiration, especially compositionally.

For this analysis I have chosen to analyze two of his most impactful photographs, relevant to the analysis of time and narration: *Mimic* (1982) and *After “The Invisible Man” by Ralph Ellison, the Prologue* (1999-2000).

Firstly, in Figure 1. *Mimic* (1982) Jeff Wall created a scene that seems almost documentary, both visually (actual street, regular people of different races) and conceptually (capturing an instantaneous gesture of racism) but actually it is staged. Everything is directed and rehearsed. Jeff Wall chose those particular actors by giving auditions. He was particularly attentive regarding the clothes, and most importantly the gesture. Nothing is documentary in this image, but that does not mean the social and concrete reality did not play an important role in its creation. Maribel Castro Diaz related the actual story behind this image, how Jeff Wall saw a scene almost identical to this in his hometown, in Vancouver, how he was shocked by the racist gesture and wanted to re-create it through photography (Castro Diaz, 2019:92).

As we can see the image represents three individuals, a white man, his girlfriend and an Asian man walking down on an urban street. The focus is placed on the racist gesture made by the white man, showing the middle finger in a discreet way to the Asian man, while smirking. The Asian man appears to not be aware of it or simply ignoring it.

Here comes the narrative ambiguity previously mentioned, if it were a film, the story would have been clearer. The context, the character’s motivation or attitudes would have been more precisely depicted in it but not here. Photography, because of its temporal limitation, explores narration in a unique manner. Maybe the only other artistic language close to it would be figurative painting. Charlotte Cotton had an interesting observation regarding the link between the 18th and 19th centuries figurative painting and the postmodern staged photography, mainly to how the plastic space was thought of in both instances, and to how this space plays an essential role in creating visual fictions in both of these artistic languages (Cotton, 2020:70).

Secondly, if we were to look at the second image, figure 2 *After “The Invisible Man” by Ralph Ellison, the Prologue* (1999-2000), a similar approach regarding staged photography can be found here as well, but the snapshot aesthetic has disappeared. Everything is constructed meticulously, and the purpose of it is to depict a scene from the novel *The Invisible Man* (1952) written by African American writer Ralph Ellison. Essentially, there is presented a black man with his back turned to the camera, in a room with no windows, that is strangely lit, with hundreds of light

bulbs on the ceiling. This image is actually a creative illustration and reinterpretation of a scene from the beginning of the novel *The Invisible Man*.

There, the main protagonist, a black unnamed man, through a complicated series of events, ends completely isolated from society. He finds refuge in an abandoned underground room, that has no light, no electricity and no windows. In a way it is the most suggestive metaphor for the protagonist. He is formless, because of the lack of light. There is an extremely interesting relationship constructed here, between visibility and invisibility, both socially and metaphorically. And Jeff Wall creatively nuanced it. Because the figure has its back turned on us, it becomes almost an archetypal figure, with no particular individuality, which could have represented the idea of the oppressed black man, in general.

The protagonist is invisible to society but becomes extremely “visible” because of the hundreds of light bulbs. Regis Michel wondered if the 1369 light bulbs depicted in the novel are actually present in Wall’s photography (*Michel, 2007:59*). Indeed, the Canadian artist was quite attentive to details in this regard. The lightbulbs have a significant visual weight compositionally, almost a third of the image, on the upper part, are only lightbulbs. They have an even bigger weight than the mysterious figure.

Here it is depicted a moment frozen in time but without knowing the story of the novel, the interpretation of this image would be incomplete. In it lies the syncretism of Jeff Wall, its depiction of a literary image through photographic language and techniques.

Considering everything that has been analyzed in this sequence it can be remarked that Jeff Wall, in the abovementioned photographs, tried to explore a temporal dimension in his photographs by freezing the narrative moment in a creative manner.

### Discussion

The relevance of this article is that it analyzes the syncretic relationship between photography and other arts (theatre, cinema, literature, painting) and the essential role of staged photography in this endeavor. Generally, photography, as opposed to theatre or cinema, is not syncretic, it usually focuses on its unique properties (reproducing of reality, freezing time, use of light, framing etc.) and develops them. But staged photography uses many different types of artistic languages. It can be political, psychological, erotic or metaphorical.

All of the artists that chose this genre refuse the idea that photography can only depict the most basic layer of everyday reality and the only manipulation should be that of technical or visual aspects, or as A.D. Coleman would call it, the “informational mode” (*Coleman, 1976:278*). They believe that photography can rival any other art, on any intellectual or cultural layer and they show this richness through their photographs.

Also, there is a degree of staging in product or fashion photography but it is present at a superficial layer. However, the staging present in this photographic approach is different, more similar to that of the filmmakers of art cinema, who, by filtering their personality and vision of the world, create complex and intriguing universes that bear their mark. Gregory Crewdson, Cindy Sherman or Jeff Wall can be approached in this manner (and many others as well).



## Conclusion

Finally, in this article, I have tried to emphasize the role of staged and conceptual photography in the context of contemporary arts. This type of photography is sophisticated and complex intellectually, filled with many cultural references, and reacting to contemporary social or political issues, but rarely analyzed in an academic context. This genre being so rich in allusions conceptually, visually, semantically, should lend itself well to an academic approach, in the author's opinion. I have chosen Jeff Wall because I believed that through him many of the ideas that I wanted to express can be explored.

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## Appendix



Figure 6. Jeff Wall, *Mimic* (1982),  
Lightbox, 198 x 229 cm. (Wall 1982a)



Figure 5. Jeff Wall, *After The Invisible Man* by Ralph  
Ellison, the Prologue (1999-2000), Lightbox, 174 x  
250 cm (Wall 1999a)

**Liudmila A. Voloshina**, Candidate of Philosophical Sciences (PhD), Institute of Practical Psychology  
“IMATON”, St Petersburg, Russia

### **Beauty in the visual arts as a phenomenon of perception (in Russian)**

*Abstract:* The article is devoted to the beauty topic as the central theme of art. The author considers beauty as a problem of individual perception. The idea of beauty is incorporated into our consciousness. It gives a person the opportunity to comprehend the world as a beauty manifestation, moreover, create this beauty himself. Using the example of painting, the author shows the importance of active perception of artistic work. It is an individual co-creation of the recipient with the author, in which the entire sensory, emotional, intellectual potential of the perceiver is involved. This process is presented as an activity that positively affects the mental and spiritual state of a person. The author concludes that art has an infinite potential for influencing a person since it is connected with our sensitivity since is intended to delight this sensitivity. The knowledge of beauty is contained in us both consciously and unconsciously. The whole history of human culture, since ancient times, tells us about what beauty is. It all depends on the creative individuality of both the artist and recipient, on what everyone specifically wants to get from art.

*Keywords:* beauty, painting, sensations, sense of art, aesthetic perception, empathy, artistic symbol, artistic image, perception of art, harmony.

**Людмила Александровна Волошина**, кандидат философских наук, Институт практической психологии «ИМАТОН», Санкт-Петербург, Россия

### **Красота в изобразительном искусстве как феномен восприятия**

*Аннотация:* Статья посвящена теме красоты, как центральной теме искусства. Красота рассматривается автором как проблема индивидуального восприятия. Идея красоты включена в наше сознание. Это и даёт человеку возможность постигать мир как проявление красоты, более того, самому творить эту красоту. На примере искусства живописи, автор показывает важность активного восприятия художественного произведения. Это индивидуальное сотворчество реципиента с автором, в котором задействован весь чувственный, эмоциональный, интеллектуальный потенциал воспринимающего. Данный процесс представлен как деятельность, положительно влияющая на душевное и духовное состояние человека. Автор делает вывод, что искусство имеет бесконечный потенциал воздействия на человека, так как оно связано с нашей чувствительностью, так как оно и предназначено для того, чтобы эту чувствительность улаживать. Знание о красоте содержится в нас как сознательное и бессознательное. Вся история человеческой культуры, начиная с древних времён, повествует нам о том, что такое красота. Всё зависит от творческой индивидуальности, как художника, так и реципиента, от того, что каждый конкретно хочет получить от искусства.

*Ключевые слова:* красота, живопись, ощущения, чувство искусства, эстетическое восприятие, эмпатия, художественный символ, художественный образ, восприятие искусства, гармония.

### Введение

Красота (прекрасное) – эстетическая категория, которая лежит в основе искусства. В нём всё развивается относительно этого понятия. Это центральная категория, а все остальные слагаемые эстетического представляют собой её модификации. Понятие «красота» как эстетическая категория всегда было в центре внимания мыслителей всех эпох. В контексте искусства оно могло дополняться присущими определённой эпохе особенностями. Неизменным всегда оставалось понимание его как синонима гармонии, меры. Неизменным было и отношение к этому феномену как совокупности внешнего (материального) и внутреннего (духовного) бытия. Подобная двойственность раскрывает её как, открытую нашему восприятию и одновременно трансцендентную область. Рассуждения о красоте, как эстетическом мы находим в исследованиях мыслителя античности Демокрита: «О ритмах и гармонии», «О поэзии», «О красоте стихов», «О живописи» и др. В своей теории познания, он уделял значительное место ощущениям. Как и Гераклит, Демокрит находил красоту в объективной действительности. Красота уже во времена античности понималась как совокупность внешнего и внутреннего. Талантливый человек – красив. Недаром прекрасного Аполлона окружают столь же прекрасные музы. Идея красоты заявляла о себе в греческой мысли высказываниями Платона, Аристотеля, Поликлета.

Красота человека и красота природы, то, что заметно каждому, но при этом не является чем-то отвлечённым, всегда за внешним явлением красоты сокрыто что-то внутреннее, неизъяснимое, невыразимое. В Средние века это невыразимое было связано с представлением о божественном происхождении красоты. Заложенное ещё во времена античности, представление о красоте как гармонии, целостности, пропорциональности, получило развитие в Средние века. Эстетическое созерцание красоты не было чуждо средневековому человеку, но это восприятие не было исключительно чувственным, а всегда искало сверхъестественной связи объекта любования с Богом. «Коль скоро прекрасное представляло собой ценность, оно непременно должно совпадать с благом, истиной и всеми атрибутами бытия и божества» (Эко, 2017:35).

Как бы предваряя, средневековую мысль один из Отцов христианской церкви Григорий Нисский писал о красоте человека, как о правильном и прекрасно устроенном теле, сравнивая его с музыкальным инструментом. Всё в нём разумно и обусловлено божьим замыслом. В своём трактате «Об устройении человека» он пишет о главном назначении человеческих рук и связи их с человеческим умением говорить. «Ведь если бы человек был лишён рук, то, несомненно, у него, по подобию четвероногих, части лица были бы устроены соответственно с потребностью питаться: лицо было бы вытянутым и утончалось бы к ноздрям, у рта выдавались бы вперёд губы, мозолистые, твёрдые и грубые, как это нужно, чтобы щипать траву, между зубами был бы вложен язык не такой, как теперь, а мясистый, жёсткий и бугристый, помогающий зубам пережёвывать то, что попало в зубы, или влажный и мягкий по краям, как у собак и прочих хищников...Потому если бы не имело тело рук, то как бы образовался у него членораздельный голос, когда устройство гортани не было бы приспособлено к

потребности произношения» (*Нисский, 1995:25*). Человеческие руки взяли на себя заботу о пропитании, освободив наши уста для служения слову. Человек совершенен в своём устройении, пока подобен первообразу, но всякое уклонение от него сразу открывает человеческое безобразие.

Теорию пропорций продолжили рассматривать в своих трудах Витрувий, Ченнини, Бонавентура. Красота становилась предметом исследования, который всё более пополнялся открытиями. Появился интерес к свету и цвету, как явлениям красоты в мире. Уделяя внимание внешней форме, средневековое сознание не довольствовалось только этим в понимании красоты. Й. Хёйзинга в своей книге «Осень Средневековья» соотносит ощущения человека того времени с ощущениями современного человека. «Подобное безотчетное знание присуще также и нам, и оно просыпается в такие мгновения, когда шум дождя в листве деревьев или свет настольной лампы проникают вдруг до таких глубин восприятия, до каких не доходят ощущения, вызываемые практическими мыслями и поступками» (*Хёйзинга, 1988:221-222*).

Постепенно в искусстве в связи с понятием о красоте всё более начинает внедряться чувственное начало. Проявление этой чувственности нашло выражение в искусстве Ренессанса в изображении женского тела, как олицетворении прекрасного. Все эти древние представления о красоте, как целостности и гармонии живы в нашем сознании до сих пор. Кто сегодня поспорит с утверждением св. Августина, который определял красоту как соразмерность частей тела в соединении с приятным цветом кожи? А симметрия всегда ассоциировалась с понятием правильного, красивого. Она «является той идеей, посредством которой человек на протяжении веков пытался постичь и создать порядок, красоту и совершенство» (*Вейль, 1968:37*). В данной работе не стоит задача показать, как в истории мировой культуры происходило осмысление и формирование понятия «красота». Основной целью является – показать, что красота дана человеку в его собственном внутреннем ощущении. И более того, она является не только неким представлением, некой заданностью, или следствием гармоничного воспитания, а живой энергией в человеке, взыскующей совершенного. Поиски этого совершенного в данной статье представлены в контексте изобразительного искусства.

### **Прекрасное в искусстве**

Искусство явилось в мир с определённой целью – противостоять хаосу, беспорядочности, безобразному. Даже природа, внешне прекрасно устроенная, содержит в себе это зло, которое выражено в несовершенстве бытия всего живого, в его прерывности. Страху перед смертью, скоротечностью бытия, неустроенности этого мира, как показывает вся история человеческой культуры, может противостоять искусство, которое в любом своём сюжете может содержать оптимистическое начало. И это жизнеутверждающее свойство даёт художественному произведению красота, в своём вечном стремлении упорядочить, гармонизировать, дать надежду.

Человек, устроенный как целостность, всегда искал целого и эту целостность мог обретать в искусстве. Красота, как основа любого искусства, конечно, содержится и в сознании художника. Но ей невозможно научить, как учат основам живописи, или скульптуры. Как сущность, как живая энергия, она содержится в самом мироздании. С.



Франк писал, что не человек вкладывает что-то новое в реальность, навязывая ей своё, а напротив, реальность навязывает нам себя «заражает нас». «Прекрасное (в природе и в искусстве) «говорит» нам что-то, «даёт нам знать», подаёт знак о некой тайной, скрытой, живой глубине реальности» (Франк, 1990:428). Он утверждал, что в любом прекрасном предмете нет ничего такого, что предназначалось бы только для внешнего. Внешнее всегда связано с внутренним. Мыслитель подводит нас к тому, что в данной нам красоте, уже существует выразительность. Задача искусства дать выражение предмету, то есть представить в своей полноте, законченности.

В искусстве красивое – это пережитое и одухотворённое художником. Оно предстает нам как художественное. Это художественная форма, художественный образ. А.Ф. Лосев называл художественную форму полной одухотворённостью. Художественная форма не должна идти в разрез со смыслом, сочетание их делает произведение гармоничным. «Художественный смысл произведения отличается от простого, обычного познавательного-коммуникативного своей концентрированностью, обобщённостью, инновационностью и многозначностью» (Басин и Крutoус, 2016:139). Художник отделяет эстетический элемент от случайностей, изображая характерные черты. «Красота, разлитая в природе, в её формах и красках, на картине является сосредоточенною, сгущённою, подчёркнутою» (Соловьёв, 1991:74). Для подчёркивания идеи о красоте художником могут быть использованы и противопоставления: комические, сатирические и трагические элементы. В арсенале художника все его знания, которые он использует, чтобы произведение обрело выразительность и художественную завершенность. В живописи этой цели служит сама творческая манера мастера.

### **Восприятие красоты в художественном произведении**

При восприятии художественного произведения, как объекта прекрасного, у реципиента уже имеются свои представления о красоте. Здесь речь пойдёт не об индивидуальных предпочтениях, связанных с модой, вкусами, воспитанием и пр. А о красоте, как данности, заключающей в себе постигаемое и непостижимое. Мы знаем о красоте человеческого тела, о том, что в нём красиво и привлекательно. Красивое тело воспевали в искусстве со времён античности. Особенное восхищение вызывала красота женского тела. Именно искусство способно донести до нас эту красоту в возвышенном смысле.

Однако эту грань любования красивым телом очень легко переступить. Красота и эротизм в искусстве часто соседствуют. Художник, восхищаясь красотой модели, часто выражал это восхищение с особой чувственностью. И тогда красота наполнялась страстью и уже воздействовала больше своей чувственной, а не духовной составляющей. Для создания красивого образа, привлекательного внешне, порой не требуется даже полного обнажения натуры. Определённое положение рук и тела, некоторые слегка обнажённые его части, плавные линии – всё это может вызывать ощущение красивого и чувственного. Но эта красота нас обделяющая, обманчивая, не дающая нам узнать главного о ней. В таких работах преобладает так называемое дионисийское начало, чувственное и страстное. Философ Н.А. Бердяев сказал о такой красоте – «Красота может

переходить в свою противоположность, как и всякое начало, оторванное от источника света» (Бердяев, 1993:330). Под светом здесь подразумевается божественное.

Есть в искусстве и такое понятие, как «демоническая красота». Тот же Бердяев пишет, что демоническое начало содержится не в красоте и творчестве, а во внутреннем состоянии человека. С этим нельзя не согласиться, ведь творят сами люди: и создавая, и воспринимая художественное произведение. В демонической красоте есть свой эстетизм.

Как художник, так и реципиент знают, что такое: симметрия, золотое сечение, перспектива. Такие понятия, как вертикаль, горизонталь, хоть непосредственно и не связаны с категорией красоты, но порождают в нас ассоциации, которые мы соотносим с определёнными смыслами. Эти смыслы закреплены в нашем подсознании. Так, вертикаль (ассоциация верх-низ), связана у нас с представлениями о верхе – как положительном, высоком, а о низе, – как правило, об отрицательном. Горизонталь (ассоциация левое-правое) мы связываем с такими смыслами, как: симметрия-ассиметрия, статика-динамика. Горизонталь в картине – это линия горизонта, которая задаёт определённое настроение пейзажу. Ассоциативное пространство у каждого индивидуально, но детерминировано общими для всех условиями физиологии и это тоже необходимо учитывать каждому художнику, если он хочет быть понятым.

Чувство прекрасного нашло выражение в разных жанрах художественного творчества. В портрете – оно всегда связано не только с внутренним миром портретируемого, но и с отношением к нему художника. Роль художника в донесении до нас ощущения красоты очень значительна. Здесь важны не только школа, мастерство, а сама творческая индивидуальность художника, его духовность. Внимательный реципиент всегда сможет отличить красоту от красивости, слащавости. Под видом красоты может подаваться откровенная пошлость. Только богатый душевно и духовно художник, сможет сказать о красоте в высшем её понимании.

Для передачи красоты недостаточно выбрать подходящий сюжет и подобрать соответствующую красивую форму. Важны здесь и такие качества мастера, как искренность и правдивость. Искренность – это личная заинтересованность изображаемым. Это живое участие в создании художественного образа, связанное с личными эмоциями и переживаниями. Подобное отношение всегда подкупает зрителя, заставляет верить в то, что изображено, сопереживать героям произведения. Чувство эмпатии должно быть присуще, как реципиенту, так и художнику.

В качестве примера можно привести произведения Е.Е. Моисеенко. В его картинах часто встречается образ яблони. Он настолько выразителен, что заставляет задуматься о столь явной привязанности художника к нему: яблоня в цвету, яблоня с плодами, ветка яблони и т.д. Наконец, яблоня, как элемент ряда картин, в которых неизменно присутствуют дедушка, мальчик и лошадь (рис. 1). Эта повторяемость не может быть случайной. Скорее всего – это визуализированные воспоминания детства художника, очень трепетные, пронизанные светлым чувством. И эта яблоня обретает уже не второстепенный, а глубокий смысл, становится символом – радости, счастья мирной жизни. Она здесь сродни той черешне на одноимённой картине. Там изображены бойцы, которые в перерыве между боями прилегли отдохнуть на траву и поесть черешни, нарванной в местных садах прямо в фуражку. И эта черешня – уже не еда, это – мечта-

воспоминание о прежней мирной жизни, о доме, о близких (рис. 2). И становится понятным, как драгоценны и прекрасны были эти воспоминания детства для Е. Моисеенко, когда он сам был солдатом, и постигал все ужасы войны и плена. Этот пример свидетельствует нам о той радости и красоте, которые были осмыслены и прочувствованы художником и представлены нашему восприятию в виде законченного прекрасного художественного образа.

Искренность, любовь и правдивость (это может быть правдивость чувства) – те личные качества мастера, без которых невозможен разговор о художественном произведении как о чём-то прекрасном. Соединение красоты с истиной способствует просветлению бытия.

Мы можем воспринимать как прекрасное и сюжет, в котором присутствуют вечные темы, ассоциирующиеся у нас с понятием красоты. Темы: молодости, материнства, патриотизма, детства сразу располагают к себе и отзываются в нас как что-то положительное, близкое, то, что естественным образом входит в нашу эмоциональную жизнь, то, что заложено в нас как красивое – естественное и гармоничное.

Пейзаж – жанр, который немислим без красоты. И здесь мы воспринимаем и те виды, которыми художник вдохновился, и самого художника, через эмоции, привнесенные им в данное произведение. На нас действует сама естественная красота этого мира. Она может быть окрашена индивидуальными оттенками, которые сообщил ей художник, но при этом будет узнаваема нами и, как правило, приятна глазу. В реалистической живописи мы будем восторгаться и мастерством художника, и самым прекрасным видом. В импрессионизме – теми ощущениями света и цвета, которые наполняют картину жизнью. Некоторые из нас считают красивыми: неяркие, наполненные тихой грустью, пейзажи И. Левитана, или какие-то «неприбранные» дворики А. Саврасова, мокрый луг и разбитые дороги с ясными отражениями синевы небес в огромных лужах на картинах Ф. Васильева, или покосившиеся, утонувшие в снегу старые амбары у И. Грабаря. Тогда возможно, что восклицание «красиво!» и не сорвется с наших губ, но отзовется ещё громче – в нашем сознании и в самой душе. Эта красота – в родном, в том, что нам знакомо с детства в нашем ближнем окружении, в книжных иллюстрациях, да и в самой художественной литературе. В строках А. Пушкина, С. Есенина, А. Чехова, М. Пришвина, К. Паустовского, в нашем русском фольклоре – всё это воспето и глубоко прочувствовано.

Художник, ощущая эти виды как родные, создаёт художественный образ таким, что перед нами предстаёт само чувство мастера в его визуальном воплощении. Эта художественная работа позволяет сделать обычный вид выдающимся, выразительным. Вся композиция строится таким образом, чтобы подчеркнуть, сопоставить, оттенить главное; заставить все элементы картины служить основному замыслу. И мы видим в картине И. Грабаря «Зимний вечер» (рис. 3), как великолепен снег, как сопоставляет художник его красоту, свежесть, чистоту и старое дерево постройки; как умело он соединяет и противопоставляет элементы композиции, выводя на первый план всю прелесть зимнего вечера.

Пейзаж всегда служил для художников всех эпох объектом любования и вдохновения, но художественное произведение даёт нам необыкновенную возможность:

не только полюбоваться красивым видом, но и принять участие в этом мифотворчестве, которое начато было мастером. Символика образа, его наполненность индивидуальным переживанием не выразимым до конца, даёт реципиенту такую возможность. Раскрытие этого символа, разворачивание в нас обогащает нашу душу, нашу индивидуальность, наполняет радостью открытия. Символ в художественном произведении даёт нам то ощущение чего-то непостижимо прекрасного, что становится потом невыразимым содержанием нашей внутренней жизни, его считывание наполняет нас радостью первооткрытия. А.Ф. Лосев писал, что «всякий символ указывает на некоторый предмет, выходящий за пределы его непосредственного содержания. Он всегда содержит в себе некоторого рода смысл» (Лосев, 1991:257).

Есть в изобразительном искусстве особый жанр, задача которого – изображать красивое. Это – натюрморт. Мир предметов окружает нас. Но только художник может представить эти предметы в таком состоянии, которое даёт нам полное ощущение красоты. Для того, чтобы вещи в натюрморте взаимодействовали, надо ими залюбоваться самому, найти их пропорциональную и колористическую совместимость, их взаимное друг к другу расположение. Вещь в натюрморте становится из просто вещи – художественным объектом. Та красота, которую обнаружил в ней художник, становится заметной и для зрителя.

Красота растений в натюрморте делает его выигрышным, любой растительный натюрморт, как правило, красив (рис. 4). Но как быть, например, с таким произведением как «Натюрморт с вербой» Е. Моисеенко (илл. 5), можем ли мы сказать о нём, что он красив? Да. Это красота символа, который никогда не откроется человеку невнимательному, не заинтересованному. Холод зимы за окном. В прозрачном стекле стакана – несколько веток вербы, покрытой скупой зеленью, пробивающихся клейких листочков. Всё в натюрморте не ярко, приглушённо, яркие только упругие коричневые веточки, с неумолимой силой противостоящие этому холоду. Весна близко! В этом ожидании весны, в этом ощущении, заключена главная красота – победа жизни над холодом вечности. Вербка для христианского мировоззрения – преддверие Пасхи, Воскресения Христова.

Натюрморт, как и любая живопись, может и должен содержать в себе символ. Поскольку в создании натюрморта используются обычные предметы, то это значит, что для художника – это не просто предметы, а носители смыслов. Иногда тот, или иной предмет появляется в работах мастера довольно часто. У К. Петрова-Водкина, например, это яблоки, которые представлены в картине, как нечто самодостаточное, совершенное. Натюрморт «Яблоки» – это пять яблок на красном фоне, словно рассыпанных в неопределённом порядке (рис. 6). Замечательна ткань, на которой они изображены, она вся в изломах, словно какой-то фантастический пейзаж. Яблоки здесь – главное, вполне самодостаточное и совершенное. От них почти нет теней, они словно парят над этой сияющей внутренним светом «пустыней». В этом произведении есть что-то космическое. Если взять для сравнения работу И. Грабаря «Яблоки» (рис. 7), то мы сразу заметим, как велика между ними разница, хотя оба они по-своему красивы.

В натюрморте красота – это и красота самих предметов, созданных человеком. Здесь художник даёт нам возможность разглядеть в обыденном нашем окружении красоту

простого, утилитарного. Это красота формы, которая возникла не случайно, а как осмысленная, целесообразная, проверенная временем. В народном искусстве мы можем наблюдать эту красоту и в материале. Каждый природный материал имеет свою естественную красоту – фактуру. Настоящий умелец умеет находить для неё нужную форму. Фактура – это не только поверхность того или иного материала, это наше к ней отношение. Фактура воздействует на наше сознание как архетип. Мы можем не задумываясь воспринимать поверхность дерева, керамики, камня и других природных материалов, из которых изготовлено то, или иное изделие. Более того, мы можем ощущать её, даже в виде художественного изображения, как, например, в натюрмортах В. Стожарова (рис. 8). У нас есть предрасположенность к тем, или иным природным материалам. Каждая такая фактура имеет свой неповторимый рисунок, цвет, которые могут быть задействованы художником при изготовлении изделия. И в этой эстетике заложена живительная сила природы. Эта красота естественная и простая. Простота в искусстве выступает как правдивость, как противопоставление манерности и фальши.

### **Эмпатия как постижение прекрасного**

Настоящая красота никогда не откроется реципиенту как духовное содержание, если не произойдёт эмпатии, или вчувствования. Это некий процесс одушевления художественного произведения. Эмпатия – субъективный процесс, в этом и есть психологическая её составляющая. Она всегда связана с выразительностью художественной формы. В процессе эмпатии художественное содержание становится частью воспринимающего, переживающего субъекта.

В русской философии, в частности, у С. Франка, мы находим возражение против эмпатии, как процесса, в результате которого мы вживаемся в художественную реальность и передаём ей часть своих чувств. Он утверждал, что «человеческий дух находит в эстетическом опыте «готовым», непосредственно данным в составе самой реальности черту выразительности, в которой ему непосредственно открывается внутренняя значительность, осмысленность, душеподобность реальности» (Франк, 1991:429). Человек может открыть себя этой реальности. Существует «сродство» между интимным миром человеческой душевности и основой того, что предстоит нам как внешний предметный мир. Красота представлялась мыслителю, как отблеск рая на земле, и непостижима в земном нашем существовании в полноте своей. Подобный взгляд на красоту, как понятие, в сущности своей, метафизическое, был присущ многим мыслителям XIX-XX веков. Как бы то ни было, но «эмпатия» сегодня - общепризнанная способность человека и отрицать её существование мы не можем. Скорее всего, она распространяется на ту часть нашего сознания, которая связана с нашими чувствами, и не только, поскольку чувственная жизнь влияет на нашу духовность.

Объяснить воздействие на человека художественной реальности сейчас уже могут не только представители гуманитарной науки. Пытаются понять феномен эмпатии и учёные-физиологи. Нейробиолог Семур Зеки ввел термин «нейроэстетика». Благодаря исследователям человеческого мозга, мы имеем представление о том, как процесс художественного восприятия осуществляется на физиологическом уровне. Профессор МГУ В. Дубынин в своей видео-лекции «Мозг: общие принципы нейроэстетики»



объясняет процесс эмпатии с точки зрения биологической врождённости у нас знания о красоте. Он выделяет 4 пункта, связанные с нашими физиологическими способностями, которые делают для нас произведение искусства прекрасным. Учёный представляет этот процесс как биологическую потребность человека и его мозга.

Сейчас немало учёных в области нейрофизиологии пытаются разгадать тайны человеческого мозга, который так же бесконечно загадочен, как космос. Наука ищет объяснений всему, что окружает нас в мире и тому, как устроен сам человек. Эмпирическое знание всегда считалось убедительным. Да, современные достижения учёных-исследователей мозга, открывают нам невообразимые его возможности. И все эти исследования оказались настолько серьёзными, что мы уже имеем помимо человеческого, искусственный интеллект. И всё-таки напрашивается простой и одновременно закономерный вопрос – «зачем?». Наверное, есть смысл поведать миру о том, где находятся те, или иные центры наших ощущений, использовать эти знания в медицине. Но, в целом, чувство прекрасного, о котором здесь идёт речь, не может находиться в каком-то определённом участке головного мозга, так как, – это чувство целостного в человеке. У А.Ф. Лосева можно прочесть такие строки: «Если же мы возьмём красивый букет цветов, то, рассматривая его, мы затратим вероятно, десятки, если не сотни, разного рода осмысленных актов сознания. И тем не менее букет цветов есть именно букет цветов, а не что-то иное; и чтобы понять его именно как букет цветов, мы должны затратить единый и нераздельный смысловой акт, который отнюдь не делится на акты восприятия отдельных составляющих его цветов и уж тем более отдельных свойств каждого цветка». (Лосев, 1991:267). Так и в самом акте восприятия прекрасного невозможно определить какая часть коры головного мозга отвечает за столь сложный процесс. Более того, мы имеем достаточно примеров, когда мозг может полностью противиться тому, что нам говорят наши чувства о каком-то прекрасном объекте.

Святитель Лука Войно-Ясенецкий – врач и учёный, писал «пока мы имеем сделать только одно, но чрезвычайно важное заключение: кроме обычных раздражений, адекватных нашим органам чувств, наш мозг и сердце могут воспринимать гораздо более важные раздражения, исходящие из мозга и сердца других людей, животных и всей окружающей нас природы и, что важнее всего, из неведомого нам трансцендентального мира» (Войно-Ясенецкий, 2005:40). Человек не изолированное существо, он находится в таинственной и нерасторжимой связи со всем этим. И эта связь понимается учёным как духовная энергия любви, которая всё животворит. Красота в мире и есть одно из проявлений этой животворящей энергии. Чувство красоты в человеке взаимосвязано с красотой всего мироздания, и конечно, всего человечества в целом. Индивидуальное и всеобщее в красоте и дают ту полноту и гармонию, которой ищет каждый из нас. «Мы в каком-то смысле «общаемся» с прекрасным – с красотой ландшафта или прекрасного лица, с картиной, статуей, собором, музыкальным произведением, – как мы общаемся с другом, с близким; мы усматриваем во внешней реальности что-то сродное нашей интимной глубине, нашему потаённому самобытию; и в момент эстетического наслаждения мы перестаём чувствовать себя одинокими, а, напротив, находим в окружающей нас реальности некую исконную «родину» для нашей «души», этой одинокой скиталицы в предметном мире» (Франк, 1990:428).

### **Заключение**

Вся история искусства – это, история познания красоты. Она – основа любого искусства. Не ощущая красоты, невозможно в полной мере понять художественное произведение как некую целостность. То, что мы видим, как отдельные элементы и как композицию в целом – недостаточно, для полноты восприятия. Это первая ступень. Через видимое приходит к человеку знание о мире. Но это знание не будет полным, если оно удовлетворится внешним. Через видимое, чувственно и интеллектуально мы прорываемся к внутреннему, глубинному в произведении. Красота художественного произведения – это представленный нам внешне, эстетически оформленный объект, который получает свою завершенность и полноту в нашем Я – активном, чувствующем, мыслящем, ищущем этой красоты как внутреннего содержания.

Искусство имеет бесконечный потенциал воздействия на человека, так как оно связано с нашей чувствительностью, так как оно и предназначено для того, чтобы эту чувствительность улаживать. Знание о красоте содержится в нас как сознательное и бессознательное. Вся история человеческой культуры, начиная с древних времён, повествует нам о том, что такое красота. Всё зависит от творческой индивидуальности, как художника, так и реципиента, от того, что каждый конкретно хочет получить от искусства. Есть индивидуальный вкус, желание узнавать новое, предпочтения в выборе жанров и видов, и, наконец, возможности. Можно, благодаря общению с искусством, просто разнообразить свою жизнь, впустив в неё немного красоты и гармонии. Но можно, благодаря искусству, раскрывать такие дали душевного и духовного пространства, что это станет для нас настоящим личностным приобретением. Чем богаче становится личность, тем богаче и ярче ей открывается мир, как в его данности, так и в его трансцендентности.

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## Приложения

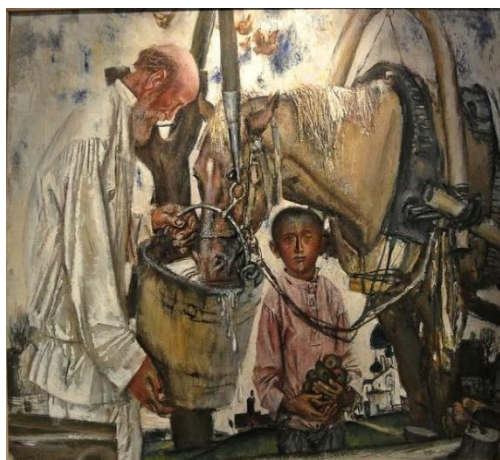


Рисунок 1. Моисеенко Е.Е. «У колодца»



Рисунок 2. Моисеенко Е.Е. «Черешня»



Рисунок 3. Грабарь И.Э. «Зимний вечер»



Рисунок 4. Васильева Е.И. «Пионы в вазе»





Рисунок 5. Моисеенко Е.Е.  
«Натюрморт с вербой»

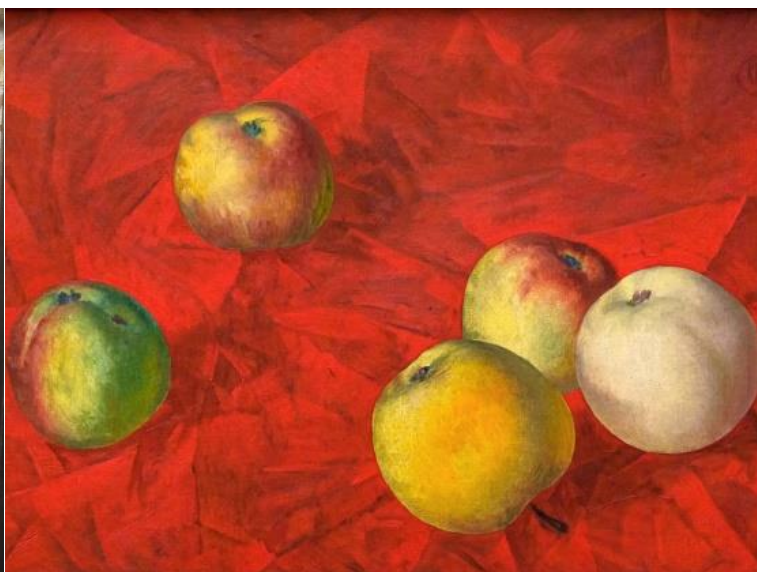


Рисунок 6. Петров-Водкин К.С. «Яблоки»

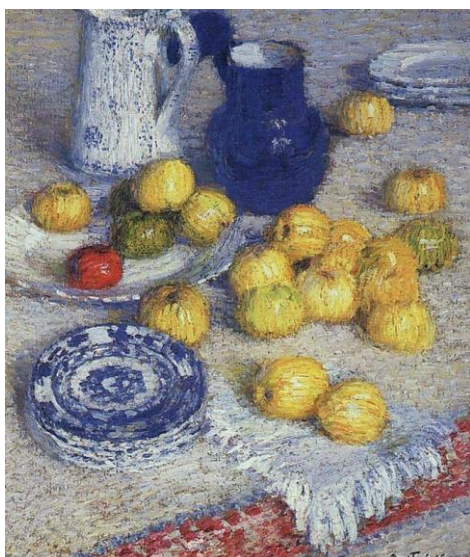


Рисунок 7. Грабарь И.Э. «Яблоки»

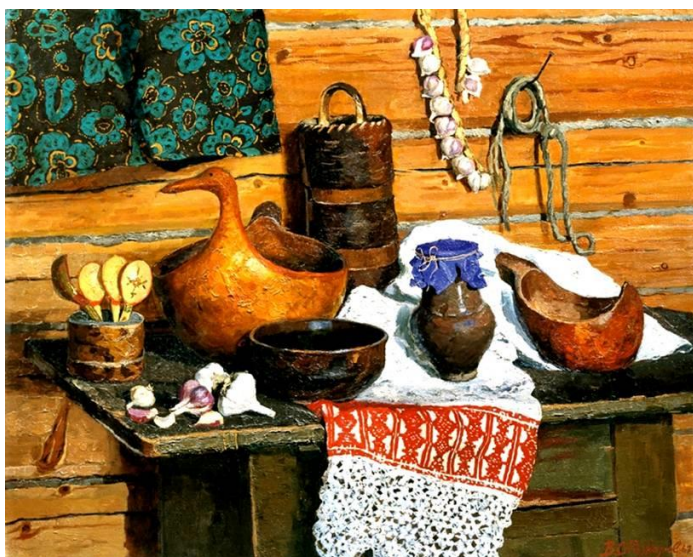


Рисунок 8. Стожаров В. «Братина и чеснок»

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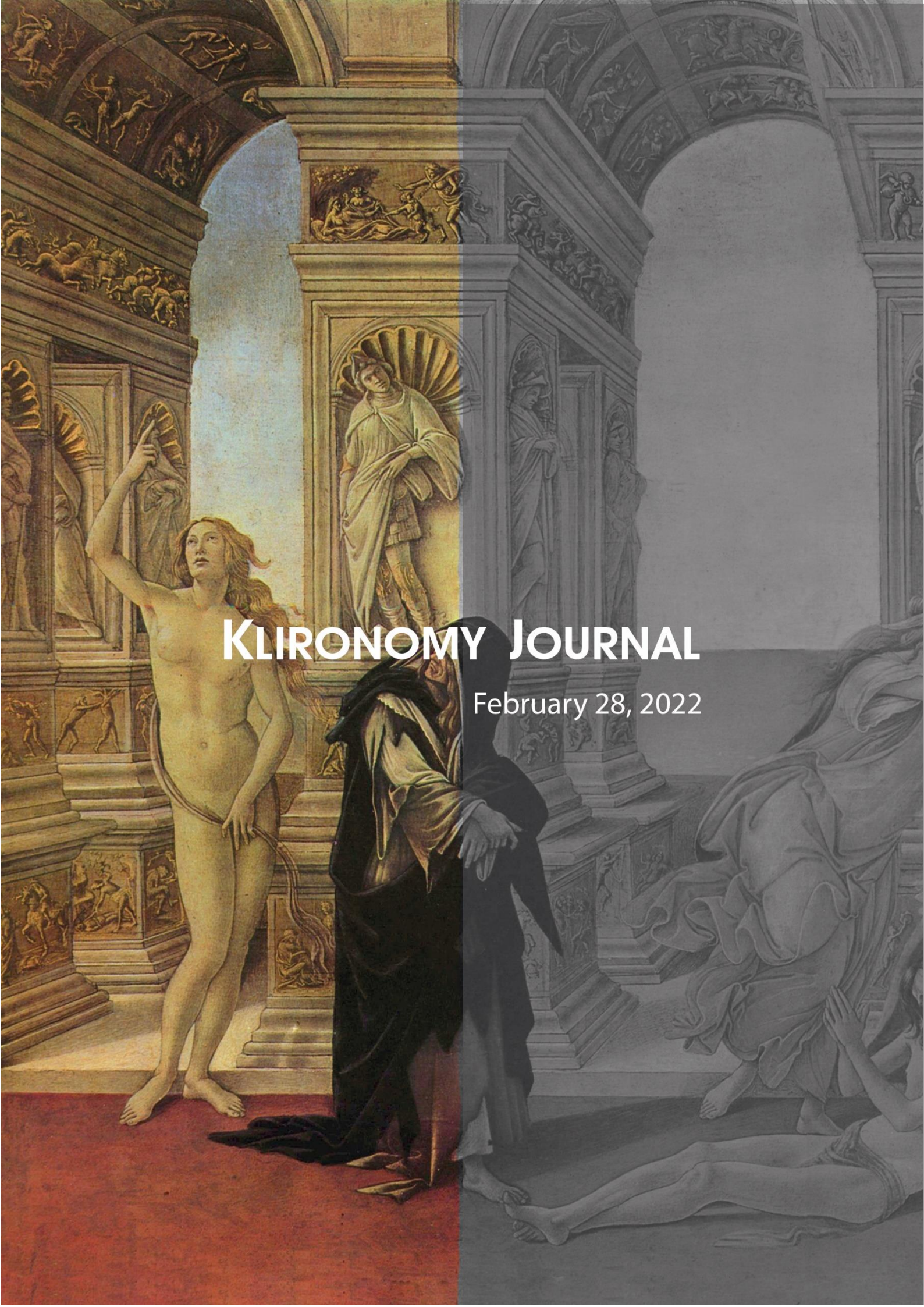
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