MEMORY AS THE SUBJECT AND INSTRUMENT OF ART STUDIES

STATE INSTITUTE OF ART STUDIES

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MOSCOW 2016

Memory as the Subject and Instrument of Art Studies. Collected articles / Compiled by E.A. Bobrinskaya, A.S. Korndorf – Moscow: State Institute of Art Studies. Moscow, 2016. 346 pp.

The collection of articles entitled 'Memory as the Subject and Instrument of Art Studies', like the conference held in October 2014 at the State Institute of Art Studies, was largely inspired by the works and ideas of Dmitri Vladimirovich Sarabianov (1923–2013). His book 'Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory' (Moscow, 1998) and the idea expressed therein of profound or hidden traditions in art that 'may be characterised as an awakening of memory that most often occurs unconsciously' have become the point for departure for discussing a broad range of important problems in the culture of the early modern and contemporary age in an interdisciplinary context. These collected articles by Russian, European and American academics touch upon very significant issues linked to the problem of memory in culture: memory and the mechanisms by which art functions; archives, museums and collecting as strategies of memory; etymology, migration and the transformation of subjects and images in Russian art of the early modern age; amnesia and the destruction of tradition; the theory of memory as a philosophical concept and its influence in art; memory and the methodology of art studies.

© Portrait of Dmitry Sarabianov made by Tatiana Ignatova-Vesel (begining of 2000s) is used in the design of the frontispiece.

Contents

Aby Warburg

The Absorption of the Expressive Values of the Past[1]

Introduction by
Matthew Rampley

Warburg's Introduction to the Mnemosyne Atlas offers the most extensive outline of the basic concerns that motivated his work, from his doctoral thesis published in 1893 until his death thirty-six years later. Little of this was made explicit in the writings he published; his 1920 essay on the use of astrological woodcuts in the Reformation comes closest, perhaps, to offering a programmatic statement of the ideas informing his historical theory of culture (Kulturwissenschaft)[2]. In general, his published articles are more notable for their marshaling of large quantities of historical source material-images, personal letters, wills, journals, poetry – rather than for any engagement with sustained theoretical reflection. The Mnemosyne Introduction in contrast presents a sequence of ungrounded speculations about social memory, the origin of artistic expression and the psychological drama driving the history of European culture from classical antiquity onwards.

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[1] Translated by Matthew Rampley.

"Einleitung" written in German c. 1926–1929. First published in: *Der Bilderatlas "Mnemosyne"*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000 (a second edition published in 2003).

See the original text of this article at: http://ace.caad.ed.ac.uk/VARIE/files/ait_warburg.pdf

[2] Warburg A. *Pagan-Antique Prophecy in Words and Images in the Age of Luther* // Warburg A. *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity* / Trans. David Britt. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999. Pp. 597–698.

At the heart of Warburg's "Mnemosyne Atlas" is the attempt to spell out what it might mean to apply the aesthetic ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche to the understanding of visual imagery. Warburg attempted to distance himself from the superficial appropriation of Nietzsche that had become increasingly common following the latter's death. However, the basic outline of Warburg's Kulturwissenschaft is fundamentally Nietzschean; for both writers the reading of classical culture is oriented around the meaning of the Dionysus–Apollo duality. They are also both concerned with the legacy of classical antiquity for the present; Nietzsche believed he had found a source of aesthetic redemption of the present in the rebirth of tragic drama and, in his early writings at least, identified this with the operas of Wagner. This he opposed to the Socratic culture of ancient Athens, which lay at the root of modern scientific inquiry. For Warburg it was the Apollinian dimension of classical culture, its values of self-control, rationality, and its sublimation of primal trauma into symbolic myth, that was to be emulated.

Warburg's reading of Nietzsche was enriched by an immersion in ideas derived from empathy theory, contemporary anthropological thought, evolutionary theory, the study of mythology, and biological conceptions of memory. The Apollo–Dionysus opposition was thus redescribed in terms of the contrast between the maintenance of rationalizing distance and empathic absorption in the objects of perception. As he states in the opening to the Introduction, it is the maintenance of Apollinian distance that constitutes the emergence of culture, and this implies distance not only towards the percepts of the present but also towards the inherited collective memories of the past. It was a central aspect of his theory of culture that the conflicting responses to the legacy of classical antiquity, and the psychic energies sustaining them, directly informed the expressive styles of the visual arts, from the realism of Burgundian and Netherlandish art to the heroic forms of the Italian High Renaissance.

Many of the ideas Warburg explored were also being explored by other art historians of the period. In his doctoral thesis Heinrich Wölfflin had attempted to apply empathy theory to the understanding of architecture; the opposition of distance and proximity had been translated by Alois Riegl into the duality of optical and haptic vision[1]. A concern with the origins of art was also

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[1] Wölfflin H. *Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture // Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873–1893* / H.F. Mallgrave and E. Ikonomou trans. and eds. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1994. Pp. 149–190; Riegl A. *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts* / Trans. J.E. Jung. New York: Zone Books, 2004.

a common preoccupation for art historians of the late nineteenth century, and was frequently informed by concepts from contemporary anthropology[1]. The originality of Warburg's thought lay in his combining all these different strands, which he coupled with a theory of social memory, to form a historical anthropology of the Classical tradition. In this sense the more speculative aspects of his thinking were highly unorthodox, and stood at odds with the disciplinary norms of Renaissance art history of his time. This undoubtedly explains why his far-reaching speculations, though substantial in quantity, were almost entirely restricted to the unpublished notebooks he had compiled since the late 1880s; only occasionally does one gain a glimpse of these thoughts in the texts he submitted for publication.

In the final years of his life he clearly decided finally to order his speculative ideas and to present them to the public; although the Mnemosyne Atlas was incomplete at his death, it was his intention that it should be published, and this project occupied his final years from 1926 until 1929 when he died. It was planned as a series of annotated plates illustrating the transformation of classical myth and imagery as documents of "the stylistic development of the representation of life in motion in the age of the Renaissance". The format of the pictorial atlas was an established practice; one of the most widely read art historical publications in the nineteenth century was Ernst Seeman's picture atlas used for schools, which appeared in numerous editions[2]. Warburg's Atlas differed, however, in that it did not straightforwardly document the history of Renaissance art, but rather traced the migration of classical symbols across space and time, charting the changes in function and meaning they underwent in the process. In keeping with his deeper speculative thinking, the examples he chose were not meant to demonstrate stylistic developments but rather the evolution of human cognition and its shifting systems of spatial and temporal orientation; examples ranged from ancient Greek cosmology to contemporary newspaper reports on the airship Hindenberg. Such a vast project explains, perhaps, why he never arrived at a definitive version of the Atlas. The edition published in 2003 represents the most coherent version of the work, but there remain numerous drafts and variants of both the plates and also the Introduction[3].

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[1] See, for example: Grosse E. *The Origins of Art*. New York: D. Appleton, 1928 (First published in 1894).

[2] Seeman E. *Kunsthistorische Bilderbogen: für den Gebrauch bei akademischen und öffentlichen Vorlesungen, sowie beim Unterricht in der Geschichte und Geschmackslehre an Gymnasien, Realund höheren Töchterschulen zusammengestellt*. Leipzig: Seeman, 1879.

[3] Warburg A. *Der Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*. 2 Ausg. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003.

If Warburg's inability to complete the project was a reflection of its massive scope, it also indicated his difficulty in finding a satisfactory language to describe it. The tortured syntax and complex sentences of the Introduction betray the extent to which he was constantly wrestling with the resources of the German language, and present an extreme challenge to the translator. The same can be said of his choice of vocabulary, in which he exploited the ability within German to form compound nouns to the full, creating novel expressions that can often only been rendered in English by means of lengthy circumlocutions. In part this was a particular stylistic trait of Warburg's writing, and can also be observed, albeit to a lesser extent, in his published works. In part, however, it was a reflection of Warburg's intellectual development. Although the Introduction was written in the late 1920s, it relied on the same intellectual sources – Nietzsche's theory of tragedy, Richard Semon's account of memory, and Tito Vignoli's ideas of myth – that had first propelled him into the study of the Renaissance in the late 1880s. Warburg's ideas had since outstripped his original sources, but he also remained peculiarly bound to them, and in particular he allowed himself to be governed by their same conceptual vocabulary. The language of the Introduction thus represents the conflict between Warburg's attempt to summarize his project on the one hand, and his reliance on an inadequate set of terms on the other. The fields of aesthetics, psychology, and mythology had undergone enormous changes between the 1880s and the 1920s, but Warburg seemed oblivious to such conceptual and terminological developments. The Introduction therefore presents the reader with an argument the tenor of which, in its emphasis on the fragility of subjectivity, the psychological dynamics of the visual symbol, and the semantic variability of the image, is strikingly contemporary. Yet it also seems to be backward-looking, rehearsing debates from forty years previously. As such it provides a succinct image of Warburg in general. On the one hand, a scholar immersed in the values of nineteenth-century bourgeois humanist learning, on the other, an intellectual whose preoccupations still have a resonance for the present.

The conscious creation of distance between oneself and the external world can probably be designated as the founding act of human civilization. When this interval becomes the basis of artistic production, the conditions have been fulfilled for this consciousness of distance to achieve an enduring social function which, in its rhythmical change between absorption in its object or detached restraint, signifies the oscillation between a cosmology of images and one of signs; its adequacy or failure as an instrument of mental orientation signifies the fate of human culture. In a peculiar way

recollection, both collective and individual, comes to the assistance of the artist oscillating between the religious and the mathematical world view. Although it does not create intellectual space unqualifiedly, it does nevertheless strengthen the tendency either to tranquil contemplation or to orgiastic devotion, which comprise the extreme psychological poles of behavior. It establishes the lasting legacy of memory, yet not as part of a primarily protective tendency. Rather, the full force of the passionate and fearful religious personality, in the grip of the mystery of faith, intervenes in the formation of artistic style, just as, conversely, science, with its practice of recording, preserves and passes on the rhythmical structure whereby the monsters of the imagination guide one's life and determine the future. Those seeking to understand the critical stages of this process have not yet made fullest use of the way recognition of the polarities of artistic production, of the formative oscillation between inward-looking fantasy and outwardlooking rationality, can assist possible interpretations of documents of the formation of the image. Between the imagination's act of grasping and the conceptual act of observing, there is the tactile encounter with the object, subsequently reflected in sculpture or painting, which we term the artistic act. This duality between an anti-chaotic function, which can be termed thus because the artwork selects and clarifies the contours of the object, and the demand that the beholder should gaze in cultic devotion at the idol that has been created, creates the human intellectual predicaments that should form the proper object of a scientific study of culture that takes as its subject the illustrated psychological history of the interval between impulse and rational action. The process of de-demonizing the inherited mass of impressions, created in fear, that encompasses the entire range of emotional gesture, from helpless melancholy to murderous cannibalism, also lends the mark of uncanny experience to the dynamics of human movement in the stages that lie in between these extremes of orgiastic seizure – states such as fighting, walking, running, dancing, grasping – which the educated individual of the Renaissance, brought up in the medieval discipline of the Church, regarded as forbidden territory, where only the godless were permitted to run riot, freely indulging their passions. Through its images the "Mnemosyne Atlas" intends to illustrate this process, which one could define as the attempt to absorb pre-coined expressive values by means of the representation of life in motion.

   On the basis of its images it [the Mnemosyne] is intended to be first of all an inventory of pre-coined classical forms that impacted upon the stylistic development of the representation of life in motion in the age of the Renaissance.

   Such a comparative analysis has had to restrict itself to the examination of the complete oeuvre of a few principal artistic types, especially because there is a lack of systematic general preliminary works in this field. Instead it has had to attempt a more deeply penetrating examination of social psychology, in order to grasp the sense of these expressive values preserved in the memory as a meaningful function of the intellect.

As early as 1905 the author was helped in such efforts by Osthoff's writing on the nature of the superlative in the Indo-Germanic language: in brief he demonstrated that a change in the word root can occur in the comparison of adjectives and conjugation of verbs. Not only does the conception of the energetic identity of the intended attribute or action not suffer, even though the formal identity of the basic lexical expression has fallen away; rather, the arrival of an alien root achieves an intensification of the original meaning.

A similar process can be ascertained, mutatis mutandis, in the area of the language of gesture in art when, for example, the dancing Salome from the Bible appears as a Greek maenad, or when a female servant carrying a basket of fruit in Ghirlandaio rushes by in quite conscious imitation of the Victory of a Roman triumphal arch.

It is in the area of mass orgiastic seizure that one should seek the mint that stamps the expressive forms of extreme inner possession on the memory with such intensity – inasmuch as it can be expressed through gesture – that these engrams of affective experience survive in the form of a heritage preserved in the memory. They serve as models that shape the outline drawn by the artist's hand, once the extreme values of the language of gesture appear in the daylight through the formative medium of the artist's hand.

Hedonistic aesthetes win the cheap approval of the art-loving public when they explain such formal changes in terms of pleasure in the extended decorative line. Let anyone who wishes content themselves with the flora of the most beautiful and aromatic plants; this will never, however, develop into a physiology of the circulating, rising sap of plants, for this only reveals itself to whoever examines the subterranean roots of life.

Prefigured in the sculpture of antiquity, the triumph of existence, in all its shattering contradictoriness between the affirmation of life and the denial of the self, confronted the souls of later generations, who saw it in the form of Dionysus in the orgiastic whirlwind of his followers on pagan sarcophagi, or of the triumphal procession of the Emperor on the Triumphal Arches of the Romans.

In both there are symbols of the mass movement of followers of a ruler; but whereas the maenad brandishes the goat, torn apart in madness, in honor of the god of intoxication, the Roman legionaries deliver up to Caesar the decapitated heads of barbarians like the tribute due to an ordered state (just as on the reliefs the Emperor is celebrated as the representative of imperial welfare for his veterans).

Indeed, the Colosseum, just a few steps away from the Arch of Constantine, grimly reminds the Roman of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance that the primal impulse to sacrifice humans had imposed its cult site on pagan Rome, and even up to the present Rome continues to present the uncanny duality of martyrs and the victory laurel of the Emperor.

Medieval church discipline, which had experienced a merciless enemy in the form of the deification of the Emperor, would have destroyed a monument like the Arch of Constantine, had it not been possible to preserve the

heroic acts of the Emperor Trajan, supported by reliefs added later, under the mantle of Constantine.

Even the Church had managed to lend the self-glorification of the Trajan relief Christian sentiment, by means of a legend that was still alive in Dante. The famous story of the pietà of the Emperor towards a widow who was pleading for justice is probably the subtlest attempt at transforming imperial pathos into Christian piety, through the energetic inversion of its meaning; the Emperor, bursting out of the inner relief, becomes an advocate of justice, and bids his followers halt, because the widow's child has fallen under the hoofs of a Roman rider.

To characterize the restoration of antiquity as a result of the recent appearance of a factual consciousness of history and carefree artistic empathy, remains an inadequate descriptive evolutionary theory, unless one is at the same time prepared to descend into the deep human spiritual compulsion to become enmeshed in the timeless strata of the material. Only then does one reach the mint that coins the expressive values of pagan emotion stemming from primal orgiastic experience: thiasotic tragedy.

Since Nietzsche's time it has no longer been necessary to adopt a revolutionary attitude in order to view the character of antiquity through the symbol of the double-headed herm of Apollo–Dionysus. On the contrary, when looking at pagan art, the superficial daily use of this theory of opposites makes it difficult to take seriously the role of sophrosyne and ecstasy as a single, organic functional polarity that marks the limit values of the human will to expression.

The unhindered release of expressive bodily movement, especially as it occurred amongst the followers of the gods of intoxication in Asia Minor, encompasses the entire range of dynamic expressions of the life of a humanity shaken by fear, from helpless melancholy to murderous frenzy, and in all mimetic actions, which lie somewhere in the middle, as in the thiasotic cult, it is possible to detect the faint echo of such abyssal devotion in the artistic depiction of the actions of walking, running, dancing, grasping, fetching, or carrying. The thiasotic hallmark is an absolutely essential and uncanny characteristic of these expressive values as they spoke to the eye of the Renaissance artist from the sarcophagi of antiquity.

The Italian Renaissance sought now to absorb this inherited mass of engrams in a peculiar, twofold manner. On the one hand it offered welcome encouragement for the newly liberated spirit of worldliness, and gave courage to the individual, struggling to maintain their personal freedom in the face of destiny, to speak the unspeakable.

However, to the extent that this encouragement proceeded as a mnemic-function, in other words, had already been reformed once before by art using preexisting forms, the act of restitution remained positioned between impulsive self-release and a conscious and controlled use of forms, in other words, between Dionysus and Apollo, and provided the artistic genius with the psychic space for coining expressions out of his most personal formal language.

The compulsion to engage with the world of pre-established expressive forms – regardless of whether their origin is in the past or the present – signifies the decisive critical moment for any artist intending to assert their own character. It was recognition of the fact that until now this process had been overlooked, despite its unusually wide-ranging importance for the stylistic formation of the Renaissance in Europe, that led to "Mnemosyne", the images of which are intended, most immediately, to present nothing but a traceable inventory of pre-coined expressions, which demanded that the individual artist either ignore or absorb this mass of inherited impressions surging forward in this dual manner.

The decisive phase in the development of the monumental style of Italian Renaissance painting is reflected, with the symbolic clarity that only real history grants us, in those artworks from pagan and Christian times connected to the figure of the Emperor Constantine.

From the reliefs of Trajan on the Triumphal Arch that bears the name of Constantine, even though only a few reliefs are from his time (cf. Wilpert), there emanates the imperial pathos that granted universal validity to the language of gesture of subsequent generations by means of its intoxicating and captivating eloquence, before which even the finest pioneering works of the Italian eye had to forfeit their right to claim a leading role amongst their followers. The Battle of Constantine by Piero della Francesca in Arezzo, which had discovered a new, unrhetorical greatness in the expression of inner human emotion, was, as it were, trampled under the hoofs of the wild army that comes galloping towards us on the walls of the stanza in the guise of the Victory of Constantine.

How could the language of artistic form stand idle in this way in the vicinity of Raphael and Michelangelo? The fact that the pleasure in the grandiose gesture of classical sculpture led, when it encountered the newly awakened sympathy for archaeological authenticity, to the intrusive dominance of the dynamic pathos formula all'antica, offers a merely aesthetic explanation for the vehemence of such a process. The new gestural language of pathos from the world of pagan forms was not simply drafted into the studio with the acclaim of the subtle eye of the artist or of a sympathetic, discerning taste for the antique.

Rather, the characterization of the pagan world as the world of clear Olympian form was extricated after a period of powerful resistance that stemmed from two different forces which, despite their anticlassical barbarism, could rightly regard themselves as the faithful and authoritative guardians of the inheritance of antiquity. These two masks, of quite heterogeneous origin, which hid the clear outlines of the world of the Greek gods, were the surviving monstrous symbols of Hellenistic astrology, and the world of antique forms *alla francese*, which appeared in the bizarre realism of the play of facial expressions and costume of the time.

In the practices of Hellenistic astrology the clear, natural pantheon of the Greeks was bundled together into a gang of monstrous forms, impenetrable

and grotesque hieroglyphs of fate, which awoke human religiosity and which had to be the forceful demand of an age that, in relation to the style of its outward appearance, demanded that the rediscovered word of classical antiquity should be visible in organic form.

The second unmasking to be demanded of pagan antiquity was directed against an apparently more harmless disguise, the realistic costumes *alla francese*, which is how the demonic figures of Ovid or the greatness of Livy's Rome appeared in Flemish tapestries or book illustrations.

Cultural history (art history) is admittedly not used to seeing the depictions of classical antiquity in the practices of the Orient, the courts of the North, or the Humanism of Italy, as equal components in the process of the formation of the new style. It is not acknowledged that the astrologers, who correctly recognized Abu Ma'shar as faithfully preserving the tradition of Ptolemy's cosmology, could claim, with right, that they were the painfully loyal guardians of tradition, just as the learned advisors of the weavers and miniaturists in the cultural circle of Valois might believe—whether they had good or bad translations of classical authors in front of them—that they were resurrecting classical antiquity with painful fidelity.

The force of the entry of the classical language of gesture can thus be explained indirectly as a result of the dual demands of this reactive energy, which sought the reproduction of the clear expressive values of antiquity, free from the fetters of a tradition that lacked consistency.

If the formation of style is accordingly understood as the problem of the exchange of such expressive values, then we are faced with the imperative of examining the mechanics of transmission underlying the dynamics of this process. The era between Piero della Francesca and the School of Raphael is an epoch of the international migration of images

between North and South; its elemental violence affecting both the force of its impact and the scope of such migration, is hidden from the European historian of style by the official "victory" of the High Renaissance in Rome. Due not only to its mobility but also its technique, which fitted the multiple reproduction of its image, the Flemish tapestry is the first, albeit colossal, vehicle for mobile images, which, freed from the wall, served as a forerunner of the printed illustrated page (in other words, the copper engraving and the woodcut) that for the first time made the exchange of expressive values between North and South into a vital part of the process of circulation that shaped the formation of European style.

Just one example illustrates how forcefully and extensively these image-vehicles imported from the North penetrated the Italian palazzo: around 1475 the walls of the stately residence of the Medici were decorated with some 250 continuous meters of Flemish tapestry depicting life from ancient times and the present, lending it the longed-for sheen of courtly and princely splendor. Yet alongside them a less conspicuous kind of art was already showing itself, hiding its inner superiority as a force in the formation of style beneath its modest appearance, in the form of inexpensive images on canvas. They made up for their lack of material value

with the novità of their mode of expression. It was on such canvas images that Pollaiuolo's play of gestures, free of the knightly armor of Burgundy, could present the deeds of Heracles all'antica in all its ravishing enthusiasm.

This is accompanied with a longing for restitution rooted in the primal realm of pagan religious feeling. For were not the Hellenistic star signs symbols of an eschatological raptus in caelum, just as the tales of Ovid that transform humans back into matter correspondingly symbolize the *raptus ad inferos*? The tendency to reproduce the language of gesture in clear outline, which only *seemed* to be purely a matter of artistic appearance, led, by its own inner logic, bursting out of its chains, to a formal language that was suited to the submerged, tragic, stoic fatalism of antiquity.

Thanks to the marvels of the human eye the same fluctuation of the emotions has stayed alive in Italy for later generations, outlasting the centuries, preserved in the rigid stone sculpture of antiquity.

In works of architecture (for example, the triumphal arch, the theater) or artistic representations (from the sarcophagus to coins) the pictorial language of gesture, frequently reinforced in verbal inscriptions by the language of the word that addresses the ear, forces, by means of such memory function, and through the ineradicable force of its expressive character, a repetition of the full range of human emotion in its tragic polarity, from passive suffering to active triumph.

The affirmation of life was celebrated in triumphal sculpture in all its pomp, while the legends on the reliefs of pagan coffins presented by means of mythic symbols the desperate struggle for the ascent of the human soul to heaven.

The strength with which such anticlerical elements could imprint themselves is demonstrated by the row of over twelve sarcophagi embedded in the wall of the stringboard of the stairs of S. Maria Aracoeli, which were permitted to accompany the pious pilgrim ascending into the church like dream images from the forbidden region of unholy demonic paganism.

This contradiction in the external expression of self-consciousness demanded that the gaze of the waning Middle Ages, absorbed in its object, engage in a parallel ethical confrontation between aggressive pagan feelings of personal identity and those of Christian humility.

One of the truly artistic creative events of the period of the so-called Renaissance was that as soon as it saw the depiction of human life in motion as its task, the dramatic, clear, contours of the individual gestures of the victorious classical figures from the era of Trajan, which gained ascendancy over the indistinct epic masses of the epigones of Constantine, became the object not only of feeling, but were immediately circulated as exemplary and canonical pathos formulae in the formal language of the European Renaissance from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

Donald Preziosi

Memory and amnesia:
the essential interrelation of art and religion

To even raise the question of the "relationship between" what are customarily distinguished in modernity as *art* and *religion* is to have already answered the question, because the answer is in the words themselves: a presumption of their distinctiveness and autonomy, that each is a *kind* of thing requiring an account both of the way each exists *in itself* and the way each is linked to the other.

However, because two or more notions are verbally juxtaposed does not necessarily create a genuine relationship, despite the efforts of politicians, propagandists, or advertisers of cars, vodka or shoes. The art historian and theorist Hubert Damisch once commented upon what he termed the "false simplicity" of such conjunctions; what he called "two uncertainly defined terms...coordinated in service of a demonstration, usually of an ideological nature", because such linkages, depending upon the circumstances, might signify union as much as opposition, connection as much as exclusion.

But what about the juxtaposition of art and religion? I will argue that this relationship may be more than circumstantial or accidental, but is a genuine one and *esssential*. This is because each term in the equation – art, artistry, artifice, or materiality, (on the one hand); and religion, religiosity, spirituality, or immateriality (on the other) – has been historically so much a part of what constitutes the *other* as to deeply challege the very idea of each as *autonomous* or ontologically distinct.

My point is that the relationship between what we call religion and art is so fundamental as to trouble the autonomous existence of each *except in relationship to its other*. Each as the other's shadow or ghost; the ghost in the machinery or constitution of the other. In other words, each term in the equation is the mark of a *differential relationship*. What is termed art, then,

is not a "thing" but a distinct *type of relationship between* things, ideas, or phenomena. Distinct, that is, from the kind of relationships marked by religion.

But how then should we characterize such relationships? If each is a different process or method of relating or using things (potentially, any thing), they may better be termed *artistry* and *religiosity*, to foreground the *performative* aspect of each and *de*-emphasize their reification or thingness.

There is a linguistic analogy to such processes. For example, the concept of the *phoneme*, where the 'meaning' of a single sound is to *mark differences* from other phonemes, other markers of difference. The meaning of the sound of the Russian "ts" is to mark its difference from others such as "sh" so as to differentiate larger units such as words, that are directly significant. In other words, indirectly meaningful sounds that *in combination* build or 'ground' more *directly-significant* phenomena (morphemes, words, syntactic structures, sentences, texts...).

Are the connections between what we designate as art and religion uniquely different than any others that we might juxtapose, for example art and science, or religion and politics? Is any such marking of an ontology *deponent;* that is, incomplete, and significant mainly insofar as it reflects upon the entire set of phenomena which may be claimed to be more than circumstantially or randomly connected? What exactly would justify a claim – such as the one made by this paper – that art and religion have a uniquely special relationship? Or is it that this juxtaposition is systemically similar to others, but at a deeper level?

My title also juxtaposed *memory* and its presumed antithesis, *amnesia*. What exactly does art have to do with amnesia? Isn't art a cure for amnesia; a remedy for forgetting, and not its cause? It might seem obvious that artworks – or more generally, humanly-made artifacts – preserve the memory of things occurring in the recent or distant past. Artifacts would seem to be constant reminders of events, phenomena, and experiences. Constant and persistent, to be sure, but also mutable and context-specific.

The general concern here is with the latter: the mutable and contingent nature of *both* art and religion. All such problems come into clearer focus when we look at them from the perspective of one particular modality of signification; one modality of meaning-making that I will refer to in shorthand as _theism_, which I use to signal an *equivalence* between phenomena. Where X = Y in any situation, *independent* of context. However, as I will argue here, any equivalence is defined in relation to other non-equivalent connections. So: What does all this mean when applied to the question of art's relationship to religion, or memory's relation to amnesia? Consider the following.

In her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, the philosopher and social critic Hannah Arendt (b.1906) famously observed in 1951 that the aggressiveness of totalitarianism lay less in its lust for power and more in an ideologically-driven _desire to make the world consistent_. That is: to make the world orderly, homogeneous, and *pure*. More orderly than it currently appears.

Even if deconstructing and transforming the world as it now seems might involve marginalizing, banishing, expelling, or even murdering persons or peoples perceived as *im*pure, whoever and wherever they may be, and on whatever grounds they may be staged as undesirably *other*.

The problem with this is that othernesses are not only external but *internal*: constituting what in myself I distinguish or bracket out as other. I'm reminded here of the words of Alexander Solzhenitsyn: "...the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of *every* human being. Who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?" he said. The uncanniness of this is strikingly manifest when reckoning with or trying to account for the phenomenon of self-sacrifices of one's life – A particular kind of suicidal action that is increasingly common today, especially in societies (and not only in the Middle East) dominated by *mono*theistic variants of theist versions of that form of art we call religion.

Consider especially the *martyrdoms* – literally, acts of "witnessing" – performed in the name of a transcendent divinity, spirit, force, or being. I mean the very *idea* – that is, precisely, the artistry or artifice – of a god. A cosmological *theatricality* concerning what the poet William Butler Yeats, in his remarkable poem *Sailing to Byzantium*, aptly called "the *artifice* of eternity" into which we shall all "be gathered" at death.

The philosopher and cultural critic Simon Critchley, in a recent book called *Infinitely Demanding*, investigating the ethics of political and religious commitment, and drawing on Hannah Arendt and other authors, argued that in modernity the political order of the nation-state came to be staged as social cartography, cultural mapping, and psychological ordering. What is crucial here is the artistry of *staging* or theatricality. He took as a salient example Martin Heidegger's 1933 inaugural address as Rector of the University of Freiburg, in which he divided the university student body into three types of projected community service: work-service, war-service, and knowledge-service (*Arbeitsdienst, Wehrdienst, Wissendienst*). In fact, this civic-psychic multifunctionality was directly modeled on Plato's three-fold division of the "soul" of the ideal citizen 2500 years ago in his utopian dialogue *Ta Politeia*, or "[Concerning] Civic Matters" (known in English as "*The Republic*"). Heidegger's lecture was delivered 3 days after joining the Nazi party.

The important point however is that this is *not* unique to Nazism. For Critchley, politics and democracy were two names for the same practice. Democracy is not a *kind* of thing; nor is it fixed or immutable, nor is it even the practice of social *consensus*. Democracy is more fundamentally the practice of what he calls *dissensus* – what might more explicitly be termed *critique*. By which I mean specifically the crafting or fabricating of an awareness of the contingency, mutability, and artistry or artifice of the social and political realities promoted and policed by the nation-state or community or ethnic group as "natural" – commonly involving the militarization of civic life. The practice, in other words, of totalitarianism.

But, if democracy is an ongoing process or practice, then in relation to what other practices would it be understood? To what is it staged as antithetical? While one might answer: practices such as aristocracy, plutocracy, kleptocracy, or oligarchy; more fundamentally, democracy is antithetical to *theocracy* or theocratic politics. Which means, technically, in semiotic terms, a *fixity* of signification and the a-historical juxtapositioning and putatively permanent alignment together of signifiers and signifieds. In other words, a *totalitarianism of belief*; the *policing* of signification and its affordances and opportunities.

Historically, in many if not most totalitarian polities this has commonly involved the staging of *shame*: shame associated with and publically manifesting or confessing one's own imperfections and inadequacies. The shame that has played a central role in expressions of martyrdom, both ancient and modern, eastern and western. One classic manifestation of self-shaming in the early Western Christian tradition was St. Augustine's account of his revulsion and abhorrence of his own body, the reaction to an earlier life of excess and promiscuity. Augustine, it may be recalled, articulated and promoted (1500 years before Freud) the notion of "original sin" as an innately negative and permanent quality of human personhood as such.

Of course the feeling of shame is neither uniquely Augustinian, or Western, or even Christian, nor is it limited to the other Middle Eastern monotheisms such as Islam or Judaism. Indeed, it is not uncommon in many religious communities around the world. It is exemplified in East Asia in the Aum Shinrikyo of Japan, or in South Asia in Mahayana Buddhism. Nevertheless, shame is most powerfully embodied and realized in societies in thrall to the phantasmagoric artistry of monotheist institutions. This is powerfully seen in the actions of the jihadist terrorists behind the suicidal destruction of 11 September, 2001 in New York, whose explicit aim, as stated by one of its organizers, the 32-year old Egyptian architect Mohammed Atta, himself on board one of the flights, was *to initiate a new series of religious wars*. Wars that have multiplied and whose devastations, displacements, and genocidal atrocities have strikingly accelerated over the past decade and a half, especially with the recent growth of what has been proclaimed as an Islamic State (IS, ISIS, or ISIL) and the projected revival of a Muslim "caliphate." The staging of which is being done in direct relationship to what it creates *as its antithesis*, the 'Dar al Harb;' the house or zone of the rest of the (non-Muslim) world. The house of war; that world staged as that which must be destroyed in order to *purify* the world. An act of artistry similar to what some in Muslim Africa refer to as "Boko Haram," or western ideas subject to censure and erasure.

Jihadist acts are self-proclaimed *acts of destruction and simultaneous self-immolation*, done in the name – that is, the artistry – of the transcendental purity and supreme perfection of a *divinity*. An artistry staged as if it were *not* artifice, *not* theater. As the theologian and psychologist James Jones observed recently, this commonly entails crafting an *image*

of a vengeful, demeaning, patriarchal, absolutist divinity: one eliciting individual and collective obedience, submission, and purification.

In terms of art, what is going on here? What exactly is a *religious* artifice or artwork? I'm going to give a name to such an entity using the ancient Greek technical term used exclusively for *statues of gods having innate power:* an _agalma_. It is what psychoanalytic theorist and master semiotician Jacques Lacan once referred to as the "*objet petit a_*": the *aporia* at the heart of semiosis, the still center around which revolves the world of signs. A sign that is *not* a sign. The "little a" stands for agalma.

This uncannily recalls the notion of that Christian ceremonial object, the _eucharist,_ the piece of bread that at a singular ceremonial moment comes to be equal or identical to what at all other times it would symbolize or merely "*re*-present:" the body of the divinity. An act which in its *determinacy* ironically simultaneously calls attention to the relationality and contingency of *representation*. These very issues were explicitly elaborated upon in the 17th century by the French linguist-theologians of Port-Royal, whose semiotic theory postulated a universe of contingent signs incorporating, as its enabling center-point, a sign that was *not* a sign and *non*-contingent: the *eucharist*. In scientific terms, this resembles the kind of massive black hole of *antimatter* said to be at the center of galaxies, and around which all galactic *matter* revolves.

I referred a moment ago to the formal or institutional solicitation of self-sacrifice. Making a sacrifice literally means making (something or someone) sacred. Self-sacrifice, furthermore, entails a *proactive nihilism* explicitly articulated *not* as "suicide" – which most monotheisms see as cowardly – but as a dramatic *witnessing of the inadequacies of the self* – in the face of what that imperfection is the underline negative index of. Which is, specifically, the perfection of an absolutely transcendent and unattainable Real; the artistry of the absolute and completely transcendent purity of the idea of divinity. What the Greek Orthodox theologian Christos Yannaras once called "the absence and complete unknowability of God." Entailing what in Eastern (Greek) Orthodox theology is termed *apophaticism*: positive knowledge of god obtained *by negation*; by declaring all that the god is *not*.

Lacan argued that art is the most explicit staging of the impossibility of desire gaining access to its final object. Manifested as the artifice of determination within indeterminacy. Indeterminacy's *interior other*: Its _theatricality_. Those incorrectly called in the contemporary media "suicide bombers" are in fact performing the monotheist ritual of *sacrificing the imperfections of their own selves* so as to manifest, reveal, or witness precisely what that inadequacy is the _antithesis_ of: the purity and absolute perfection of god. A supremely semiological act of self-knowledge as self-re-creation or re-birthing through the staging or theatricality of self-erasure.

Where impending *invisibility* (death) is made *visibly legible* as an affirmation of life. Such an act is structurally akin in some societies to making a woman's body invisible by veiling or concealment; precisely in order to *make visible* her "purity." An *allomorph* or analogue of female genital

ex-cision (clitorectomy) as a negative index of sexual purity. Itself reso-nating with male genital alteration or *circum*-cision, the removal of a fore-skin and, in Jewish monotheism, its *transference* by replacement on the head and left arm as a *phylactery* – a square leather box containing a piece of skin (or paper) inscribed by a fragment of sacred text. The artistry of ab-sence as a witness of future power. There are many examples of the staging of an absence in a place to negatively make visible what is gone, missing, or removed, such as a particular ethnicity: recall the deliberately empty section of Daniel Liebeskind's Holocaust Museum in Berlin, signifying the city's absent and removed Jewish population. Many comparable exam-ples of this mode of artistry can be cited.

The subtitle of my talk – *Plato's Dilemma* – referred to Plato's patent am-bivalence in reaction to what he saw as the inconsistencies, incoherencies, and the very palpable messiness of his own social world: the *direct democ-racy* of the classical Athenian city. He proposed *banishing* (despite their obvious attractions and pleasures) the representational or mimetic arts of theater, sculpture, and painting, because they had the power to serious-ly trouble or disturb the allegedly pure and ordered selves or 'souls' of citi-zens. Art is *dangerous*. But exactly how and why?

Plato's solution to the danger – what he called the holy fear or divine ter-ror (*theios phobos*) of art – seems (from a modern perspective) strikingly disingenuous. His cure lay not in something entirely different, something beyond or external to artistry, for he was supremely aware that all that we call reality is social fiction and illusion – that is, artistry. His cure was in *better* art: meaning that which *coherently and consistently* echoed, reflect-ed, and re-presented the greater order of the universe; the cosmos. To some extent this resembles what we would consider today a cure by *inoculation* – using a serum derived from what poisoned you to build up a resistance to that illness. Plato's therapeutic semiology. Reforming and reconfiguring Athens was the *more coherent artistry* of a theocratic utopia, ruled by a phi-losopher-king purportedly in synch with divinity. There are not a few con-temporary similarities. For example, the actions of the psychopathic geno-cidal thugs and gangsters of ISIS or the 'Islamic State' (IS / ISIL) whose ultimate aim is to transform the whole world to be consistent with a lit-eral reading of the Qu'ran. The aggressiveness of Islam (literally mean-ing "submission") is precisely that echoed in Hannah Arendt's words quot-ed earlier – to make the world *consistently and homogeneously ordered or pure*. Requiring the sacrificing of all that is deemed impure or disorderly, by whatever means – banishment, conversion, or death.

Such a projected action is echoed in many societies at many differ-ent times and places. To take but one example, ISIS's mirror-image eth-nic-cleansing cousins in the Israeli colony in Palestine, whose ongoing ter-ritorial appropriations and displacements of indigenous populations were "authorized" by the convenient fiction: the artistry of a *gift* or endowment of a tribal god, Yahweh. A material world *secured* by its link with immateri-ality; a theological "get-out-of-reality-free" card.

Plato's text *Ta Politeia* voiced a deep ambivalence about the *uncanniness* of art – its paradoxical ability to simultaneously create *and* potentially problematize the hegemonic political and religious powers imagined to be materialized, embodied, or merely "re-presented" in and as a people's forms and practices. Plato's dilemma was essentially this: art itself deeply *de*stabilizes and renders indeterminate and mutable seemingly secure oppositions between fact and fiction, history and poetry, reason and emotion, the sacred and the secular, materiality and immateriality. Contrasts that are revealed or made apparent as the circumstantial, contingent, and mutable products and effects of artistry.

What artistry creates, then, is *both* a "second world" (a heterotopia) alongside the world in which we live, *and* the very world (*topos)* in which we *do* live. It is *both illocutionary and perlocutionary*: creating *and* declaring or presenting that of which it speaks. An illocutionary act is akin to what Derrida once called *mythomorphism*. The holy fear or terror Plato claimed art induced in the souls of citizens was the terrifying awareness of precisely this paradox: that works of artistry don't simply imitate or reflect but rather create and open up the world. Art *realizes* worlds.

Art consequently *really is dangerous*, because it makes available to common understanding that *what we take to be reality is a work of art*: "the fictions of factual representation," as the historian Hayden White once phrased it. Art is terrifying not only theologically but politically, precisely because *it makes it possible for ordinary citizens to <u>imagine the world differently</u>*. Other than what their rulers would wish (or command) them to believe as real, natural, fixed, and true. Nothing could be more deeply threatening to those holding or desiring power than these two things: (1) that reality really is a fiction, and (2) that it can consequently really be <u>changed.</u>

There is what I'll call a *Praxitelean* impulse shared by politics and theology: the drive to *erase* the marks or traces of their construction; their artistry. The *fine art of artlessness*, in other words – an essential feature or quality of any political hegemony, and especially, to recall Hannah Arendt again, any totalitarian or theocratic power. The motivation of which, of course, being to forestall the need to even think about discussing what is already claimed to be fixed and sacred and eternal. Any political system concerned with the organization and management of daily life would thereby *seem* to be securely grounded and legitimized not merely (if at all) in discourse, discussion, or parliamentary negotiation, but in effectively juxtaposing or *tethering* materiality to immateriality; the physical to the metaphysical; the palpable to the virtual; the world you see to an allegedly "more enduring" (albeit invisible) world of transcendence. That cosmological realm that is *apophatically* the antithesis of whatever is palpable.

Plato's solution to his own dilemma, voiced two and a half millennia ago, has been replicated in theocratic and totalitarian polities ever since. And of course Plato's dilemma is absolutely contemporary: Consider the rhetorical logic of the antithetically-grounded theatricality explicitly articulated a decade ago by Joseph Ratzinger, the (currently emeritus) western

Christian pope Benedict XVI. Benedict was a champion of the arts, and he strongly argued for their importance and indeed their *utter necessity*. But they were essential precisely <u>because</u> *their very imperfections and impurities were legible* apophatically; as *negative indexes*, powerfully eliciting an unquenchable desire for the antithetically perfect, the pure, the fixed, the eternally immutable and immortal; the god.

Jacques Derrida once observed that it was "a divine teleology that secure[d] the political economy of the fine arts." But Derrida's assertion was incomplete, for it conjured up its ghostly obverse; its antithesis, as equally cogent: that it has been aesthetics, or artistry broadly construed, that has always secured or grounded the political economy of religiosities, or 'divine teleologies.' In the most general sense, art and religion are *inextricable* epistemological processes; that is, <u>variant positions</u> taken on putative relations between objects, entities, and individual or collective subjects.

In conclusion, I trust it will have been clear that these brief remarks were intended as much interrogatively and hypothetically as they have been presented as assertions and theses. One stands in astonishment in the face of what such theatricalities; such art, has wrought in very real suffering, death, and destruction in so many societies around the world. Any hope for redemption in all this is what I've tried to weave into these remarks from the outset in the references made to the diverse writers I've cited. The texts and authors I've touched upon create an epistemological, philosophical, semiological and indeed an *ethical* trajectory or teleology, which I might call a <u>*theological semiography*</u>. Which I'll voice here again, finally and simply, as the courage to confront the truth of fiction *as* fiction; the real as artistry and artifice: the uncanny home we as social beings have been fabricating forever as reality's very real fiction.

Art permits us to see fiction *as* fiction; to see with eyes wide open the fictiveness or contingency, the stagecraft; in short, the artistry of the world. As the poet Wallace Stevens put it in a text he called "Opus Posthumous," *The final belief is to believe in a fiction, which you know to be a fiction, there being nothing else. The exquisite truth is to know that it is fiction and that you believe it willingly*. I've been suggesting that art and religion are semiotically *imbricated* – manifestations of *alternative signifying processes* nnthe distinction between a sign and a sign that is not a sign. Between – in terms explicitly used in the 13th century AD by Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica* – <u>*adequation*</u> and <u>*equation.*</u>

What I've dealt with here was the paradox of *representation* itself, of which *theism* was its simultaneously most alluring <u>*and*</u> most terrifying mode of artistry. Which is why, as I said at the beginning, art and religion exist *primarily* in their interrelationship, and why memory is truly *both* "the subject and instrument of art."

Valery Podoroga

Explosion and Cutting Edge
Need for Kairos

Modernism / Avant-garde /
Post-modernism. Problem revisited

1. In the early 1990s Dmitry Sarabianov made several important points regarding the *temporal limitations* of the concept of avant-garde. He identified the fundamental difference between avant-garde as something *innovative,* something that *renewed* art in the early 20th century, and a *trend* that had its history and temporal framework. But there is a third aspect, namely the very ability to discover something *new*. Perhaps, it is necessary to single out the very moment of novelty and put it in the fore-ground in the current of time. The avant-garde artist comes into his own at the cutting edge of time, he is ahead of time, its advance gesture... Of course, this cannot last long: the collecting and saving function of memory creates pivots for shaping ever new traditions. Here is what Sarabianov wrote:

"Masters of the middle and second half of the century drew on the im-mediate traditions of their predecessors, the avant-garde artists of the 1910s-1920s. That was why their art ceased to be in the vanguard. The quest for 'other' traditions that today's masters are preoccupied with has also become an exercise in recapping. This does not mean that art has nothing more to do, that it has stopped in its tracks and cannot dis-cover anything. It does discover new things and will continue to do so, as did artists of the 17th or 19th centuries. However, creative endeavour has lost its innovative character. Although it seems to comply with many of the conditions formulated above, some of the important criteria are missing. The very combative spirit of many new trends has been borrowed

and moulded into a tradition. Its mechanism is well oiled. It has become a norm, a canon handed down from without, which is inherently at odds with the avant-garde principles."[1]

Of course, we can call "avant-garde" anything that breaks out of tradition (aesthetical custom or earlier canon) in any way. Then all the principal figures of 20th century art are avant-gardists, i.e., innovators "going to the brink of the time", risk-takers, experimenters, anarchist-provocateurs, rejectionists, iconoclasts, etc. Such definition is very limited because it addresses only one aspect, that of values, and even that chosen arbitrarily. But if we break down avant-garde art into individual trends (with differentiation focussing on differences between *techniques* rather than philosophies or politics), we will altogether lose the intuition to see art periods as a single whole.

2. The differences become obvious as soon as we choose the *will for the total artwork* (Gesamtkunstwerk) as our criterion. Modernism is absolutely infatuated with it and does not see anything in art that would not strive for one thing only, the creation of a perfect work of art. Isn't there any continuity between two types of aesthetic impact: one that **_Modernism_** of the late 19th – early 20th centuries sought in trying, starting with Nietzsche/Wagner and Baudelaire/Mallarme, to produce an artwork that would implode the world into itself and "devour" reality? At that time the idea of the *absolute, or total artwork* was the standard of the ultimate creative product. Everything revolved around drawing closer to Nature and a new understanding of the potential of human perception. Of course, achieving the depth of experience promised by Modern Art would have been impossible without altered states of consciousness. Experimentation proceeded across the entire aesthetic spectrum (here are some names that readily come to mind, without specification of trends or styles: Paul Cezanne, Vincent Van Gogh, Georges-Pierre Seurat, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Pablo Picasso in painting; James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka, Andrei Bely, Virginia Wolf in literature; Dziga Vertov, Sergei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin in film-making; Alexander Rodchenko in photography; Mikhail Chekhov, Antonin Artaud, Vsevolod Meyerhold in the theatre; Adam Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Anton Webern in music; Henri-Louis Bergson, Martin Heidegger, William James, Theodor Adorno in philosophy and many others.) The practice of contemplation was giving way to the onslaught of new forms of perception.

Deep inside the classical oeuvre is the ideal image of the total artwork which, as it unfolds, engulfs the whole world, Nature and history:

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[1] D.V. Sarabianov, "K ogranicheniyu ponyatiya avangard" (Apropos Limitations of the Concept of Avant-garde). In: D.V. Sarabianov, *Russkaia Zhivopis. Probuzhdenie Pamyati* (Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory), Moscow: Iskusstvoznanie, 1998, pp. 274–5. Regrettably, this paper leaves no room for a more extensive discussion of this subject with the use of other sources.

everything disappears into it (the Book of Nature, Universe, Knowledge, etc.). Everything is collected in that greatest of the greatest books in the world, which Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz introduced in his *Théodicée* as the Book of God. Nietzsche wrote his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* and Joyce tried in his *Ulysses* to express this total completeness and perfection of the world within itself, which, however, did not come to light without the Book. The Book completes the world, and the world becomes completed in the Book. There are other examples. And does not the development of the modernist theory of painting pursue the goal of the ideal – **total** – form of the oeuvre?

Strangely, the classical work has always suffered from *objective* incompleteness. No artwork has ever been "finished", the artist always has the nagging thought that he has not brought his work to the end, has not laid on the "last stroke". This idea of the perfect, ideal artwork, the oeuvre of all oeuvres, has overshadowed creative endeavour over the ages. Honoré de Balzac's *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu* is just one example.

3. The opposite approach was taken by the Russian revolutionary avant-garde art of the 1910s-20s, which did not view the total artwork as a way of enhancing the aesthetical impact but searched for the ideal mechanical models, technical structures and concepts to support the efforts drastically to "remake" man and restructure the world around him. This implied an anti-artwork strategy: rejection of Nature in favour of Machine, "de-humanisation" of sensual experience and ridding it of models based on organic nature that were characteristic of the period of Modern Art. Perhaps, the de-anthropologization of aesthetical experience was more pronounced and dramatic in the Russian revolutionary avant-garde (Kazimir Malevich, Andrei Platonov, Sergei Eisenstein, El Lissitzky, Vladimir Tatlin, Dziga Vertov, Pavel Filonov, Vladimir Mayakovsky). Perhaps the avant-garde could be considered especially packed with events, as befitting Modern Art. Avant-garde mentality (or leftist art) is *revolutionary* mentality, which means that where it is at work, it reveals an aspect of the world that can only be detected through an explosive rather than evolutionary change. Avant-garde mentality balances between destruction and renewal, between "a new beginning and new end". But the beginning is a sort of objective of destruction itself. Destruction predetermines the possibility of a beginning, and the more radical the new, the more devastating it is. "Show me your ability to destroy and I will tell you what sort of avant-gardist you are!" Therefore, our conclusion is that in general the avant-gardist gesture is a gesture of total negation that is complete unto itself (that is, has no trace of assertion). Such negation is only possible thanks to the machine as the only vehicle of transforming the world without reliance on man or nature. What is needed is the original void, its infinite vacant surface to draw plans on, build new machines, and carve and recarve the world and the universe (Le Corbusier's new language of art Modulor, Malevich's architectons, Platonov's

"machine of the invisible ether", Eisenstein's *montage* (decoupage) machine, etc.)[1].

4. The third form is referred to as **actual art** (or *post-modernism, or modern art*), and here the impact is equivalent to the instantaneousness strike of the cutting edge or a brief flash, and this is what I call *kairos*. It is something that may or may not happen as you view a modern art object. However, the right object always appears and one of the visitors to the exhibition gets lucky and is "moved", "stung" or even "pierced" by *kairos* ("supreme moment"). Today modern art objects are characterised by localised pinpoint impacts of varying intensity that do not have a totalising (cascade-like) effect. They flare up for an instant and go out eventually to flare up anew elsewhere, in another environment and with a different effect. This is not a synthesis of earlier forms of art and their practices, but rather an experience in conceptualisation of art as a special phenomenon of our times. Conceptual art – and here we must agree with Joseph Kosuth, Boris Groys and Ilya Kabakov – is searching for the limits of the answer to the question as to what art is *today*. Is it not the question that Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia and Man Ray set out to answer when they declared rejection of any form of mimetism and went after the ideal image of anti-oeuvre?

5. The artwork migrates over time; now and then something happens to it: like a ghost ship, it navigates through storms, calls at peaceful harbours or altogether disappears in the art milieu. Modern art or the period of modernity or else modernism can manifest itself not only through image representation techniques, but also as an integral paradigm.

Modernist consciousness is entirely immersed in the past; it is mythogenic and only concerns itself with what is covert and deep-lying; it is aware of its break with the former classical (standard) culture and tries to overcome it by what it thinks to be a simple action, namely, by critically rethinking the status of the oeuvre in the new age. What makes the past valuable is reminiscences, reconstructions and reconstitution of past experiences in new terminological settings, in other words, *rewriting*, if we can say so. All major modernists copy and rewrite classical models, but in a language that no one knows and that will be impossible to rewrite anew. This is a sort of butchery of the classical standard in the process of bold attempts to use it.

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[1] For details of my position see: V. Podoroga, *Mimesis. Materialy po analiticheskoi antropologii literatury* (Mimesis. Materials on Analytical Anthropology of Literature), vol. 2/1, Moscow: Kulturnaya Revolyutsiya, 2011, pp. 240–65.

Fireworks. The Idea of Explosion

6. In modernist oeuvres we deal with *explosion,* but in the form of *implosion,* i.e. the slow accumulation of author's energy that destroys the original form, and with other "explosive" elements leads to the transgression of experience. To Eisenstein there is no *ecstasy* without *pathos.*

To have a better idea of the subject of our contemplation we need to go back to Bergson, to the problem of an impulse of life, *élan vital.* Today his philosophy is one of the better expounded and more recognised theories of modernism. Here is how his principal train of thought goes. For life to exist it must be excessive with respect to the essential consumption of energy; life is always *too much,* it is indeed a fireworks display, a sparkle, the shooting of streams from that centre… Bergson called it élan vital: "Now, if the same kind of action is going on everywhere, whether it is that which is unmaking itself or whether it is that which is striving to remake itself, I simply express this probable similitude when I speak of a centre from which worlds shoot out like rockets in a fireworks display – provided, however, that I do not present this centre as a *thing*, but as a continuity of shooting out. God, thus defined, has nothing of the already made; He is unceasing life, action, freedom."[1] Bergson uses "explosive" terminology now and again in describing the creative evolution of life[2]. Every living creature is a sort of explosive charge that is ready to go off; the evolution of life proceeds in leaps, by "the random play of forces", from one explosion to the next. There are two types of blast: one is *explosion*, quick or instantaneous, and the other *implosion*, slow or "delayed". The former, like any blast, destroys itself and

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[1] Bergson A., *Tvorcheskaya evolyutsiya* (Creative Evolution), Moscow: Canon-Press, 1998, p. 138; the English text here and below cited by http://www.gutenberg.org/files/26163/26163-h/26163-h.htm

[2] Elsewhere in the quoted book: "The evolution of life really continues, as we have shown, an initial impulsion: this impulsion, which has determined the development of the chlorophyllian function in the plant and of the sensori-motor system in the animal, brings life to more and more efficient acts by the fabrication and use of more and more powerful explosives. Now, what do these explosives represent if not a storing-up of the solar energy, the degradation of which energy is thus provisionally suspended on some of the points where it was being poured forth? The usable energy which the explosive conceals will be expended, of course, at the moment of the explosion; but it would have been expended sooner if an organism had not happened to be there to arrest its dissipation, in order to retain it and save it up." (Ibid., pp. 243–4). If natural energy is admittedly excessive and if every organism has such a surplus of energy, then what does limit it? Its limitation is precisely what makes it excessive: indeed, "when continued growth is impossible, the way to the expenditure of energy is open". The point is, however, that this *expenditure* of energy cannot be instantaneous or explosive, although this is the best way to get rid of surplus. It can be very economical and prolonged. And here we see the theme of memory tacitly coming to light, or rather showing itself. The higher forms of life, the more developed ones, depend on memory, which allows them to control their own condition.

anything within its range of action; the latter can be easily confused with any growth ("development"), the gradual deployment and struggle of forces. In the former case we have simple, more primitive organisms, which are ready immediately to expend the energy they receive and convert it into life activity; in the latter immediate explosive expenditure is impossible, and increasingly complex organisms emerge and use the energy of the original *Explosion,* or *the First Push:* they retain part of the energy for purposes of their own development. This is "diverted" energy: the organism saves up and uses energy in the mode of "delayed explosion", or implosion. However, the organism cannot save surplus energy indefinitely. Even if it does, it is only for expending it because life itself means balancing out expenditure and savings, and the life cycle of consumption (growth) as such consists in this process. Hence the necessity of expenditure, and any attempt to avoid, delay or halt it is a breach of the law of Nature, that is, something anti-Nature and anti-life. The themes of essential expenditures of energy, of organisms/oeuvres as "explosives", of "dispersion" and "redistribution" thus translate into general economics as basic anthropological facts.

7. Here is Eisenstein's train of thought as he analysed Piranesi's series of etchings *Imaginary Prisons:*

"The focus of their effect is not so much *an explosion as the processes of the buildup towards an explosion.*

"An explosion may happen. Sometimes it is as intense as the preceding tension, sometimes not, and sometimes almost non-existent. The bulk of energy is drained into the process of overcoming with virtually no stop at the point achieved because the very process of overcoming in itself is the process of release. Almost invariably it is scenes of buildup that are the most memorable ones in my films."[1]

Eisenstein explicitly formulated the regularities of explosive transition from one architectural composition of the "prison" (graphic image) to another. This "transition" operates as self-description of a system that overcomes the final (*catastrophic*) state to transform into another (*transfigured*). An artwork has a great potential of *indirect* impact, which is dramatically intense and more far-reaching and lasting if it can produce a form capable of redirecting surplus energy flows within itself. The true work of art is a contained, delayed explosion. From the point of view of intrinsic dynamics of compositional imagery Piranesi's *Prisons* are an implosive structure, an *invisible explosion,* with everything flying out, disintegrating and getting pulverized. We see unbelievably huge forbidding prison walls with gratings and embrasures, but our sensation is that of lightness rather than heaviness. The explosive cloud of flights of stairs receding into distance makes us feel in the focus of an *explosion.* In this way the dynamics of conflicting spaces, "blocks" and the brickwork of walls thus makes its way beyond the visible

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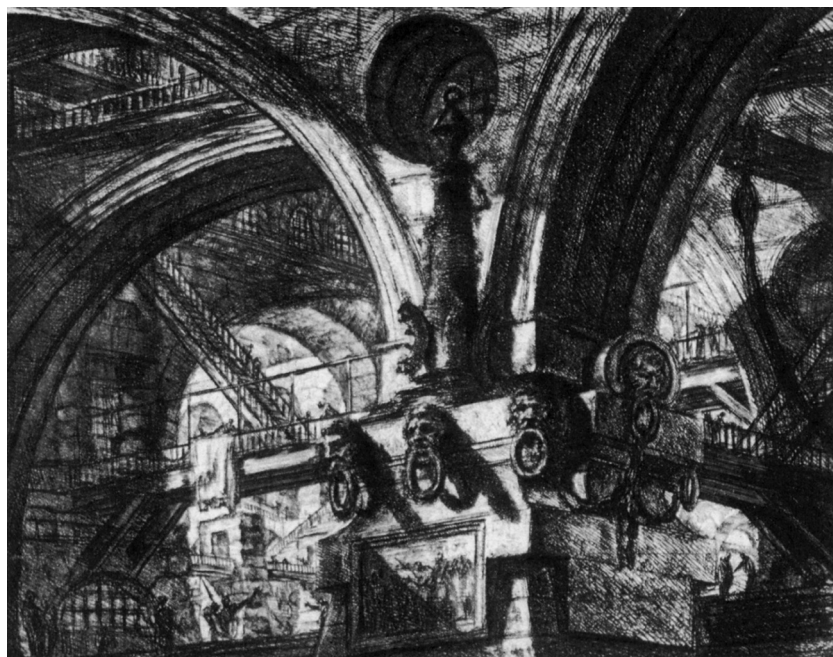
composition of the etching so forcibly that there can be no other explanation: of course, this is the implosive wave breaking free and sweeping along everything in its way… The imprint of the perceptive impact will trace the line of our amazement over the power of this blast.

Eisenstein is attracted to the road that the artwork, such as *Imaginary Prisons,* opens to our eyes. As we contemplate the etchings, we become increasingly immersed in this incessant interplay of arches, bridges, crossings and passages, niches and spaces, light waves and glares: all of a sudden everything becomes "suspended", as if lifted above the supporting basis, heavy shackles and locks, losing any weight and slowly soaring up. Eisenstein's thought flows precisely in that direction: his aim is to track and analyse the viewer's leap from eager contemplation to immersion in the visible movement of "transitions/breaks" and, ultimately, to the ecstatic sensation of that weightlessness and vagueness of imagery.

"Like the tubes of a single telescope extending in length and diminishing in diameter, these diminishing arches engendered by the arches of a plane closer up, these flights of stairs ejecting progressively diminishing new flights of stairs upward, penetrate into the depths. Bridges engender new bridges. Columns new columns. And so on ad infinitum. As far as the eye can follow.

"In raising the intensity of the etchings from state to state, Piranesi, in establishing new foregrounds, seems to thrust once again into the depths

Giovanni Battista
Piranesi
Etching from
the *Prisons* series
Sheet VII. 1761
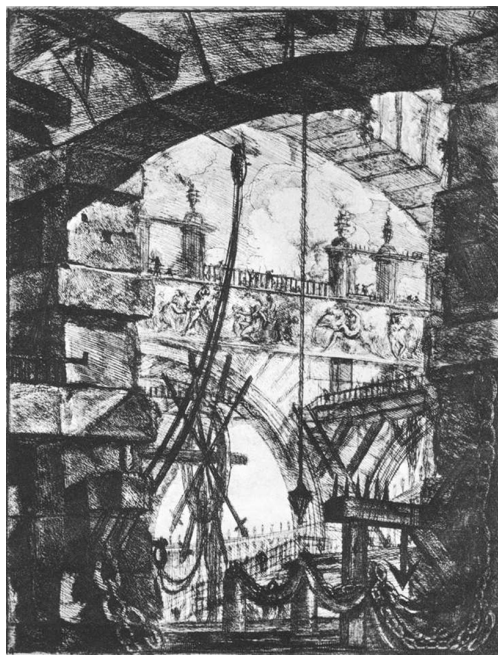
Giovanni Battista
Piranesi
Etching from
the *Prisons* series
Sheet IV. Circa 1760

one measure deeper the entire figure created by him of successively deep-ening volumes and spaces connected and intersected by staircases."[1]

All the stages of implosive (explosive) poetics are represented on Pirane-si's two or three etchings, which, incidentally, were done at different times; it is only when comparing them that you notice to what extent they try to emulate one another while distorting and disfiguring what they try to con-vey. A play of explosive elements.

8. Andrey Biely is even more tempestuous and, I would say, more acrobat-ic as he urges us to hear the monotonous ticking of the bomb/"sardine tin" and feel the threat of world catastrophe in the imagery of his *St. Petersburg.* We indeed seem to hear that continuous, unbelievable sound, first unob-trusive, like muffled rumbling, but then rising to hollow, horrifying howl-ing, the unpronounceable **Y-y-y** as the only sonorous code governing the entire movement of sounds in the novel. All the movements and rhythms of the novel are gradually sinking into this all-destructive rhythm; any-way, Biely tried to convey the effect (*phenomenon*) of the explosion without introducing or describing it, but *immanently,* as some force that is contin-uously at work in the novel, thus imparting explosive, impulsive energy to the compositional structure of the novel. Everything is throbbing, lashing out, sliding and exploding in Biely's *St Petersburg,* everything appears to

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[1] Eisenstein S.M., *Izbrannnyie proizvedeniya v shesti tomakh*. The English translation from
http://monoskop.org/images/a/a0/Tafuri_Manfredo_The_Sphere_and_the_Labyrinth.pdf

be displaced. The main characters move about with unusual speed thanks to their gestures and grimaces. Where they are visible and seem to have bodies, thoughts and individualities they still are mere dead masks, empty shells. Only an imperceptibly fast movement brings them back to life, and only those movements that the language announces; it is in language that we find their traces (the author's inarticulateness, rumbling, shouts and howling) whereas they themselves, the ultrafast creatures of this strange world, are virtually invisible[1].

9. Any oeuvre is a clash of forces, *external* and *internal*, *centrifugal* and *centripetal*, a clash of forces that associate themselves with what they are trying to overcome and thus express and those forces the clash with which cannot produce anything except explosion. It is primarily avant-garde artworks that are imbued with this ultimate shocking force, they indeed explode within us without leaving behind any memory of themselves. In defining the artwork Theodor Adorno, another influential Bergsonian, attempts to formulate its aesthetic characteristics, the main one of them being *apparition:* "Fireworks are apparition κατ ἐξοχήν: They appear empirically yet are liberated from the burden of the empirical, which is the obligation of duration; they are a sign from heaven yet artifactual, an ominous warning, a script that flashes up, vanishes, and indeed cannot be read for its meaning."[2] However, one thing is perception and another the answer to the question as to whether there are objective preconditions for the artwork to objectivise itself, that is, to present itself as autonomous reality of experience and *outgrow* reality itself. Apparition is a phenomenon that can and must be discussed in phenomenological terms.

True, what makes the artwork objective for Adorno is its having irremovable internal contradictions, forces struggling with one another: it is these forces that "spark it up" and make it "explode" and rip the appearance of the world with "flashes" and "sparkles". The artwork is objective when its guiding force of expression breaks out of the prescribed form and ruins it; this force is always "more than itself" (mehr). Of course, we are talking about the latest unaesthetic experience (which no longer owes anything to the philosophy of the beautiful). Here is what Adorno uses as the basis for his definitions of apparition: "The instant in which these forces become image, the instant in which what is interior becomes exterior, the outer husk is *exploded*; their apparition, which makes them an image, always at the same time destroys them as image."[3] And below, even more definitively: "Movement at a standstill is eternalized in the instant, and what has been made eternal is annihilated by its reduction to the instant."[4] The latter point is

[1]   A. Biely, *St Petersburg*, Moscow: Nauka, 1981; V. Podoroga, *Op. cit.*, pp. 30–76.

[2]   Th.W. Adorno, *Esteticheskaya teoriya* (Aesthetic Theory), Moscow: Respublika, 2004, p. 120; the English translation from https://istifhane.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/aesthetictheory.pdf

[3]   Ibid., p. 126.

[4]   Ibid., p. 127.

particularly important. Indeed, the force of impact should make sure that the artwork itself is a device producing "direct action" effects. Adorno was well aware of the extent to which modernist consciousness is tensely allegorical, imbalanced and always on the brink of premature peril, given the risk of disappearing before making a presence.

10. Much earlier Marcel Proust wrote his great novel *In Search of Lost Time* with an emphasis on apparition. The first 60 pages of the first volume of the novel *Swann's Way* describe in detail how the original image of an artwork manifests itself. It is casual, random, it just "flares up": "...I saw no more of it than this sort of luminous panel, sharply defined against a vague and shadowy background, like the panels which a Bengal fire or some electric sign will illuminate and dissect from the front of a building the other parts of which remain plunged in darkness."[1] Proust often uses such descriptions of a slight arrest of attention followed by an almost instantaneous flare and ecstasy of involuntary memory when he tries to transform a fragment of reality into an artwork ("hawthorn-blossom", "three churches", etc.). His imaginary artists and performers of genius, whose art is the keynote of *In Search of Lost Time,* are presented through the same apparition technique: there are the *andante* movement from Vinteuil's sonata, several beautiful passages from Bergotte's works and a spot of light on the artist Elstir's canvas that Marcel the narrator finds in his poorly lit studio. All these are instants of explosion, of auratic arrest of the course of narration and literally the birth of aesthetic experience.

11. Samuel Beckett, a close reader of Proust, sees over a dozen such "epiphany flares" in his *Search of Lost Time* that bespeak the work of involuntary memory: "Involuntary memory is an 'involuntary, total and delicious conflagration'."[2] Here Beckett includes such apparitions, or revelations of memory, as the uneven cobblestones on which Marcel stumbles, *a spoon and plate, their very sound, the rumble of water in hotel pipes, a stiffly starched napkin, shoestrings,* etc. However, Beckett may have overlooked the most important thing: the artwork *fully presents itself only when it comes true.* This is the crucial definition of the artwork in modernism and post-modernism. Beckett records a clash of two particles in the memory experience of the "forgetful" Proust: one is a particle of the present and the other of the past; one is a signal originating from the practical experience of *now-being* and *right-here-being* while the other is a particle belonging to

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[1] Proust M., Swann's Way. Penguin Books, 1957, p. 54 (Translated by C.K. Scott Moncrieff).

[2] S. Beckett, *Oskolki. Esse, retsenzii, kriticheskiye statyi* (Shards. Essays, Reviews, Critical Articles), Moscow: Text, 2009, p. 22. The English text quoted from https://books.google.ru/books?id=xhSk6fg6u2MC&pg=PT195&lpg=PT195&dq=beckett+proust+involuntary+memory+-explosion&source=bl&ots=e7ViLDoyPY&sig=hmvNzmgLia1uEnfqd3tpFSSrC38&hl=ru&sa=X-&ved=0ahUKEwj9x-qP88LLAhWrIJoKHWX1CQwQ6AEIJDAC#v=onepage&q=beckett%20proust%20involuntary%20memory%20explosion&f=false

the past image and ready to unite with the former one. It is the same parti-
cle which is indivisible in our living memory, and it relates our perception
to past memory with one explosive moment, illuminating, revealing and
erasing it... So it circulates, now losing itself, now finding itself anew, here
and there, stopping nowhere. It is from such micro-flashes of memory that
the *perfect modernist artwork* is built[1].

> Time takes both toil and idleness away into space
> And brings back intention
> While space seasons the resultant difference
> with an element of suspicion.
>
> Time and space live separately.
> Time absorbs so as to give back
> White space exhausts until the moment of fatality,
> Their false brotherhood eventually wrecked.
>
> Dmitry Sarabianov. *Verses of the later period*

THE ACTUAL, OR THE TIME OF FORGETFULNESS

12. The consciousness of contemporary artist is pervaded with the lat-
ter-day sense of temporality or impermanence, which we call a c t u a l.
This consciousness comes to life only in the moment of actualization; here
it flares up, and in a moment goes out. The actual should be understood
as the action or act of actualization, activism or even actionism. Actual
art is on the edge cutting of time, where contemporaneity cannot hold on.
Contemporary art (museum classics) has characteristic techniques, styles,
genres and mass-reproduced technology for producing "recognizable" im-
ages. Standard images of today are consumed over sufficiently long peri-
ods of time; they can correspond to the ebb and flow of fashion and the

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[1] What Adorno calls apparition James Joyce, especially in his early works, formulates as a basic
category of post-Aristotelian Thomistic aesthetics termed *epiphany, or Theophany* (frequently
occurring in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*). I think that to Joyce the epiphany phenomenon as
some *quality of being as it is* presents a general principle, one that only receives fresh aesthetic
support and grows stronger as the years go by. (See Joyce J., *Sobranie rannei prozy* (Collected
Early Prose), Moscow: Eksmo, 2011, pp. 8–34. He did not renounce his early ideas as drastically
as Umberto Eco suggests in his remarkable study. On the contrary, this category is definitive to
the aesthetics of the later Joyce; moreover, it underlies his finely elaborated writing technique.
The completeness of every position, statement and viewpoint gives us a chance to see an event,
a piece of reality as it is and where it is. Or in other words, there are the epiphany of the artwork
and presentation of its components, which are quite autonomous with their specific apparition,
although quite in synch with the artwork as a whole (U. Eco, *Poetiki Dzhoisa* (Poetics of Joyce),
St Petersburg: Symposium, 2006, pp. 123–31).

movement of goods and follow market strategies. The contemporary has a temporal cutting edge, which can be called *actual*, but the actual does not depend on any calendar time or cycle. The actual bursts out, explodes and rejuvenates the contemporary with its newness as fast as today's world allows.

13. The actual artist "knows everything", he reflects, reads high-brow art books, can sell himself and is versatile; he is both professional and amateurish (combines different levels of knowledge and skills, from performances and design projects to business initiatives); in short, he navigates the well-explored socio-cultural and political landscape and knows it well. He is not what the artist of the early 1990s used to be and has very different goals and ideals. The new actual artist is not committed to one "favourite" subject or distinctive technique for expressing ideas: he is labile, mobile and ready to take on any, even "dirty" work. He was born at the time the art market was taking shape and for this reason, I think, he is unable to blow up the situation but only can timidly follow it. In fact, his professionalism is focussed on the "correct" understanding of the IMAGE (as it is circulated in the mass media). We also can construe the *ideal* of the actual artist. Today there are few artists capable of perceiving themselves as multicultural personalities, that is, *persons with a thousand faces,* with virtually every aspect of such personality capable of being reflected in a separate art practice without obliterating the others. The subject of actual art possesses a mercurial *Dassein*, he is polymorphous, plasma-like and mimetic to the point of virtuosity, as if he has had all the bones taken out of his body and now his jelly-like body were vibrating in rhythm with the concept, ready for actualization... Perhaps, this type of actual artist has been called for by market demand as it has taken shape *right* now (and not by dint of art evolution).

14. What then does it mean to be contemporary? It means to belong to one's time, which defines one's capability to perceive and be perceived. What can be contemporary is the period, the century, the past ten, twenty or thirty years, but by no means what is taking place here and now. Is actual the equivalent of fashionable? Generally speaking, what we call contemporary is beyond our comprehension; although most of events are taking place before our very eyes, we do not know the reasons behind them. Perhaps, this will come to light at a different time – or never.

15. Let us analyse the *topography* of the actual shown below.
There is no future any longer because it has already come; there is no past because it has been pushed out of individual memory and "settled down" in collective memory, getting "frozen" there forever. What is left is only the p r e s e n t, that is, the lasting time of perception, during which the perceiver does not tell himself from the perceived. But how do we comprehend the present? To my mind, it is double-layered: the *contemporary*

and the *actual* are combined in it, and these are certain modes of action of time that require evaluation (when we say "this is *contemporary*, but not necessarily *actual*", for example, or "this is *actual*, but not necessarily *contemporary*"). What then do we mean by being contemporary? This means belonging to one's time, which defines one's ability to perceive and/or be perceived. The period, century, or past ten years can be contemporary, but by no means what is taking place here and now. Of course, the actual is not defined by calendar time, even less so by measurable physical or by psychological time. The actual is the acting time that can be neither postponed nor delayed. Contemporaneity has its *temporal cutting edge,* and it is that cutting edge that can be called *actual.*

16. The movement of time comes up against an obstacle; this obstacle is the direction of two times: the past against the future and the future against the past, which point to the mode of transition of one time to the other. The dialectic of the *break*, at the point of transition from the past to the future through the present. The future cannot be imagined or the past forgotten if the present is bypassed, and this is understandable. In the present time it is twisted up, broken down into ever more minute fragments and seeks to actualize itself at every point/moment with final completeness. Hence the intensity, impulsiveness and explosiveness of the temporal flow. An event in the mass media space cannot but be repetitive: the more repetitive images there are, the more significant the event. One example is millions of copies of the collapse of the World Trade Center towers in New York.

Actual art has no memory. It is not the art of forgetfulness, it does not need mnemonics because it lasts within a certain interval of time that is not governed by the longevity of the stored and preserved institutional memory. The actual artist acts so that every new gesture of his erase the previous one. That is why he always repeats himself, although in a different way on every new occasion. The mechanics of erasure is the artist's skill of repeating himself, that is, of coming out as new and still newer.

Cutting Edge Instant. Boredom and Disintegration of Aura

17. The **instantaneousness** of the impact is what makes the actual complete. If you want to complete something, you must minimize the point of impact. The viewer must have no time to evaluate or resume a verbal act (protection), he must become a consumer of the communication; if such communication is targeted **precisely,** he will not need interpretation. A well-executed artwork has pinpoint accuracy and causes a shock. It does not move, stir or repel the viewer – no, it smashes his perceptive protection, which depends on *completeness* (or "document"). The instantaneousness of perception does not mean that you must be shocked; what matters is that you

understand it the moment you see it. Roland Barthes, following the spirit of late Modernism, expounds the idea of *punctum,* a sudden prick, the cutting edge of an invisible attack by an image that finally gets at you. However, one thing is missed here: the *punctum* is accidental and its generation is not the author's design but a blind choice of time. Finally, every epoch has *its own* punctums, and that is why they are so fluid, replacing one another as if in a relay race. Occasionally the viewer cannot "capture" and misses them, although they are there to see (when we "cannot tear our eyes off them"). The wholeness of the image is broken down and a search for these "covert" punctums begins[1].

18. In his unfinished early study of the existential interpretation of b o r e d o m Heidegger touches upon certain aspects of existence of the actual artwork that are of major importance to us[2].

Here is how his train of thought goes.

First he poses a series of questions about what should be understood by *boredom* or what is the experience of *being bored,* the experience of profound or dumbing boredom: is not this the absence of habitual reactions to what is taking place (to the needs of Daisen)? Precisely the temporary paralysis that seizes us when being bored or having a bout of "profound boredom" testifies that something has happened to time if boredom itself is some phenomenon of temporality, or even some pathology of individual time, or a deviation from the rhythms of existence itself. Boredom is a product of the infinite extension of the temporal horizon, moreover, to such an extent that time in such extended form is something like a spell, wizardry or aura, and also capture (the ***translation*** offered to us.). Time empties itself and becomes space (with the negative sign). Heidegger reiterates over and again the conditions of this utmost slowing down of time, that is, the very phenomenon of boredom as a complex and multicomponent phenomenon of temporality. Being predisposed or attuned to boredom manifests itself through emptiness, through being left empty, and this attunement is understood *topologically*. What we see is boredom, the phenomenon of being bored as *an expanding space stretching into infinity that is full of emptiness.* We come across such space in Andrei Platonov's stories, where boredom is just a symbol of tragically lived being that is called a n g u i s h (melancholy): this feeling envelops one and threatens to drain away everything human. It is also "simply boring", sunk in the spellbound emptiness of faraway gullies and steppes. But it is not the boredom that the character of Goncharov's novel *Oblomov* strives to uphold as the doctrine of "doing nothing" or the fabulous Russian laziness.

[1] Roland Barthes, *Camera lucida.*

[2] M. Heidegger, "Osnovnye ponyatiya metafiziki. Mir-konechnost-odinochestvo (The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics. World, Finitude, Solitude), St Petersburg, Vladimir Dahl Publishers, 2013, p. 241.

How does one break out of the state of complete capture (enchantment) with boredom and regain oneself in the time of existence? I can only presume, with a reference to Kierkegaard, that boredom can also be interpreted as rejection of existential temporality. This means rejection of the *time* of choice. Meanwhile this time belongs to choice itself, it is the time of the i n s t a n t in which Kairos operates as the c u t t i n g e d g e, tearing existential time out of the boredom that threatens to stop life. There is only one purpose, and that is breaking the boredom of repetitiveness in favour of the risk of choice and always siding with the resoluteness of choice.

Letter and Spirit. Apropos the History of Moscow Conceptualism

19. I see the conceptual movement as rather closed, private and partially dissident. It was a conspiracy of the artistically advanced elite against the then political regime. Their conceptual reflection was focussed on the world of Soviet *paradigms* (in all their diversity, such as customs, habits, dreams and stereotypes of the period). Conceptualism as a whole is focussed on the LETTER (as the smallest element of political writing and its grammatical unit). I will try to explain the meaning I invest in this postulate. What is the reason for this painstaking analysis of the linguistics of the letter in the practice of conceptualism and why does precisely the letter crown all its plastic images? The answer is obvious. Under the Soviet regime the natural verbal flow was captured (usurped, forcibly taken over) and driven out into the periphery of social life (into semi-legal study and interest groups and kitchens of Moscow and St Petersburg). Every word and letter, in fact, every stylistic, grammatical and even lexical capability of the language was under control. That great political regime feared the stand-alone Letter if it was not part of the administered ideological context. The authorities insisted on the Marxist-Leninist discourse, imposed it as the only admissible linguistic norm and were well aware of the possible source of danger for the regime. In fact, every letter pronounced or, even worse, written "in a wrong way" and placed not where it should have been, could ruin the regime's discourse. I think that all the more prominent heroes of conceptualism (among them I. Kabakov, B. Grois, D.A. Prigov, V. Sorokin, G. Bruskin, A. Monastyrsky, L. Rubinstein and many others) were men of the LETTER. At that time the Conceptual Letter existed in a very broad range of applications. I remember the many "political mistakes" caused by breaches in set phrases and clichés (for example, the same error occurred in many publications of the *Voprosy Filosofii* (Problems of Philosophy) journal when authors mentioned transition "from socialism to capitalism" rather than "from capitalism to socialism" in their articles). Only veteran editors with their "trained eye" spotted such things whereas others just did not notice them. Even readers always missed such "mistakes". The automatic relationship between the regime's discourse and its language was

gradually falling apart. Conceptualism attacked the Letter of the regime, which prohibited any communication with society out of the literal context of the communicated message. I think it was President Gorbachev who finished off conceptualism as an ideology and destroyed the party man's loyalty to THE LETTER OF THE REGIME when he began talking without fearing to make a mistake or deviate from the Stalinist sacrality of the LETTER, its primordiality and its omnipotence.

Conceptualism is one of the better developed techniques of stripping the regime's discourse of its sacrality. Replacement or anamorphosis of the Letter in art. In other words, the regime's automatic writing and discourse of paradigms came under attack from *writing without discourse,* a new artistic gesture that targeted the addressee rather accurately, a viral letter, the infestation of the regime's discourse by invading its automatic writing: slow down, stop, interrupt, destroy.

20. Instead the conceptual artists introduced well-designed techniques for actual art practices (such as happenings, performances, installations, etc.). Under such an ideological regime the LETTER does not exist separately from the SPIRIT or the SPIRIT from the LETTER. Then there was progress from the letter to writing, which conceptualism began to develop in order to counter the mechanistic hieroglyphic paradigms of the Soviet regime. Conceptualism started developing the techniques of automatic writing, thus involuntarily parodying the automatic writing of the regime and its entire "discourse", which in the last years of the Soviet Union dismally failed to control daily language usage. "Medical Hermeneutics" members, D.A. Prigov's verse raptures and M. Epstein's essayistic group readily come to mind in this connection. It was indeed in the 1970s that the regime's automatic writing began to be seen as something absolutely alien and even absurd that did not agree with the standard of common human communication. This writing of the regime was everywhere, but without any support from its own ideological discourse. There was no doublethink, but the gulf between Reality and the ways of its Representation in the regime's automatic writing was absolutely obvious. The latter was fast moving away from the former, destroying "Marxist-Leninist" ideology in the process. Gorbachev's naiveté was manifest in his belief (even if fake) in some "true" Leninist socialism. He did not quite understand that any discussion, opinion or contest of ideas would kill any ideological resource (if we can speak about it at all). There emerged some strange "automatic writing": people did not believe anything any longer, but writing was everywhere, everything was written "c o r r e c t l y" everywhere, the right speeches were pronounced, and so on.

21. By the end of the 1970s it became clear that the regime had entered a new phase: the gap between what was associated with the LETTER, LAW and CONTROL and what was said and was allowed to be said had widened

dramatically. Previously the party discourse had been responsible for what people though *aloud* and what should be presented as the "correct" sacral image of the regime that restricted the public will for free speech. The political writing of the regime became automatic and slipped from under the control of the ideological/party discourse. In conceptualism it was the Letter, manipulation with words said by others, re-interpretation and depreciation of such words and their translation into a plastic gesture, painting or sculpture played a tremendous role. The first important actions were tested mostly on members of the art community and their friends; they were shocking but apolitical. Actionism becomes powerful and influential only when it gets involved in a political happening or accompanies it, or else brings it to attention in the utterly emphatic exposition of a gesture.

22. The current stage of development of contemporary domestic actionism cannot be characterised as new, but it is clearly taking the place vacated by the conceptual philosophy of art. What is the most important thing about these changes? It is the factor of *immediate impact* that only became possible because society has gained a different level of freedom[1]. In my view, actionism emerges precisely as a consequence of awareness of a new sense of freedom and, of course, readiness to demonstrate that sense. The sphere of the direct action of the artistic gesture has expanded unprecedentedly and there appeared a new CONSUMER, namely, the mass media community as a whole rather than individual groups of connoisseurs and fans of actual art. Communication with the consumer is based on interaction; here is the cutting edge of the actualisation of the artistic gesture. The actual for the actionist artist is *immediate impact* upon the Other, and that other cannot avoid, dodge or prevent it.

23. In the 1990s, the time of chaos and predatory original accumulation of oligarchic capital, actionism could not find its niche within actual art and remained a sort of bourgeois action within the emergent post-Soviet bourgeoisie. Indeed, actual art took shape as permanent practice against the grim depressive background of devastation, the catastrophic impoverishment of the population, rampant crime, the emergence of oligarchs, glamour and "public opinion", the makeover of punitive institutions, and the growing influence of TV and the Internet, but all those processes were "off the mark", with no promise for future change. Being in the focus of this freedom... actionism went on the offensive precisely when it was capable

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[1] There was close control over the sacral official space, with a tight hold on all the possible venues where actionist artistic gestures could be demonstrated. Under Brezhnev and Andropov Red Square was supervised especially closely. Under the security regulations the police patrol on duty had the minimum time (something like 15 seconds) to cope with protests and individual sporadic actions on the square. In other words, any actionist manifestation was immediately suppressed, and anyone behind its planning and execution would be sentenced to a prison term under laws prescribing punishment for crimes or dissident activities.

of capturing (at least temporarily) the *sacred places* of post-Soviet urban space and renaming them. The tools of such activities of actionist groups are scandal, guerilla warfare, provocation, mute speech (a ban on speech). All these tools have the only purpose of ridding old things of post-Soviet aura and place. It is not enough to conceptualise an event; a direct impact on the environment is needed for its drastic transformation (at least for the moment of the action itself). It is necessary to put an end to the understanding (contemplation) of the idea of omnipotence of reason and reflection. It is necessary to attack consciousness not by appealing to "free thinking", not through speech or mind, but through the b o d y, that is, attack everything that involves the co-participant in the action, the new Consumer, in the "harsh" practice of remaking his own body and the bodies of others, their new images. Actionism tries to create a new anthropology, the anthropology of *actual* corporeality. The silence of the actionist artist is not something subjective or arbitrary, but the very essence of actionism: he uses exclusively body language. Action links the desired object to one who observes it and tries to capture, appropriate and destroy it. Following the victory of Perestroika and the onset of the age of Big Crime (throughout the 1990s) there opened up a new social space, a space that was free for crime and flight, anonymity and theft, but not for rebellion. The bulk of the population shut off the unbearable reality as best as they could and especially banished art that directly appealed to that disgusting and deadly Reality. Actionism was especially successful when it used the human body and all the other bodies (museums, mass bodies, etc.)

24. It is important to note that actionist ideology is focussed on *sacrifice.* In some cases the act of sacrifice makes the artist himself the target and centre of representation of an idea while in others the attack targets concrete paradigms, norms and institutions – the regime's discourse – and those people who represent them in public mentality. Artists representing the latter trend suffer at the hands of the authorities far more often than artists who present themselves as targets for experiments and/or artworks. Admittedly, actionist art is *necessarily* connected with such self-sacrifice. What A. Osmolovsky calls the *sincerity* of the actionist artist I call readiness for self-sacrifice and victimhood and, ultimately, readiness to take the r i s k of losing everything one has had or achieved and even end up in jail. The stakes are rising: it is not enough to be *simply* an artist or even a *successful* artist – how can you get your message across to many people, even those who have nothing to do with art?[1]

[1] I remember Oleg Kulik effectively demonstrating in my sector video scenes from his "dog's life". I was particularly impressed by the clip in which he as a dog viciously attacks German shepherds held in leash by policemen to keep the beasts from "retaliating". The dogs were positioned in a circle at a distance of the length of the chain holding Kulik the dog. A white flag with blue stars flies high over the spot. We see a vulnerable naked human body darting about between dogs' snouts at the risk of being torn apart as soon as the dogs are unleashed.

Unreturned Gaze. Apropos D.A. Prigov's Mask

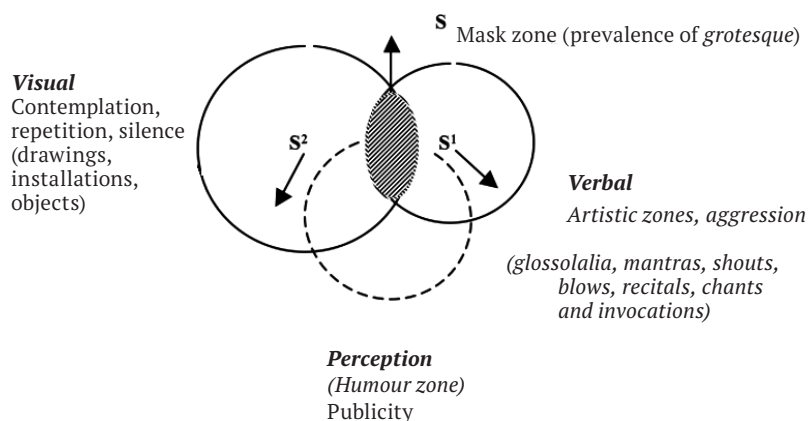*Anemic face, your trick, poet...*
N. Zabolotsky

25. One very memorable physiognomic impression of mine is Prigov's face, the *distance* he puts between himself and what he is involved in, what he creates as an actual artist. This feeling is not something close to what is described as "being not in one's element" or an artificial psychological condition; perhaps, it is something like the well-known mask of *Buster Keaton.* He wears an impenetrable expression without any reaction to anything, perhaps gloomy, but not that gloomy, perhaps aloof and self-focussed, but not that aloof; the eyes look at you and don't look at you; and being at that place, he behaves as if he were elsewhere. Perhaps, my observation is wrong and few people will share it, but I see Prigov's image through that mask of his. Prigov's photographs displayed at the exhibition are beautiful precisely because of that utter aloofness. When you come across rare photographs of V. Khlebnikov, regardless of how they were taken his gaze never reaches us; it gets lost somewhere on the approaches to our world without crossing the borders of time. You cannot find a photograph on which he looks into the camera lens. A sideward gaze was the most open gaze of the great poet. To Prigov his own mask was very important because it made him an exterritorial person in an art experiment: he is the author and participant, but neither the author nor participant, nor even the public. We were just discussing the artistic value of the unreturned gaze in destroying the artistic aura of the traditional image of an artist seeking support, fame and justification. This unreturned gaze keeps us away from the image that is being created before our very eyes. We cannot say that the artist here is like a *zombie,* sleepwalker or *psycho-automaton.* However, this behavioural mask precludes any event of gaze exchange and, therefore, denies any understanding of what is taking place right before us. In other words, Prigov's mask does not restrict his potential as an actual artist. Masks are simulacrums of identity; in fact, the mask hides the unbelievable capability for impersonation that Prigov used as a poet, artist, master of performance and installations, virtuoso of glossolalia, etc., a mercurial and fluid identity.

26. In the early 1990s *aggression* underlay the plastically expressive form of actual art. Moreover, that aggression often had a very concrete target. Eventually its intensity diminished because the murderous ruthlessness of that time made it impossible to accept the aesthetics of the aggressive gesture as a social phenomenon. Common aggression suppressed the aesthetic experience. However, it did not disappear but was turned around: its provocative, "tongue-in-cheek" aspect addressed the inner circle of the art community of the period. Artists themselves became victims of and participants in various art experiments. I remember how Prigov read his "*Militiaman*" at a poetry readings in the Zuev community centre on Lesnaya Street,
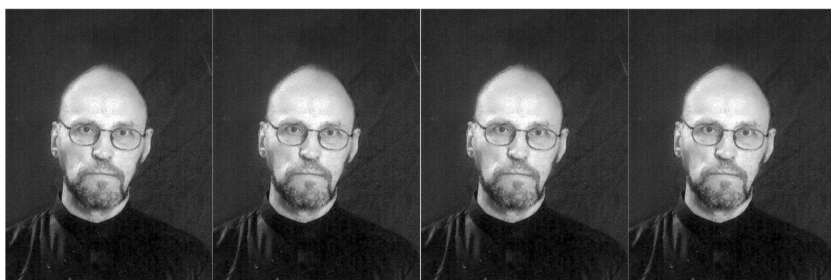
Video performance
(2001–2002)

if I am not mistaken. The brilliant aggression of the free artist destroyed everything around and it seemed that nothing of the "coppers" of the immediate past was left around except for Prigov's *militiaman*. At that time the audience was far less receptive to the comic aspect of Prigov's style than to its aggressive, anarchic aspect.

S Mask zone (prevalence of *grotesque*)

Visual
Contemplation,
repetition, silence
(drawings,
installations,
objects)

S^2　　**S^1**

Verbal
Artistic zones, aggression

*(glossolalia, mantras, shouts,
blows, recitals, chants
and invocations)*

Perception
(Humour zone)
Publicity

S is the mask zone, it is invariable and even immobile;[1] its expression does not change in any way, it is semantically *desolate,* like the streets of old Paris on Atget's photographs (which Benjamin admired so much); that face with its aloof expression is a face without an aura. **S^1** actually marks the beginning of the nearest environment with which aggression (or its semblance), understandable humour and gestures are associated; **S^2** is a different environment in which the artistic impact is not *immediate,* and it is an environment of the visible, where the artist's body does not "sound":

[1] Prigov's cameo role in A. German's film *Khrustalev, the Car;* his "mask" was probably needed to make hospital space look as real as possible. I thought that Prigov was germane to or, rather, compatible not only with that, but with any other space, regardless of whether it was playing, highly artistic or common, compatible because it would be as alien to him as any other space in which he could find himself...

there is no echo, it is "pure space" devoid of any tones. The body represents itself in total silence and without any feedback, then and immediately follows transition to different types of recording (from writing to symbols). The mask enables Prigov to perform acts that are very much like those of a *shaman,* in other words, acts that are not limited to anything like genre, professional techniques, ideology or common art objectives. Like the shaman, Prigov wears an immobile mask, which due to its general neutrality towards ongoing events, its *non-involvement* and aloofness makes it possible to create new opportunities for playing. Every environment has its own shock programme: while in S^1 it is immediate challenge and immediate impact, one that is superfast and dominated by speech, in S^2 the slowing down, halt and cataleptic lull in an installation are equivalent to a shock. Everything is gathering momentum here and slowing down there. What I mean is that Prigov was an *actor* of actuality rather than an actual *artist.* While the former does everything at his own risk and peril, without paying attention to those who he addresses, the latter always does something for the Other (and thus becomes dependent on the demands of that Other, what we call the art market today). Actuality is not technological and does not follow any rules, and that was how Prigov acted, on every occasion turning up where the actuality of current events was fraught with a shock. I think we should draw a more distinctive divide between the *actor* of actuality and the actual *artist* than we could do before. The latest exhibitions of actual art have forcefully demonstrated that even the best specimens of actual art are severely subordinated to the logic of the art market, the strategy of glamour, and no longer capable of creating an innovative environment. Close-knit teams of bunglers march onto the actual art scene one after another in search of fame and money. Those who way back in the 1990s tried to impart new dimensions, such as "physical aggression", to actual art, among them Kulik, Brener, Osmolovsky, Guelman and AEC, translate their imagination into new materials and ever more refined art technologies. Only few actual artists, among them Prigov, choose artistry over well-thought-out market strategies. By virtue of his "genetically inherited" (I dare say) shamanism the universal artist or ACTOR is capable of implementing individual projects contrary to the technologically overloaded art of today. When he ceases to be an actor, the actual artist becomes a designer decorating the zone of attraction for "new" bourgeoisness. Prigov interpreted his creative work as a sacrifice and readiness for *self-sacrifice* as the basis or even supreme stage of professionalism.

27. By the mid-1990s Prigov had changed his tactics in view of the past years that changed the times and operated mostly through *delay* or halt of time (video installations, performances and portraits). Today, with everything caught in a fast pace, which is beginning to engulf our life without leaving us a moment of peace, it is *deceleration* that produces a shock: what is needed is the slowest, not the fastest. Nothing happens, there is no reflection-provoking content, and everything just repeats itself monotonously.

The goal is the art of repetition. Prigov's artistry pursues the very pragmatic objective of not succumbing to the rhythm imposed from without but resisting it. The actual artist seeking to keep abreast of developments becomes part of an extraneous process and turns into a craftsman, specialist in tastes, aesthetic servant or business artist. Technology entirely subordinates innovative imagination; moreover, such imagination no longer "works" because now any novelty is just a link in the technological chain. Whatever Prigov took up, risk was the natural framework of his art actions. I heard that shortly before he *left* us he had agreed to take part in some monstrous performance: he was to be lifted in a wardrobe nearly to the 12th-storey level of one of the Moscow University towers. Though well advanced in years, Prigov nevertheless took such risks of falling victim to his art practice.

28. A closer look proves that many of his artworks involve deceleration. Generally speaking, the factor of deceleration has been used since Warhol, and it was used in the exhibition. The video installation is as follows: Prigov is sitting on one side of the picture and his counterpart on the other, and Prigov leads, makes passes and directs the counterpart's movements, which *mirror* his own. It is a very slow Zen Buddhist exercise. Although the movement is very slow and can be watched slowly as well, there is no "traditional" contemplation here. On the contrary, it is destroyed by the slow repetition of the same gestures and pendulum-like movement. The instantaneous capture of the situation has already occurred and given way to trance, that is, to a condition in which we become involved in an extraneous rhythm and try to master it. Repetition as it is, very slow, points to the possibility of trance. So, superfast alternates with superslow, and both upset the conventional ways of perception of an artwork. The traditional, *auratic* artwork ceases to exist because the traditional forms of its perception die away. But this does not mean that the earlier forms of contemplation cannot still be active outside the sphere of (contemporary) actual art. So the artist trying to be in time everywhere becomes a designer of the civilisational process; he takes part in it as an aesthetic process engineer. But the artist who does not want that institutes rules of delay. He uses various halting techniques to draw attention to repetition itself and give man time not for contemplation, but for understanding the character of such repetition. Man should survive amidst these different rhythms and have enough time simply to examine something, instantly grasp something and disregard something else, that is, have unlimited speed of perception as the consumer of images and "irritations". (To what extent this is possible today is no longer a question: suffice it to mention the virtual worlds of the Web.)

Konstantin Shevtsov

Remembrance as Interpretation of the Past

1. We turn to memory when we forget something, the rest of the time relying on its silent work and trusting it implicitly. So it is natural to assume that the problem of memory that the humanities have shown interest in over the past few decades testifies to a mental quirk as a peculiar state of these disciplines. According to Pierre Nora's well known phrase, "memory is constantly on our lips because it no longer exists"[1]. Since we are talking about the end of institutions and memory ideologies providing transmission and inheritance of the past, then, obviously, the issue is about memory representation, a certain right to clarification and enunciation of what takes place as a mysterious transformation of the past and the present. As if it were important for us to know that behind a reliable storage of the past, a silent drift down the flow of time, there is a place for special evidence, memory's unuttered speech. But does memory inform us about anything, except the past? Let's say it does, and in this case the question arises whether it is possible today to talk about the *meaning of the past* and, consequently, of memory as a form of differentiating and retaining this meaning. To find an answer, we will confine ourselves to the form of memory which is a phenomenon of the past, namely, *reminiscences* and try to answer three questions concerning reminiscence as such: how the past *appears* in it as a modality of existence different from the present; whether it is possible to imagine reminiscence as *speech* with is characteristic modes of expression; what the subject of this speech is, the centre of its special significance.

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[1] Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, English language edition, Revised and Abridged Translation, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996, Vol. 1, p. 1.

2. The forgetfulness of our time Nora writes about turns the past into an unsolvable problem, a chaos of the *other*, invading the cosmos of the present like a ghost of violence and lawlessness, be it the history of colonisation, persecution of national and sexual minorities, exploitation of women or child abuse. Nightmares of the past in some way reflect the loss of memory of historiography itself, which regards the past as a fundamentally different time, almost another form of life, breaking up our own time experience[1]. Of course, speaking about forgetfulness, we do not mean the actual withering away of such institutions as the church, school, library, archive or museum. On the contrary, it seems that an *excess* of cultural memory makes the assimilation of the past or the transformation of the present into the past non-transparent and incomprehensible, overloading every new moment with an unbearable burden of an unlived and haunting past. This is the way Borges' Funes is buried under the burden of memory, which takes away first his ability to move about and then his life itself.

In practical life memory functions in a much more transparent and understandable way. Here the past is the cause and condition of action, a commitment or a goal set; in the end, every moment of the present becomes the past, teaching us simple rules of reading signs and comparing the traces of the past. The situation is different with the remembrance of the past. Indeed, why, succeeding to the deceased, should we reintroduce him into the present, making room for one's own rival? Jan Assmann argues that *death* assumes the form of the past and induces memory as a debt to the dead[2]. But next to the reverent remembrance of the dead, characteristic of "memory cultures", there is a different attitude to the dead, associated with fear and the desire to forget everything that can disturb the ghost of the past[3]. In other words, an experience of death and an ability to peer into the past through the partition of oblivion are equally important. Claude Levi-Strauss says that the Fox Indians hold ritual games during adoption ceremonies in which the winner is the team represented by the clan adopting the child and the loser is the one who *represents* the opposing team – a dead parent as the main rival of the living adopter[4]. This game implements a dual memory strategy: to recognise the dead in the guise of the living, to let him go, to separate the present from the past and thus release it for the living. Death separates

[1] Cf. "Given to us as radically other, the past is a world from which we are fundamentally cut off. We discover the truth about our memory when we discover how alienated from it we are… The whole dynamic of our relation to the past is shaped by the subtle interplay between the inaccessible and the nonexistent." Ibid, p. 12.

[2] Jan Assman, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination,* Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 19.

[3] Examples of such an attitude to the dead were collected in abundance by Sigmund Freud in *Totem and Taboo*, translator A.A. Brill, 2012, p. 36.

[4] Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, George Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1966, pp. 31.

from the other, but the past is not only a form of death and separation; it is a game with death, allowing us to settle the boundary between the living and the dead and adapt it as a place of meeting and communicating with the Other. We can say that remembrance of the past offers an opportunity to look *through death* thanks to the oblivion of what makes death incompatible with life. That is why the commemoration of the dead cannot be called a model remembrance, but it is possible to speak about the objective of memory as opening up various opportunities to recognise the past in the living present.

The death of a loved one destroys the foundation on which our everyday world rests, threatening to subordinate life and draw the present into the vortex of the past. In fact, the question of the representation of the past in the present is decided depending on the manner in which the loss is compensated and replaced in the present, what time it can save in the game with death. It makes no sense to look for a single form of such a representation, it should be at least as diverse as the goals it serves in the present, and actions in which it is included; but it is worth asking whether the *diversity* of these representations is the only way to retain the past, an essential opportunity to unmake and remake the borders of the present into a network of images and signs, direct or delayed links with the past. Only such a network could serve both as a ritual and virtual, inner body of the past, ready to thicken into memories and disperse again, giving way to new experience, accompanying the awareness of the present with a shadow.

In our memories the past comes as an image, a death mask that draws a line dividing the past and the present. It is assumed that an image gives an exact replica of the original, and its possession is evidence of domination over the process of change, birth and loss, and therefore the right to the inheritance left by the departed. However, an image is not yet a remembrance because, as Kierkegaard's *Repetition* shows, *remembering* itself is also a *loss*, an escape from the present; we remember the present when it is not over yet, as a past for the future, but should it pass, we cannot remember without a repetition of the past, otherwise the image will remain only a ghost, a false claim to the past. Even if repetition of the lost is impossible, absurd as Job's demand, it alone gives us the right to bear witness to the past. So what does it mean to lose something and go back to *the same thing*, even if it is the *past*? How does one retain a *feeling* of "the same"? A random impression, taste or smell can bring back the lost time, a forgotten sensation of others and oneself. However, it is recognised as "*the same*" because originally it encompassed other sensations, actions and words that are now brought back together with the forgotten taste and smell. In fact, what comes back is not the same smell or taste, but the same possibility to *accommodate* one inside the other, be a *place* bringing a variety of things together upon meeting. Only this place is what comes through in remembrance, always preceding, conceding, the *past*, a partner in all the games played by *the present*.

3. The image of the past delineates the boundaries of the place given to the present. Usually it is a reflection and a trace of the other, a kind of paradigm, a model to follow; this, in fact, is the whole point of Plato's anamnesis as proto-remembrance, which returns the soul to Sameness, giving it a commensurate place in the movement of the sky and the order of other souls. Apparently, orientation in space is akin to memory, whether it is human or animal memory, but the question is not about memory in general, but of remembrance, namely how the past appears in this memory of place. Movement in space and mastering its borders and routes teaches one to see things from aside, to see oneself seeing things, that is, literally inheriting oneself in space, which is itself appropriated as an inalienable part of this inheritance. To a certain extent, any act of perception is such a movement along the borders of the place. What do we feel when moving a hand over the surface of a thing? First of all, the hand itself becomes the surface which the thing indicates by its impact, and this indication gives an insight into its shape and properties. Thus the body born in perception is perceived not only as a place to register actions, but also as a way to distinguish between *before* and *after,* the pre-established boundaries of the body and the changing outline of outer space, open to action and appropriation.

Jacques Lacan said that a gaze of the subject is only a spot located in the gaze of the Other, in its comprehensive light. It is a sign of the original lack, the desire to be, to have a body, which is appropriated only as an image in the gaze of other people, in a mirror reflection, in the indication of things. Therefore, *before* and *after* are first set apart by the difference between the other's and one's own gaze, place of the body, its boundaries, and its game, its action, in which the other's gaze moves away in space up to the boundary of the invisible and indistinguishable. We remember, not when we draw pictures of the past; a distinction between perception and the perceived is a step towards remembering, a reproduction of an effort endowing the perception of a thing with the story of its acquaintance and a presence under its anticipatory gaze. Thus, when looking at a fuzzy image one can notice a thickening shadow, a denser colour in one part of it, and this almost abstract interest suddenly turns into a visible space event, into a certain pattern, which enables one to discern in the thickening shadows the outlines of the eyes, and, finally, the expression of the gaze, looking at once from the present and the past, not a remembrance, but a memorable *place in the present.*

What we call the present does not coincide with the moment of direct experience, event, action of the body, its interaction with other bodies. The present is a paradoxical measure, because it is supposed to cover the infinity of everything existing in each moment. Things remind us of their hidden sides facing other things, invisible or completely unknown, which fill the space of the present on a par with the perceiving and acting body. If one walks down the street, a stream of cars and passers-by becomes a reality of the present and remains that even when the walk is a thing of the past

and street noise has faded away outside the house walls. Raising to the surface of the present a space of countless things and events, the past lurks in every crease of the surface as a possible manifestation of the invisible. The distance travelled is recognised, not in the external addition of the past, but in the guise of familiar things and places that we remember when we see or only just approach them. It is the same with our own body, which turns at the same time into the space of the present and the past, a feeling of oneself and the "memory of sides, knees and shoulders" guiding us on a journey to lost time.

Since being one's past means changing and only becoming who you are, the memory of the past becomes a measure of becoming, the only one of its kind, a way of being-in-the-other and discerning the presence of the other in the contours of the present. In this sense, a remembrance is not only an image of the past but also an *inner language* capable of distinguishing signs of the other's presence in forms of space; Hegel writes about it in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, believing that memory finds its true realisation in the language and becomes an "internal external" of the spirit, the last frontier on the way to thinking. This means that the trust in memory goes back to the origins of the language and the confidence in one's *Other*, to the possibility of being in the other necessary for inner speech, in the past and the future, in recognition of one's ancestors and descendants.

Hegel deems it possible to overcome the singularity of the sensual in the universality of the spirit, turn matter into a fine line of the signifier, and the history of the world, into a memory and self-awareness of Spirit. Thus, memory speech should link up with the logos of history. However, outside this completeness memory speech does not coincide with the fixed meaning system, remaining an arbitrary, idiosyncratic form of language and demonstrating a variety of possibilities to be the present, the past and the future. In his *Difference and Repetition* Gilles Deleuze singles out three types of repetition, three types of rhythms, with which the present communicates with the past and the future. In the first case, the past is reproduced in the present unconsciously, as a habit that has become automatic; repetition of the second type is the reverse of the first and is a reflection of the present in the past, being in fact a repetition of a memory in the sense of pure remembrance of Bergson's *Matter and Memory*; the third type of repetition is built around birth and death as events of the future in the present. Deleuze's three repetitions are ideal types of a relationship of the past and the present, in fact, always woven into the unity of remembrance as speech unity, marking the presence of the past and the future in the present.

The first repetition is recognised as a metonymical rhythm of value transfers, making it possible to reproduce in a new present the habits and skills of existence acquired in the past and play it backwards, discerning traces of the past in the contours of the present, inferring from the available effects to absent causes, from visible fragments to the invisible whole. Carlo Ginzburg described this type of thinking and memory as an "evidential paradigm", linking it to, inter alia, the emergence of the art of storytelling,

and with it, history itself[1]. The relationship of action and subject, a change in the arrangement of objects which turns into a memory of place are metonymical; this kind of relationship can be seen as a relationship of similarity of the past and the present, action and its reproduction in effect. Werner Herzog's film, *Ten Thousand Years Older* has an episode when the leader of the Uru Eus tribe recalls killing a family of white settlers, and to restore this event in his memory starts walking and swinging his bow. His gestures do not repeat exactly his previous actions, but represent a memory, which became a dance and a song: the body moves like a living scene of his memories, and the leader, fascinated by images and events of the past, is the embodiment of the second rhythmic model. In his dance the present and the past meet and become the same, which turns the memory scene into a *metaphor* of the murder. Pierre Bourdieu writes of ritual practices as a form of mnemonics, ensuring the effectiveness of remembering by mutual reflection of structures of various spaces and metaphorical transfer from one field to another of social skills of behaviour and orientation. The man's mode of action, his habitus, embodying a variety of such skills is nothing other than "a metaphor of the world of objects, which is itself an endless circle of metaphors that mirror each other ad infinitum"[2].

Mutual reflection of different worlds defines the essence of Plato's understanding of memory. The soul must see its reflection in the image and speech of another, a beloved or teacher, to rise in remembrance to God, with whom it has a relationship of an even more perfect likeness. Linking differences with likenesses, metaphor carries through the otherness of becoming, enabling a glimpse into the forgotten, the past, beyond one's ken, and Mnemosyne's gift, after all, is opened by way of a metaphor, so that a wax tablet and finger rings' imprints would help us get to the hidden trail of former lives and long gone times. An extreme opposite of Plato's view is Kant's forms of coexistence and contiguity, whose metonymy resembles a pure mind habit. However, recognising space and time in these forms, Kant turns them into a metaphor of line and number, which help him try to ascertain the reality of the external world and himself as a "world-being"[3].

Roman Jakobson suggested that metaphor and metonymy form two lines along which a speech event, a message develops;[4] we can add that a remembrance as a memory message cannot do without the same figures

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[1] Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths and the Historical Method*, the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, p. 102.

[2] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, translated by Richard Nice, 1990, p. 77.

[3] Immanuel Kant, "Vom inneren Sinn".

[4] "The development of a discourse may take place along two different semantic lines: one topic may lead to another either through their similarity or through their contiguity. The metaphoric way would be the most appropriate term for the first case and the metonymic way for the second, since they find their most condensed expression in metaphor and metonymy respectively." Roman Jakobson, *Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances*, p. 129. http://theory.theasintheas.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/jakobson_Aphasia.pdf

(of speech). However, there is an important difference between the two messages, since language gives us sign material, while remembrance for the first time turns various moments into signs of the past. In this case, the meaning of metaphor and metonymy is determined not so much by the construction of the message chain, but the formation of a certain vision making it possible to distinguish in the figures of the present a possibility of a game or performance played out in the presence of, or under the gaze of the past. Neither metonymy nor metaphor subordinate the present to the past or the past to the present; bringing closer together the different, they do not remove it in the form of contiguity or similarity, but hold it as a fold on the surface, paving the way to remembering. Thus, on the way home you can wonder where you turned off the road last, but then you remember how you examined this house or let your glance follow the bend of the road, and the place itself directs your memory, determines eye movement and how you see yourself on the way from the past to the present. This memory gaze has a peculiar transparence, a sort of pure value of memory language, because the past is remembered from the present as if from its future and is seen pervaded by the future, as if burdened with an internal event in which every moment of the present is preparing for the coming of its future. According to legend, Simonides of Ceos recognises this event in the space of the refectory, where the merry feast turns into the chaos of wreckage and mutilated bodies[1], and it is necessary to pass through the external and alien space of death to give back to those alive the names of the dead stolen by death and gather in memory the separated forms *was*, *is* and *will be*.

4. In contrast to Hegel's memory language, memory speech remains an unremoved border of the single and the universal, represented by images, seals and emblems of the past, whose meaning is only recognised as a riddle, puzzle, mystery of the initiated who have the key to reading the cipher. This is the only way to appropriate a place in the gaze of the Other, in the totality of Being or in the despotic order of the Symbolic. This is, to a certain degree, summed up by Lacan's analytics of gaze, which links the possibility of a subjective position with the use of a mask, the art of simultaneously hiding and presenting oneself, being a blind spot in the spectacle of the world and turning blindness into a desire to recall the presence of the Other forgotten in this spectacle. The use of a mask is just a gesture in which a delay was originally inscribed, a suspension of real action[2], and in this sense Lacan's appropriation of gaze reproduces Bergson's

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[1] Cicero, *De Oratore*, Cicero in 28 Volumes, Vol. III, with an English translation by E.W. Sutton, London, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1942, p. 465, 467.

[2] "What is a gesture? A threatening gesture, for example? It is not a blow that is interrupted. It is certainly something done to be arrested and suspended. ...As a threatening gesture it is inscribed behind." Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, Translated from the French by Alan Sheridan, London, 1977, p. 116

understanding of memory and vision as a reaction delay, the shading of natural light and turning the shadows into the background and the outlines of the visible image in equal measure of the present and the past[1].

Thus, a gesture appears as a kind of remembrance and a sign of the forgotten, a mystery of the past and the key to understanding it, but it should be added that gaze as the first gesture finds a special form of presence, a place which defines all of the games of masks, demonstrations and concealment, direct action and infinite delay. To clarify its meaning, it is worth turning to Roland Barthes' reasoning in which the past of photography is opposed to memory[2]. In contrast to the disparate images of the past, photography is perceived as a punctum and punctum wound, a completed *"this-has-been"* event, crossing the stream of memories by the direct gaze of the departed, Death[3]. And yet this discouraging gaze of the past has a certain kinship with memory. The forgotten is revealed not in the feeling, not in the experience of a delayed return, but as a direct loss, which is the necessary condition for memories. Barthes' entire book is memories of his mother, and what completes it and turns the photograph into a genuine memory is the face of the mother, lost and found as the past itself.

The face is what cannot be seen directly, it is given only in reflections as the form and condition of presence in the sensual world, always open, unoccupied place of perception. The face is not seen, but is *reproduced* by everything visible and, above all, the face of the other, which becomes the most important form of memory, recognition of one's presence in the world. In the face of the other the world restores what was lost at the moment of birth, as if recognising that the present in its final existence is commensurate with the entirety of the past and the consummate. Therefore, it can be called the actuality of memory, a kind of *consciousness of the memory's subject*. The identity of the person, based on memory, implies the uniqueness of a face lost and restored by the other. In the end, to become real does not mean to move from one time to another, because in the past we do not remain who we were in the present. We have become real only because the past was a loss at every moment, a becoming, and therefore the memory of the past is no more and no less than a measure of *the other*, an excess of the visible, piercing the present as the gaze of the Other.

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[1] Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, translated by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1911, p. 12.

[2] Roland Barthes, *Camera lucida. Reflections on Photography*, Translated by Richard Howard, Hill and Wang, 1982, p. 91.

[3] Ibid, p. 79

Claire Farago

The future of world art history as cultural memory

> The idea of a contemporaneity of the present and the past has one final consequence: Not only does the past coexist with the present that has been, but, as it preserves itself in itself...it is *all* our past, which coexists with each present.
>
> Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*[1]

What does it mean to continue the work of Dmitry Vladimirovich Sarabianov on cultural memory? We are today witnessing the expansion of the discourse of Art Studies to embrace a worldwide or global perspective that encompasses many kinds of cultural artefacts and activities. The new initiative embraces the challenge to theorize about the complexities of cultural interaction without imposing ethnocentric categories such as those that historically defined the discipline of art history on Euro-American terms. The global turn also inevitably means uniting the world's cultural productions which have been historically sorted into the separate domains of art history, archeology, and anthropology. A practical problem arises because everything and anything manufactured by humans potentially becomes

a legitimate object of study. How is this immense object domain to be organized?

I will try to address the question of Sarabianov's legacy through this topic of the global turn in the discipline of Art History. Only a small portion of his life's work is available to me in English, his *Russian Art: From Neoclassicism to the Russian Avant-Garde* (Abrams, 1990), but in that widely read text, Sarabianov's stated aim was to insert Russian artistic achievements into the master narrative of European art. This type of intervention has a great deal in common with the efforts of feminist art historians in the 1960s and '70s who expanded the canon by inserting women artists into the all-male line-up of what they rightly perceived as a hegemonic discourse. Despite these attempts at recovery, the number of great women artists remained low. The second wave of feminist art historians questioned the enabling conditions of artistic practice – asking what social and institutional conditions prevented women from becoming successful. By questioning the framing conditions of knowledge production – beyond the knowledge produced – pioneering women opened up the field conceptually, encouraging productive new questions, new lines of investigation, and new debates on social justice that envigorated longstanding struggles for equality in society.

Still, the advances made during the ensuing "culture wars" through the 1990s did not go far enough in questioning the values that held in place art history's now destabilized object domain. Old hierarchies of aesthetic and ethical value, and of cognitive, cultural, and technological advancement, remained in place because the categories of "art," "nation," "culture," "style," "period," "canon," and so on were too often assumed to be unproblematic, not open to discussion, taken to be universally valid. These categories remain entrenched in the commercial world of the art industry – in museum exhibitions, commercial galleries, international biennales, popular culture. In his influential book, *Provincializing Europe* (2000), the sociologist Dipesh Chakrabarty describes growing up in a Marxist social and academic environment in postcolonial Calcutta. The European origins of Marx's thought and its undoubted international significance existed in tension with his own local lived reality where traces and effects of European rule were everywhere – in the traffic rules, the forms of soccer and cricket, his school uniforms, Bengali nationalist essays and poems critical of social inequality especially the caste system[1]. The "parochial" origins of Marx's thought was, at the time, invisible. It was not until Chakrabarty arrived in Australia to pursue doctoral studies that he could see European abstract concepts such as the idea of equality or democracy or even the dignity of human beings as something *other* than a universally applicable category. The idea that such abstract concepts could look "utterly different in different historical contexts" changed the way he thought.

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[1] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Poscolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, issued with new preface, 2008, p. ix.

These are also the normative values to which Dmitry Sarabianov addressed his survey of Russian art. What would it mean to continue Sarabianov's work today? The situation in which he articulated the traditions of Russian art and culture *differs* from the subaltern position occupied by women and others who are marginalized within the patriarchal structure of society. First, because the Russian artistic achievements that he wrote about had been suppressed by the State prior to the "Thaw period" in favour of an imaginary collective cultural memory visually symbolized as the triumph of the worker, which was hardly the actual case. Secondly, because Russia was widely considered by western European writers to lie outside Europe geographically and culturally during the formative period of art history in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when Sarabianov's revisionist narrative begins. Russia was also in-between Europe and Asia politically during the Cold War era, when Sarabianov was in the prime of his youth, a time of ultra-nationalistic sentiment. This double, or even quadruple, construal of marginality both from within and from without was on my mind as I prepared the paper you are reading now. I lingered over one tantalizing phrase excerpted in the call for papers on which the present volume is based: "the intrinsic innermost national traditions... hidden from outside view." I was reminded of the Russian film classic, Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev* (1966) with its valorization of "knowledge acquired without reliance on authority[1]".

Traditions that Sarabianov described as "capable of manifesting themselves at some stretch of history" and "against the artist's will" resonate with the arguments of Michel de Certeau in an essay entitled "Psychoanalysis and its History," which has long informed my practice as an art historian working in a complex network of institutionalized forms of power. Articulating the ways in which one is entangled with the imperatives of one's profession is no easy matter. De Certeau observes that history-writing and psychoanalysis contrast with each other as two mode*s* of structuring or distributing the space of memory[2]. They constitute two strategies of time, two methods of formatting the relation between past and present. Both, he argued, developed to address analogous problems. While history juxtaposes past and present, psychoanalysis recognizes the past *in* the present. For conventional history-writing, this relationship is one of

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[1] Jim Hoberman, "Andrei Rublev: The Criterion Collection," accessed on September 28, 2014, at Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrei_Rublev_(film)

[2] Michel De Certeau. "Psychoanalysis and its History," *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other,* trans. Brian Massumi, foreword Wlad Godzich, Theory and History of Literature, v. 17, Minneapolis-London: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, 3-16. De Certeau's concept of the mnemic trace is an historical framework on the model of dialectical anachronism. Wlad Godzich, introduction to De Certeau, *Heterologies*, xx-xxi, writes that De Certeau's conception of discourse recognizes that discursive activity is a form of social activity, an activity in which we attempt to apply the rules of the discourses that we assume. These may not be heroic roles, but they place us much more squarely in front of our responsibility as historical actors.

succession (one thing after another), cause and effect (one thing following from another), and separation (the past as distinct from the present). Psychoanalysis on the other hand treats relations between past and present as one of imbrication (one thing in the place of the other) and repetition (one thing reproduces the other but in another form). Both, de Certeau argued, developed to address analogous problems – to understand the differences, or guarantee the continuities, between the organization of the actual and the formations of the past. That is, the historian's task is to relate the representations of the past or present to the conditions which determined their production. As de Certeau phrased it so well, "memory becomes the closed arena of conflict between two contradictory operations: forgetting, which is not something passive, a loss, but an action directed against the past; and the *mnemic trace*, the return of what was forgotten, in other words, an action by a past that is now forced to disguise itself."[1]

Sarabianov's account of Russian art also reminds me of the great nineteenth-century Swiss cultural historian Jacob Burckhardt's praise for the enduring Italian national spirit as a natural bond that transcends any centralized bureaucratic structure. Burckhardt might also have been thinking of mnemic traces. At the time of its publication in 1860, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* was intended by its author as an implicit critique of current politics[2]. Sarabianov's strategic utilizations of a Burckhardtian understanding of nationalism should not be understood as the belated embrace of an outmoded humanist paradigm. To the contrary, his strategic deployment of an essentializing model of cultural memory carried its own implicit political gesture. I am reminded of another famous Russian film, Sokurov's *Russian Ark* (2002). The ghost of a nineteenth-century French traveller (the Marquis de Custine), famously dismisses all Russian culture as "barbaric," nothing but a thin veneer of European civilization covering a coarse Asiatic soul. Filmed in an uninterrupted 87-minute sequence of action – an extraordinary panoramic gesture in duration – *Russian Ark* is itself a gesture on a grand scale befitting the Hermitage's unrivalled treasures that frame the action.

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[1] De Certeau. "Psychoanalysis and its History." Historical representations themselves, as de Certeau argued, bring into play past or distant regions from beyond a boundary line separating the present institution from those regions. History writing (what he termed historiography) and psychoanalysis contrast with each other as two modes of structuring or distributing the space of memory. Both developed *to give the past explanatory value* and/or make the present capable of *explaining* the past; to relate the representations of the past or present to the conditions which determined their production.

[2] Burckhardt took an active political role only through his scholarship, became deeply disillusioned with the increasing tendency of government to endanger individual freedom and creativity. An increasingly reclusive member of the Swiss intellectual elite, he opposed the impending formation of the German nation-state for these reasons. Far from being a disengaged aesthete, however, Burckhardt paid obsessive attention to contemporary politics, though he remained "fundamentally unpolitical if not apolitical," according to Lionel Gossman, "Jacob Burckhardt: Cold War Liberal?," *Journal of Modern History* 74 (September 2002): 538-572

Two ghosts from the past make believe that what they witness is not a dream. When Sarabianov's narrative of Russian art was published in English in 1990, Gorbachev was in the midst of restructuring the economy. Sarabianov's history of Russian art, like Sokurov's film, is the event that rethinks past cultural memory in the present, the only position in which action is possible. We face a similar challenge now of how to make visible the broader conceptual framework in which the sometimes deadly debates over cultural identities and cultural properties are conducted. The dilemma of all art, regardless of what we designate by that word – of all artifice – is that signs are by definition substitutions of a "this" for a "that," and therefore art engenders a potentially endless process of semiosis that is inherently polyvalent, capable of signifying in multiple ways. This means that the most fundamental problem at hand for conceptualizing art history as the study of cultural memory is the notion of identity itself. Who decides it? Who benefits, who doesn't from those decisions? Whose futures are foreclosed? Currently, two contending models for understanding collective cultural memory are being played out in academic writings and these same models are utilized widely in the public sphere. One model is dependent upon neo-liberal notions of diversity, hybridity, and migratory and transitory identity; and the other, which might be termed a "nativist" model, emphasizes social cohesion, and the permanence and persistence of individual and group identity. The diaspora model is emphatically rejected by peoples whose collective identities are tied to ancestral territories, cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems, and ethnic identities. In nativist discourse, essentialism often plays a progressive role in forming a self-determined (or at least self-named) national identity.

Meanwhile, the opposite camp, in championing transitory identity that rejects essentializing constructs outright, remains indebted to the same epistemological underpinnings. That is to say, both models assume that each material body has one identity at a time, though identity may be lost and gained. And it doesn't matter whether we are talking about an individual or a collective because the structural relationship – one body, one identity at a time – remains the same. Few are aware of the oscillations between the two dominant accounts of collective cultural memory: being wedded to the one or the other renders its other invisible. What is unclear is that the positions are co-constructed and mutually defining, each existing primarily in relation to its other: a romance of unknown siblings[1].

Another model of identity or cultural memory is needed, one that recognizes that multiple identities or cultural memories are simultaneously possible, that identities and diverse cultural memories can co-exist without being commensurable or reducible one into another. The subject position of the critic in the institution also needs to be considered *within* the framework of the interpretation: I am part of the same historical continuum

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[1] Donald Preziosi, *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on a Coy Science,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989, coined this felicitous phrase.

as my subject of study. If my vested position remains outside the framework of discussion, the most significant epistemological and ethical issues will remain unarticulated and unaddressed. The spectre is invisible in the mirror, as the philosopher Jacques Derrida put it, and this condition can either haunt us like the ghost of the French traveller perpetually performing Sokurov's *Russian Ark*, perpetually orbiting around the same issues emanating from European thought – or we can remember our past differently, learn from it in the present, and use the lessons to devise a better future for all concerned.

If Dmitry Sarabianov were just starting his career now, would he still insert Russian art seamlessly into the dominant European narrative of art historical time? Today he would have other alternatives. We might speak of the work of art as an event, the material trace of which remains forever open to interpretation[1]. To study the artwork as an artefact in this sense of an event is to seize the contending forces of past and future in the present where thought and action are possible[2]. We have to re-conceive writing history as a translational exercise if history writing is to be an ethical rather than an imperial practice. In his famous essay published in 1978, entitled "The Fictions of Factual Representation," historian Hayden White criticized the assumptions of empirical historians who assumed that they eschewed ideology if they remained true to the facts, The nineteenth-century ideology that a value-neutral description of the facts prior to interpretation or analysis was possible, is an illusion, White remarks: "What is at issue here is not, What are the facts? But rather, How are the facts to be described in order to sanction one mode of explaining them rather than another?"[3] What has been at stake in the writing of art history is the *control* of "modes of explaining" – that is to say, the legitimization of the "reality" of history has often been cast in terms of legitimizing a single interpretative truth.

There is nothing "natural" about construing time as chronology or privileging temporal succession above other forms of narration. The manner in which works of art exist "through" time deserves even more scrutiny, even more vigorous shaking of Art History's epistemological foundations. One fundamental problem with most existing attempts to re-think the discipline from a global perspective – a question that bears directly on the present volume's objectives to expand the boundaries of art history and provide a theoretical framework for interdisciplinary approaches – is that the organization of cultural production by nation-states, continents, religions, period styles, and other such monolithic entities, is part of the same historical

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[1] Tony Bennett, *Making Culture, Changing Society*, London-New York: Routledge, 2013.

[2] Jae Emerling, "An Art History of Means: Arendt-Benjamin," *Journal of Art Historiography* 1 (December 2009): 1 -20, paraphrasing p. 3, where Emerling discusses the artwork marked with a "temporal index" that the historian/spectator witnesses at some remove.

[3] Hayden White. "The Fictions of Factual Representation," *Tropics of Discourse,* Baltimore-London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, 121-130, citing p. .

process as the objects of art historical study: such categories cannot serve as premises because they require historical explanation just as much as the "art" that is the primary object of study. The idea of "art" is itself a modern concept that evolved over several centuries, initially in western European writings, therefore also in need of historical explication. Our inherited monocultural and oppositional categories (Europe and Asia, Christianity and Islam, and West and Non-West) are also far from neutral or innocent. Like the historical idea of art itself, these categories of European origin also need to be understood historically, not applied unilaterally as if some universal idea of art existed outside of history.

A promising alternative to the schemes of periodization and national culture originally developed to account for continuity and rupture in western European art is emerging from current research initiatives to study regional trading networks. Trade networks historically enabled the circulation of raw materials, manufactured goods, people, and ideas. Many new and ongoing projects on maritime trading networks and other long distance exchanges are fundamentally reshaping inherited understandings of cultural transmission and exchange by moving away from questions of fixed identity to a multi-faceted understanding of the dynamic processes of identity formation. Such studies articulate historical alternatives to monolithic ideas of time and culture.

Attention to the circulation of goods and ideas – or we might, following Gilles Deleuze, better call them "assemblages" of heterogeneous bits and pieces – demands rethinking not only culture and "artworks," but history itself. The study of regions historically defined by trade is producing something very different from conceptions of geography configured in modern terms of landmasses such as continents and modern nation-states. Coastal regions, islands, navigable rivers, and other geographical features define important points of exchange in trading regions[1]. Such a topographical approach also avoids hierarchal distinctions such as Western versus non-Western art, or art versus artefact, and similar categories that have historically privileged certain types of cultural production and excluded many others.

Regardless of how art history's object domain is reconfigured, however, a radical reconceptualization of cultural space must accompany any serious discussion of how a world art history of the future might be organized. The ecological model of regional "connectivity" developed by Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell in their account of the Mediterranean (*The Corrupting Sea*, 2000) argues that the stability of regions n the Mediterranean region

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[1] The actor-network model conceived by sociologist Bruno Latour as a Deleuzian rhizomatic structure comprised of connections (in which material things are also "actants") is useful because it connects diverse types of agents into "assemblages" without relying on metaphysical concepts of transcendance such as the distinction between materiality and immateriality. For a concesie introduction, see Bruno Latour, "On Actor-Network Theory: A Few Clarifications," *Soziale Welt 47/4 (1996):369-381.*

is sustained by systems of local exchange based on shared environmental, biological, and anthropological factors that maintain a delicate balance between separation and connection. Such a model of interconnectivity can be organized at different scales depending on the objectives of study. This approach is useful because it connects local perspectives with regional and ultimately globally interconnected systems of production and exchange.

A deterritorialized model for organizing the discipline according to networks of interaction also has the advantage of producing numerous regional chronologies, rather than a single linear chronology tied to European events. We might use Deleuze's materialist epistemology that connects all "actants" into "assemblages" conceived as a rhizomatic structure without top or bottom, centre or periphery, to develop a self-reflexive, historiographical art history that opens up a new, transcultural, pluralistic understanding of what has been effaced by concepts such as periodization and essentializing constructs of identity[1]. Such a "pluritope" model of interchange involves more complex notions of causality because it proceeds in many directions, continuously changing and connecting objects with makers and users in dynamic networks extending over vast areas of space and time[2].

To have a productive conversation about cultural memory in any field of study, it is also important to consider *when* terms such as "identity" and "periodization" matter. In the current political climate in the United States, Russia, and elsewhere, the extent of our responsibilities as academics and intellectuals to link museology, history, theory, and criticism to contemporary social conditions and discursive formations is an urgent question. Conceiving of historical artefacts as the residues of events encourages an understanding of cultural commentary as a directly political act with the capacity to reshape the discursive ground on which cultural memory is shaped[3]. I could easily imagine that Sarabianov would be at the cutting edge of these developments.

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[1] On Deleuze's materialist epistemology, see further, Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Durham-London: Duke Univesity Press, 2010, especially p. 32, where she notes that Jacques Derrida also offers as an alternative to consciousness-centered thinking about the work of art by figuring its trajectory as "messiancity," the open-ended promissory quality of a claim, image, or entity: the unspecified promise is for Derrida the very condition of possibility of phenomenality: things allude to a fullness that is elsewhere. For Derrida this promissory note is never to be redeemed. – he affirms the existence of a certain trajectory or drive to assemblages withiout insinuating intentionality or purposiveness.

[2] To cite Eva Hoffman, "Pathways of Portabillity," in *Remapping the Art of the Mediterranean, Late Antique and Medieval Art of the Mediterranean World* , ed. E. Hoffman, Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

[3] Tony Bennett, *Making Culture, Changing Society*, Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 2013.

Silvia Burini

Cultural Memory as Semiotic Mechanism in Art

Memory, culture and interdisciplinariness

In my report I would like to illustrate introductory theoretical postulates with a set of concrete examples.

Reinforcement of cultural memory is a crucial goal of European cultural strategy. Following Iury Lotman[1], I understand culture as an indispensable precondition for the existence of any human community. The phenomenon of human community in itself rests on the presence of certain verbal texts, certain models of behaviour and certain situations with cultural functions. Therefore, we can use the concept of culture to denote the sum total of acquired rather than genetic information, a product of human memory that stores and accumulates information. Struggle for memory is an inalienable part of the intellectual history of mankind and, conversely, the destruction of culture starts with the destruction of memory, obliteration of texts and oblivion of ties.

The preservation of the common cultural past and dissemination of knowledge about it are thought to be a priority in Europe today. The importance of preserving traces of the past, which Francis Haskell[2] wrote about in his *History and its Images* citing the 19th century as an example, has become obvious. Now that European identity is evolving and incorporating countries that, although not members of the European Union, nevertheless have a common cultural heritage with Europe, there is a burning need for

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[1] See Iury Lotman and Boris Uspensky, "O semioticheskom mekhanizme kultury" (On Semiotic Mechanism of Culture) in "Trudy po znakovym sistemam" (Writings on Semiotic Systems), V, Tartu, 1971, pp. 144–76.

[2] See Francis Haskell, *History and Its Image*, Yale University Press, Yale, 1993.

retaining cultural memory. Born of social shifts in the contemporary world, the need for identity results in present-day intellectual and scholarly debates focussing on the link between memory and identity (individual and collective), and between memory and history.

No other period in the history of humanity seems to have shown as much concern over the problems of memory as ours. Although there are different reasons for this phenomenon, all of them can in fact be reduced to two general ones. One is, as has been mentioned above, the need for identity due to social changes in the contemporary world. The reverse is what Tsvetan Todorov[1] called the "abuse of memory", that is, some attempts or others to create a gradual and deceptive alternative to History, as a rule, in search of a tradition (more or less invented) that could serve as the groundwork for new group identities. Yet another highly interesting link between memory and history is closely associated with the authorities' attempts to control or misappropriate cultural memory.

The plethora of studies of memory that take different approaches to developing the pioneering and unsurpassed observations of Maurice Halbwachs, for many the chief sociologist of memory who was the first to consider collective memory as a living product of social interaction, is understandable under the circumstances. It was Halbwachs who explained, among other things, the existence of the so-called social framework of memory that indicates to the individual what is worth remembering and what is not, the framework that develops in accordance with social changes. The 1980s witnessed a veritable boom in memory studies, which in the Anglo-Saxon tradition led to the emergence of a new field of research, *Memory Studies* (the need for coining a new term is indicative in itself). This sphere is developing so vigorously, in intensity and extension, that there appears the double risk of banalization of the very concept of memory or, on the contrary, its sacralisation[2].

Memory studies in the time of mass media and virtual reality enable us to understand the role of memories in constructing personal and group identities and thus proceed from memory culture to that of attention[3]. However, the study of cultural memory does not boil down to large-scale research into the way the past is preserved. The digital revolution has dramatically changed the conditions in which cultural memory exists. On the one hand, data processing is becoming an increasingly simple process, yet, on the other, the fragility of data storage devices poses a threat to long-term storage. In this new context one cannot but recall the forms and mechanisms that regulate the formation and social transmission of cultural heritage. What leads to the emergence of cultural memory that is so important for the formation of personal and collective identities? How do initially purely

[1] See Tsvetan Todorov *Gli abusi della memoria*, Ipermedium, Napoli, 1996.

[2] See José van Dijck, *Mediated Memories in the Digital Age*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2007.

[3] See Alberto Oliverio, *Memoria e oblio*, Rubbettino Editore, Catanzaro, 2003.

personal memories transform into collective memory? What is the difference between the ways a printed book, photograph or electronic document influence memory structure and quality? How does cultural memory function, what are its storage tools (writing, representations, location, bodies); and what are the forms of its archiving and cultural heritage conservation processes in contemporary art?[1]

"Interdisciplinary study is no longer a matter of good will, but a consequence of adequate interpretation of text." With this statement Wolf Lepenies[2] formulates in a clear-cut way a new comprehensive orientation of knowledge and simultaneously points to the need to attain syntony with Internet hypertext and the ability to bring together the various aspects of the investigation of the phenomenon of memory and remembrances so as to make the multitude of diverse approaches especially effective.

Memory studies are active in neurobiology, communications research and different fields of philology and psychology, ranging from the philosophers' historical interest to the practical interest of the educators. This is an example of how a common subject can be found in diverse disciplines and studied with the help of various methods.

This growing interest in the theme of memory has resulted in specialisation of individual aspects that is fruitful in every respect and all sorts of paradigms and discourses. The conviction that there can be no integral theory of memory does not interfere with quests for points of contact between different perspectives[3].

Memory studies exemplify a field of research in which specific cognitive approaches of different disciplines explain only certain aspects of this phenomenon. Could it be that in reality we have here structural analogies between different phenomena under the blanket term of "memory"? Could it be that knowledge of individual sectors helps clarify and define gaps in one's approach? Perhaps it would be more productive to speak not about memory itself, but about memory studies, which in every case involve a general tentative presupposition irrespective of discipline, methods applied or cognitive interest, and about phenomena being significant if with respect to them a link can be identified between the past and the future.

Aleida Assmann adds that with all its multiple aspects memory is not only an interdisciplinary phenomenon, that is, a subject matter investigated by many disciplines, but at the same time a moot and controversial subject within any discipline taken separately.

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[1] See Aleida Assmann, *Ricordare. Forme e mutamenti della memoria culturale*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2002.

[2] See Wolf Lepenies, *Gutenbergs Reisen: Über die fortdauernde Faszination des Buches in den Zeiten des Internets* // «Süddeutsche Zeitung» [SZ am Wochenende]. No. 208. 9–10 September 2000.

[3] See *Globalization, cultural identities and media representations*, edited by Natascha Gentz and Stefan Kramer, State University of New York Press, New York, 2006.

TO VISUALISE THE TIMES: SANDRETTI COLLECTION

For several years the CSAR (Centro di studi sulle arti della Russia di Ca' Foscari), which I head, has been working on several research projects connected with huge Italian collections of Russian art. The first project aimed to organise chronologically the collection amassed by Alberto Sandretti in the course of more than fifty years. Thanks to its qualities, this collection became a fruitful groundwork for a pilot project to work out a prototype for successful future use, a prototype that we called "a house of memory". If memory is culture, it requires interdisciplinary approaches and acknowledges that the artistic or, more broadly, visual sign possesses a unique potential for restoring and transmitting fragmented memory. It is precisely for this reason that the multifarious documents collected by Sandretti, his unshakeable belief in the emotional charge and memorial potential of an iconic sign, as well as his unswerving striving that these signs serve above all to visualise the times, the 20th century, are the underlying elements of our large-scale cultural project. Add to this an exceptionally beneficial circumstance enabling a study of material of top artistic quality straight from the source.

Proceeding from the Warburg method of using visual evidence as documents containing historical information and studying the Sandretti collection, we therefore managed to identify the relationships which existed and continue to exist between culture and society and to show that the phenomenon of reception always takes place at the meeting ground of different cultures, which makes it possible to understand the "otherness" of a strange culture and the essence of one's own.

Ilya Repin
Postcard. 1898
Published
by Community
of St. Eugene

Within the framework of the project that I headed and Matteo Bertele curated we have of late studied, made an inventory of and scanned most of the postcards collected by Alberto Sandretti (see http://www.russinita-lia.it/cartoline.php). Most of the over 10000 art postcards of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries date from the Soviet period. In the course of decades Sandretti bought postcards at museum kiosks, antique shops and flea markets in the Soviet Union and Russia. The first of the sections we studied consists of 3139 postcards reproducing artworks, primarily paintings, drawings, designs, sculptures and photographs. From the chronological point of view the section is divided into two groups, one comprising reproductions of prerevolutionary art (748 postcards) printed before and after 1917 and the other reproductions of art of the Soviet period (2391 postcards).

Prerevolutionary postcards are for the most part reproductions of well-known pictures of the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, mostly by Russian artists and members of other national schools. Such postcards were intended above all for enlightenment purposes and enabled the public to see artistic treasures kept at that time in private collections, serving as an analogue

of an accessible art museum. This type of postcard, which can be associated with the development of Russian tourism between the 19th and 20th centuries, has another offspring with the representations of theatre sketches, and also ethnographical series, including, for example, "national types" illustrating the life and customs of the colonised peoples.

In the Soviet period postcards acquired an important ideological role. In Socialist Realism paintings gained priority due not so much to their uniqueness, originality or painters' characteristics as to their potential ability to be reproduced and educational potential. Most of the paintings made in the Soviet Union under government commissions and on prescribed themes, after getting ephemeral publicity at exhibitions and government awards, found themselves in Culture Ministry storerooms, from where very few of them ever re-emerged into the public light. The memory of them survived only in postcards printed in tens and hundreds of thousands of copies and distributed in a capillary way throughout the country. Thanks to their pocket size, low price and easy accessibility art postcards became hugely popular and widespread. Among the frequently reproduced genres were historical paintings with the obvious preference for military themes, portraiture reproducing the images of socialist leaders and Soviet citizens, be they famous or ordinary, and finally genre paintings of a narrative and didactic nature.

A significant portion of artworks reproduced on the postcards from the Sandretti collection are now lost and gone. The only trace left by them is on these art postcards that thus have a special part to play: they are not only objects of artistic and collection value, but visual documents and evidence of Russian and Soviet art of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Zinaida Serebriakova
Young Girl.
From the Kursk Gubernia
Types series
Postcard, published by
Community of St. Eugene
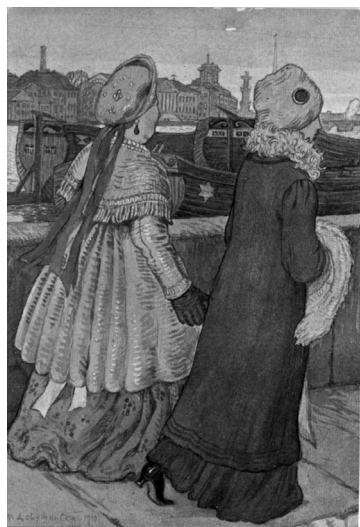
Carrying on this approach, we have recently launched another research project to create an active database and virtual museum of Russian art in Italy (20th century works)[1]. As part of the research context of memory studies, this project aims to restore the contours of the cultural history of nations and the interrelationships between the cultural experiences of different nations. The overall purpose is to facilitate the reconstruction of a complicated picture of 20th-century Russian art, including that part of Russian artistic culture which

Mstislav Dobuzhinsky
Wet-nurse.
From the Petersburg
Types series, 1910s
Postcard, published
by Community
of St. Eugene

[1] Data base attivo e museo virtuale dell'arte russa in Italia (opere del XX secolo).

Samuil Adlivankin
Our Heroes. 1930
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow
Postcard, Sovetsky
khudozhnik
Publishers

Pyotr Konchalovsky
*Coming
from Haymaking*.
1948–51
Directorate
of Art Exhibitions
and Panoramas
Postcard, Sovetsky
khudozhnik Publishers

Yuri Pimenov
Arrived for Practicals.
1954
Postcard, IZOGIZ
Publishers, 1959

for different reasons and in different ways developed or found itself outside Russia. Another special aim is to pinpoint the exact coordinates which determined the presence of Russian art in Italy in the 20th century, to construct its iconographical repertoire and promote its Internet publicity.

Let me stress the specifics of the phenomenon investigated in this project. It is not a matter of describing the normal circulation and movement of artworks in the international environment of the 20th-century art market, but of making a reconnaissance study of comprehensive cultural value.

There are two major aspects to this study:

a) to reconstruct the repertoire of works by Russian artists that made their way to Italy (as a final destination or in transit to other countries

Eliy Belyutin
Pasternak. 1969
Private collection

Otari Kandaurov
Proteus. 1970
Private collection

of Europe) on the wave of emigration triggered by the Russian revolution of 1917 and lasting throughout the period between the two world wars;

b) to reconstruct the phenomenon of collecting Soviet art (official and non-official) in Italy in the Thaw period and up to the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Ernst Neizvestny
Crucifixion. 1971
Bronze
Private collection

Boris Sveshnikov
First Snow. 1971–2
Private collection

Vladimir Weisberg
Still Life. 1969
Private collection

Both aspects are connected with different stages of Russian history, in which the development of culture of necessity went two separate ways, independent of and incompatible with each other. In one case a split happened between Russia and the émigrés resulting in two cultures, each with aesthetics of its own and its own cultural institutions (magazines, publishing houses, schools, academies and art galleries). In the other, it was a matter of inner stratification within the Soviet Union and two artistic processes, one official and the other non-official. The latter, forced to exist in the underground inside the country, won recognition among gallery owners, critics and collectors outside the Soviet Union.

The innovative nature of the project is ensured by the methods of data collecting and forming an interactive database that can become an open source for the scholarly community (and many Italian collectors) that would be conducive to the understanding and contextualisation of artworks, among other things, owing to data collection through verified crowd sourcing.

The main result we expect from this project is the appearance of an accessible online database of digitised images of all sorts of Russian pictorial art on the territory of Italy. In fact, it is a matter of organising a virtual museum of Russian art in Italy. This database will comprise an image of every work of art, supplied with a reference note including its name (given by the author or attributed to it), date of production, technique, size, place of storage, provenance, type of acquisition, critical reviews and exposition history (if any). Every entry will also provide essential information about the author and artwork description from the historical and critical points of view. The database will enable a search by one or several of the parameters mentioned above. We hope eventually to attain an even more significant result,

Dmitri Plavinsky
Red Drapery. 1967
Sandretti collection

Oscar Rabin
Rural Life. 1970
Private collection

Lydia Masterkova
Composition. 1967
Sandretti collection
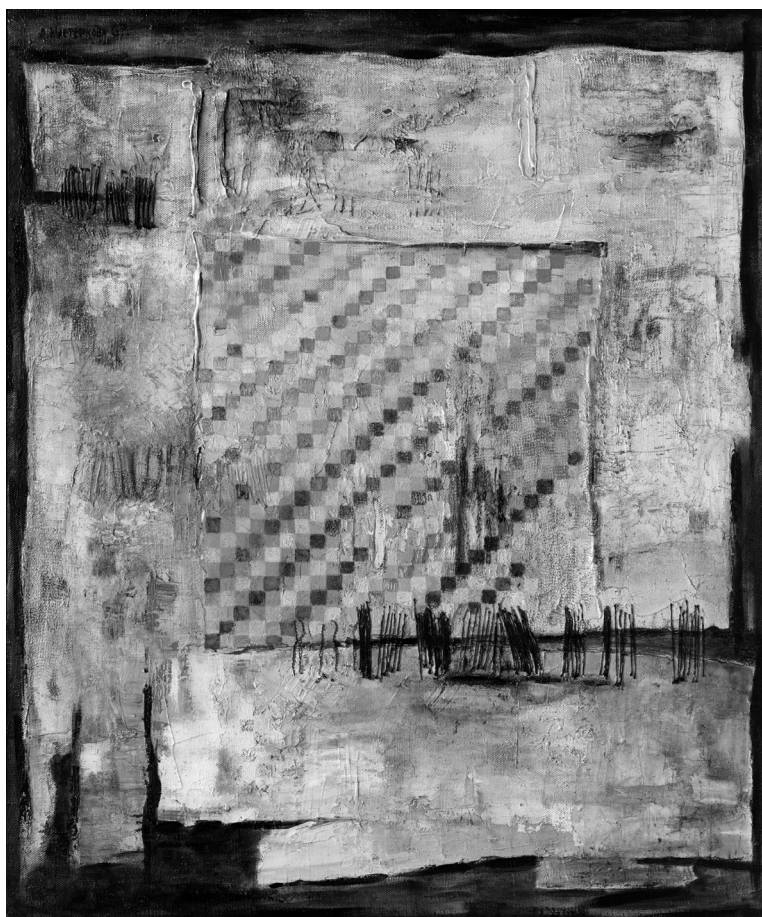
such as helping to accomplish a more precise and substantive periodization of 20th-century Russian art history – a problem that seems to be unsolvable at the moment on the basis of works stored in the major museums of Moscow and Saint Petersburg.

Giuseppe Barbieri

At the Theatre with Memory:
Uncertainty as a Research Canon

I would like to begin by mentioning a friend who unfortunately is no longer with us: the philosopher Aldo Gargani. Some forty years ago, Aldo played quite a relevant role, in Italy and beyond, in what would later be defined as the "crisis of reason", leading up to the so-called "weak thought". Gargani edited a collection of essays titled precisely *La crisi della ragione* ("the crisis of reason"),[1] which notably included Carlo Ginzburg's first essay on a subject pertaining to art history. In that essay, titled "*Spie. Radici di un paradigma indiziario*" ("Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm"),[2] Ginzburg compared the method developed in the late 19th century by art critic Giovanni Morelli to the parallel reflections of Sigmund Freud and Sherlock Holmes, the famous detective invented by Arthur Conan Doyle. Ginzburg's idea remains interesting to this day.

  On the numerous occasions on which we met, Gargani would often talk of artworks as "influential images". In other words, he considered them as signs with which each generation must come to terms. Gargani's words come back to me every time I think of Titian's *Allegory of Prudence* (or *Praise of Memory*) at the National Gallery in London. If each generation looks at the artistic signs of the past, on the one hand this gives us a truly inexhaustible opportunity to interrogate the artwork and reopen old cases, as noted in 1942 by Lucien Febvre.[3] On the other hand, it is also evident that

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[1] See Aldo Gargani, ed., *Crisi della ragione. Nuovi modelli del rapporto tra sapere ed attività umane*, Turin, Einaudi, 1979.

[2] Ibid., pp. 57-106.

[3] In *Le problème de l'incroyance au XVIe siecle. La religion de Rabelais*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1942, p. 3.

if each generation experiences and practices the eternal topicality of the artwork, the accumulation through time of questions and answers also has to do with memory as the subject and tool of our research.

As we know, influential images and "*loci*" are the foundations of the art of memory, from Simonides of Ceos to the Early Modern Period; and consequently, also of Giulio Camillo Delminio's famous "*Theatro della memoria*" ("Theatre of Memory"), on which I worked several years ago, periodically returning to it.[1] A Russian colleague told me that Frances A. Yates' 1966 study on the art of memory[2] has recently been translated and published in Russia,[3] raising a well-deserved interest. As I recall, the only inaccurate section in that otherwise admirable book is the one about Giulio Camillo's *Theatro*, a structure which Yates recognises in Andrea Palladio's Teatro Olimipico. Palladio's theatre, however, dates only from 1580, and its aspect would have been incomprehensible to anyone at least until Daniele Barbaro's 1556 edition of Vitruvius, where the enigmas contained in the Roman architect's V book (the one dedicated to ancient theatre) were finally solved, precisely thanks to Palladio. Camillo, for his part, submitted his project for a theatre of memory to the King of France Francis I only in 1519. And at that time, the word "*teatro*" could be understood only in the sense of "stage": the presence of a stage was sufficient to transform any hall or yard into a theatre, as illustrated by numerous examples.

Giulio Camillo had devised an ingenious *periaktos*, recuperating an accurate and ancient revolving device for changes of scene, known at least since the second half of the 15th century, as documented by a famous drawing by Francesco di Giorgio Martini.[4] The structure of Camillo's theatre, which I found in a convoluted passage of Robert Fludd's *Utriusque Cosmi* (1617),[5] enabled a mind-staggering number of mnemonic combinations: seven levels and seven sectors capable of revolving both vertically and horizontally ensure 823.543 possible combinations. Seven raised to the seventh power. And if we multiply this number by the some 300 images, possibly drawn by Titian and somewhat mysteriously described by Camillo in his posthumous

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[1] See in particular my essays *L'artificiosa rota: il teatro di Giulio Camillo*, in *Architettura e Utopia nella Venezia del Cinquecento*, ed. by Lionello Puppi, Milan, Electa 1980, pp. 209-212; *La natura discendente. Daniele Barbaro, Andrea Palladio e l'arte della memoria*, in *Palladio e Venezia*, ed. by Lionello Puppi, Florence, Sansoni 1982, pp. 29-54; *Un segreto europeo: il "teatro" di Giulio Camillo*, in *Le Venezie e l'Europa. Testimoni di una civiltà sociale*, ed. by Giuseppe Barbieri, Cittadella (PD), Biblos 1998, pp. 102-111.

[2] See Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory,* London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1966.

[3] *Искусство памяти*, Фонд поддержки науки и образования «Университетская книга», СПб, 1997.

[4] See Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, ed. by Corrado Maltese, transcribed by Lidia Maltese Degrassi, Milan, Il Polifilo editore, 1967: the drawing is featured in the Codice Torinese Saluzziano 148 of the Royal Library of Turin, f. 14.

[5] See Robert Fludd, *De machina nostra spiritali inventione*, in *Utriusque Cosmi Maioris scilicet et Minoris Metaphysica* [...], I, Oppenheimi, Aere Johan-Theodori De Bry, 1617, pp. 493-497.

Idea del theatro,[1] we obtain an incredible figure of 247.062.900 possible combinations. We can describe Camillo's *Theatro* as a powerful early search engine, combined, at least in its intention, to a boundless amount of cultural memories, to all the knowledge of the present and the past. Camillo, however, was unable to set up the contents rapidly enough, so Francis I grew impatient and stopped funding the project.

If I reasoned for so long on the *theatro della memoria*, it is because it helps us understand that the "influential images" that are the signs of art appear to us – in our eyes and minds – as constantly changing sequences, like the ever-shifting fragments of the kaleidoscope that we are. I shall return to this in my conclusions, when talking of what I call the notion of "uncertain memory".

Meanwhile, let me clarify the sense of my presentation with two observations. Here is the first. Over the past decades, the artworks produced by contemporary art have often been part of series that are relatively long (or very long), untitled, and marked only by the slightest inner variations.… This feature is indicative of their somewhat documentary nature, which makes them so different from what we (maybe inaccurately) perceive as the isolated and memorable icons from olden times. Thus, the signs of the present also owe their value to the fact of being part of a sequence, of documenting a research that involves but also transcends them.

And here is my second observation. Actually, the documentary nature of the artwork, even ancient ones – was already well understood in the 19th century by the scholars of the Vienna School – to use the term coined by Julius von Schlosser.[2] The Vienna School refuted the exclusively *monumental* dignity of the artwork and expanded, both chronologically and spatially, the realm of objects deserving attention and study: artworks from dominant periods (such as the Gothic age or the Renaissance) were no longer the only one that mattered, but the same interest could be extended to Mannerism and the Baroque. Likewise, the signs that mattered were no longer those present in capital cities and major collections and museums, but also those coming from more marginal contexts. The artwork and indeed any sign of expressive, meaningful intention stopped being a monument to become a document: of a context, of a period, of an artist's research.

Every document – as we well know – has to do with our memory, whether personal or shared. The signs of art can be very influential – and therefore more easily shared – but they are also changing. This is why they constitute specific series in both modern and ancient art – as we shall see – and inevitably share the same destiny as any other kind of documentary series. Many art historians, including my old master Lionello Puppi, with whom I had numerous heated discussions on the subject, believe that it is possible

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[1] See Giulio Camillo Delminio, *L'idea del Theatro*, In Fiorenza, Lorenzo Torrentino, MDL.

[2] See Julius von Schlosser, *Die Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte: Rückblick auf ein Säkulum deutschen Gelehrtenarbeit in Österreich*, Innsbruck, Wagner, 1934.

to find consistent connections within the series, thereby achieving a kind of objective memory of the past. Personally I never believed it, and always felt much closer to Jurij Lotman's definition of the more intimate nature of the "historical fact". Allow me two short quotes from him:

Unlike the deductive sciences which construe their premises logically, or the experimental sciences which can observe them, the historian is condemned to *deal with texts*. In the experimental sciences a fact can be regarded at least in the initial stages as something primary, a datum which precedes the interpretation of it. A fact can be observed in laboratory conditions, can be repeated, can be subjected to statistical study.

The historian is condemned to deal with *texts*. The texts stand between the event 'as it happened' and the historian, so that the scientific situation is radically altered. A text is always created by someone and for some purpose and events are presented in the text in an encoded form[1].

And here is the second quote:

Each genre, each culturally significant kind of text, makes its own selection of facts. A fact for a myth is not one for a chronicle, a fact on the fifteenth page of a newspaper is not a fact for the front page. So from the point of view of the addresser, a fact is always the result of selecting out of the mass of surrounding events an event which according to his or her ideas is significant.[2]

We might therefore conclude that every fact and every sign constitutes a point of view. My experience of archive research has confirmed this over and over again. As we sort through the sources and series of orderly documents, we regularly find out that the missing document is precisely the one we need, the one that would fully answer our question. Each sequence of documents, while apparently preserving and transmitting the memory of a given process, actually exposes the distance that separates the reasons underlying the constitution of that series from our own questions. In other words, we must constantly ask questions, including to ourselves, but often these questions turn out to be anachronistic. We ask the past something that has become relevant only in the future (as insightfully observed by Michael Baxandall[3]). For a while I believed that at least what I call the "black holes" of research (the missing document, the disappeared name, the undecipherable date) arranged themselves according to a consistent pattern in collective and shared memory. I hypothesized the existence of a "red thread" in reverse, made not of information but of the lack thereof. However, once more I had to face the fact that this was not always the case.

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[1] Jurij M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind. A Semiotic Theory of Culture*, London, I.B. Tauris & Co., 1990, p. 217.

[2] Ivi, p. 218.

[3] See Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention. On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, New Haven (CT), Yale University Press, 1987.

The memory is ever shifting and revolving in its own theatre, and reveals itself in sequences beyond our control.

This is all the more true when dealing with series of documents that combine different languages, something inevitable in a discipline such as art history that works on images but also on words: the words of the sources, of the critical apparatus, of the interviews and of the programmes (in a more recent or even contemporary period). Not to mention the photographs, videos, archived declarations, and digital files that have become available over the past century and more. On the one hand, all these factors lead to an exponential multiplication of data in our memory; on the other hand, they make it more uncertain. All we have is uncertain memory.

For many years now, my research has been starting with a bibliographical review. The observation is quite trivial. The slight difference is that I am no longer interested in the stratification and development of a critical viewpoint (the state-of-the-art, as it is often called in scientific terms), but rather in visionary positions that have fallen into oblivion, in delayed stances on a specific point, in failed connections between local and general studies. On a bibliographical level too, "black holes" appear once and again but with no visible consistency. Italians often talk of "critical fortune" ("*fortuna critica*"), but "critical misfortune" is far more interesting, and not only when dealing with individual artists.

As a matter of fact, I am not a great fan of coherence. Changing one's mind in a sign of good health. However, art history mostly developed by projecting a need for coherence onto the career and artistic research of artists: the catalogues of artists from the Middle Ages or the Early Modern Period (or indeed from any period marked by an artist-donor relationship) are all incomplete. Many years can pass between two artworks attributed to a specific artist (on the basis of documents or not). We are often tempted to connect those distant signs along the shortest possible line (which is the best line to grow cabbage, according to Tristram Shandy), or even along the parabolic perspective that obsessed Giorgio Vasari. Projecting coherence is undoubtedly a way to exorcise death, while our daily life testifies to our actual mode of progression: a slalom between halts and digressions. Yet another respect in which I prefer the memory model of Giulio Camillo's theatre.

However, in accordance with Lotman's statement, the inevitably "uncertain" nature of our memory is due to the fact that we deal with images, which are texts, and with proper "texts". The positivistic notion of "facts" does not concern us.

Lucien Febvre wrote:
All history is choice. It is so by the mere fact that chance destroys some relics of the past while preserving others. By the fact that, when faced with a great quantity of documents, humans tend to simplify, accentuate some episodes and obliterate others. And mostly by the fact that historians prepare their own materials, or recreate them if needs be; historians do not

wander at random through the past as ragmen looking for old junk, but start with a well-established plan in mind, with a problem to solve, a hypothesis to verify...[1]

This passage casts a worrying shadow over one of our most-employed tools, namely periodization. I prefer not to dwell on this all too important issue. However, does this means that we must return to the two historians who accompanied the ancient knights (or, in our case, the artists) in the 9th chapter of *Don Quixote*? That art history is no less an intellectual game than OuLiPo or Uchronia? I do not think so. Philology and the theatre of memory can get along. Let us remember, however, Camillo's over 260 million possible connections to the civilization that preceded us. I believe that our task is mainly to elaborate good questions. And to constantly mistrust the answers.

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[1] Lucien Febvre, *Dal 1892 al 1933: esame di coscienza di una storia e di uno storico*, inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, 1933, Italian transl., in Id., *Problemi di metodo storico*, Torino, Einaudi, 1992, pp. 73-74 (my translation).

Stepan Vaneian

Bruegel – sedlmayr – imdahl: the blind spot of interpretation

> Der Äußerste Grenzmoment der Verblendung ist dialektisch vermittelt mit einem Moment der Offenheit auf Offenbarung? wie immer diese als solche unausgesagt bleibt – wofern sie nicht, über der offenen (!) Hand der Gestürzten, als Erlösung durch eine Staude von Schwertlilien symbolisiert ist: Verkehrte Welt – so könnte man unter den Perspektiven des Manierismus sagen – selbst in Verkehrung.
>
> *Max Imdahl*

Paying tribute to the memory of both Dmitry and Vladimir Sarabianov, we consciously fall under the spell of our memories connected with them. There was a moment when a chance remark made by Dmitry Vladimirovich – that the greatest text created by Sedlmayr is "The Blind", not "Loss of the Centre" – supported us in our engagement with Sedlmayr's legacy, although at that time we did not have enough courage to focus specifically on "The Blind". However, after Dmitry Vladimirovich died, we felt it was somehow necessary to go back to this article and translate it. These notes are the result of our work on commentaries to "The Blind", which included an investigation into the sophisticated relationship between Sedlmayr and Max Imdal, an equally outstanding although somewhat lesser known author.

Before we give a full account of our probably somewhat incoherent observations on how any interpretation inevitably generates another competing

one that is not exactly an interpretation, we will outline the profiles of two characters in the strange story that is traditionally called art history.

First we would like to remind the reader of Hans Sedlmayr (1896–1984), who was one of the most prominent members of the Vienna School of Art History and the author of "Loss of the Centre", one of the most important texts in the Humanities field in the 20th century, which proved to be a true bone of contention. At first Sedlmayr was fascinated with architecture, which he studied at Vienna's Technische Hochschule between 1918 and 1920. Later he left for the University of Vienna, where he studied art history under Max Dvořák. After Dvořák's death Sedlmayr wrote a dissertation on the history of architecture under Julius von Schlosser. Starting from 1934 Sedlmayr taught at Vienna's Technische Hochschule and also at the University of Vienna, where he first acted as Schlosser's assistant, then from 1936 held a chair in Art History as Schlosser's successor.

Even in Sedlmayr's early texts-manifestos such as "Das gestaltete Sehen" (1925), "Die Quintessenz der Lehren Riegls" (1929) and the crowning text "Zu einer strengen Kunstwissenschaft" (1931), one can see the key characteristic of Sedlmayr's work, notably the gathering of methodological impressions from phenomenology, existential characterology and Gestalt psychology from the point of view of catholic anti-modernism. His rather radical 'non-Euclidian' view of architecture was expressed in pre-war publications dedicated to the Austrian baroque (1930) and Francesco Borromini (1934).

Structural analysis, traditionally associated with the names of Sedlmayr and his Kunstwissenschaftlichen Forschungen, which he edited together with Otto Pächt, bore fruit in the analytical approach towards both architectural forms (Das erste mittelalterliche Architektursystem, 1933) and painting (Bruegel's Macchia, 1934).

After the War "Loss of the Centre" (1948) was published, in which art history is perceived as a history of 'critical forms', or critical moments in spiritual history that are understood as symptoms of godlessness, polytheism and idolatry, of the victory of the 'technical age' etc. And we are confronted by the story of the sufferings and sacrifices of humanity.

Sedlmayr argues that one can find these martyrs, or witnesses, among artists, because the most sincere of them carry out a prophetic and eschatological ministry. This book or case history became the subject of fierce discussions, which became even fiercer with Sedlmayr's follow-up 'diagnostic' and 'therapeutic' works, such as "Revolution der modernen Kunst" (1955), "Die Tod des Lichtes" (1964) and also the collection of methodological articles "Kunst und Wahrheit" (1958). Its name is an allusion to Goethe.

"Die Entstehung der Kathedrale" (1950) – a 'Gesamtkustwerk' of Gestalt-structural approach with elements of visionary sacramentalism and focused on church architecture, is a text intended and also partly written as a diagnosis of modernity, but this time considering the period from gothic 'faraway' to modernist 'here and now'.

Continuing the tradition of phenomenological analysis of the architectural environment started by August Schmarsow and Hans Jantzen, Sedlmayr singles out 'baldachin' (also 'shelter', 'tabernacle' or 'aedicule') as a universal spatiotemporal monad, which he sees as a psychosomatic, if not 'primordial', invariant of the temple. Not only does the baldachin organize and channel some plastically and optically structured theophanic experience, but it also proves to be the condition of visually and emotionally dramatized kinaesthetic practice: the liturgical Meeting and Eucharistic Presence. However, because the Presence is given in the form of visual demonstration, this foreshadows all visual and optical illusions of 'modern art'.

A special aspect of Sedlmayr's work is his exemplary piece of analysis and interpretation of works of art (made for his art history seminar at the Munich university) that follows the four-part exegesis that originates from Philo of Alexandria and shows similarity to the iconological schemes of Erwin Panofsky, Rudolf Wittkower or Erik Forssman. Take such examples as his analysis of Karlskirche in Wien (1956), The Parable of the Blind leading the Blind by Pieter Bruegel (1957) and especially of De Schilder const (The Art of Painting) by Johannes Vermeer (1958). It was this last text that provoked an exaggerated reaction from Kurt Badt, who accused Sedlmayr of 'mystifying didacticism' from the standpoint of Gadamer's hermeneutics[1]. Sedlmayr responded by claiming that Badt's arguments were nothing but 'banal' because he did not seem to have been able to overcome "the natural attitude" (natürlichen Einstellung).

The problem outlined in Sedlmayr's text on Bruegel is as follows: how could one both contemplate and feel blindness not only thematically but also emotionally and cognitively? An instrumental reduction, i.e. empathising with the represented characters, seems to be possible only in the form of hypothetically [virtually] blinding oneself, in other words, in the form of either restraining oneself from vision or doubting one's ability to see.

This is the basis of the whole plot of an interpretation as an experiment, as a radical experience of self-challenging, starting from the artificial interruption of visual experience or its impeding through Tachistoscopy, which cancels the continuity of vision and brings the spectator back to the point of the initial meeting with a thing – to the 'macchia'.

Going through the semantic levels or rather meaningful aspects in a three-dimensional exegesis of the work of art, starting with the physiognomic level and followed by the formal and noetic, the latter including the object, allegorical, eschatological and tropological sense, Sedlmayr's text finishes by turning the spectator to the unseen transcendence of 'the final things': death, most probably followed by Resurrection.

As for Max Imdahl (1925-1988), he was one the most noticeable figures in post-war art studies, and not exclusively in Germany. What was special

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[1] See: Badt, Karl. Modell und Maler von Jan Vermeer. Probleme der Interpretation. Eine Streitschrift gegen Hans Sedlmayr. Köln, 1960.

about his scholarly work is the integration of an artistic education and an academic career as art historian: he worked at the University of Münster and was a professor at Ruhr Universität Bochum. The range of his interests is impressive: from Carolingian book illustration to modern art, including the 17th century French theory of art. Imdahl has been especially praised for turning modern art into an academic subject, at least in German universities. Apart from that he implemented undoubtedly progressive methods of artistic education. However, his main achievement that placed him forever in the Pantheon of the world's art studies was his book about Giotto[1]. This work is a brave experiment in putting together phenomenological hermeneutics, poststructuralist neoformalism and iconological postulates revised in the Neo-Thomist key. To the already known opposition introduced by Panofsky between 'iconography' and 'iconology' comes a third part – its result and, at the same time, basic unit – 'iconic' – Ikonik, slightly reminding us of Droysen's Historik. For Imdahl this is a theory and practice of considering the work of art both as a result of the painter's 'work of the eye' and as a way of discovering the 'presentness' of the spectator, which is crucial for the understanding of a work of art, whereas for the spectator his/her optical activity is a form of self-discovering and self-realisation. Apart from this, iconic is a special type of visual eventfulness where the dramatisation and choreography of imaginary acts, forms and motifs are intended to work in concert[2]. As a consequence, iconic as a hermeneutic procedure is rather a performative than informative process, in which an essential feature is the linguistic 'staged performance' of a specific work of art, which takes into consideration all its references – textual, related to events and to subjects. The result is supposed to be the grasping of a 'simultaneous and intense visually compelling totality of the image'[3] in its profound and immediate contingency[4].

...After this presentation of the two characters of our little hermeneutic play, as we believe there is no need to introduce Bruegel, let us proceed to the 'libretto', whose leitmotif can be formulated as following: is Imdahl's theory a real alternative to the previous tradition of interpretation, which is usually signified by the concepts of iconography vs. iconology. Imdahl believed he had developed this tradition to its climax and thus, let us put is this way, abolishes it by introducing his own iconic.

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[1] Giotto. Arenafresken: Ikonographie, Ikonologie, Ikonik. München: W. Fink, 1980.

[2] Ibid., pp. 17-28 (part II, 'Contingency – Composition – Providence').

[3] Ibid., p. 108.

[4] 'Necessity' as a stable visual composition of the representation is juxtaposed to the 'chance' (contingency) of a viewer's glance, which alone actually makes the representation (and the whole world) visible and thus meaningful. ((Ibid., p. 17, referring to Max Dvořák). This act of contingency already includes the power of the optical to grasp and conquer the haptic, if we use Riegl's oppositions here. But this is still grasping and categorization (restraining within public domain, and therefore the possibility to transfer the knowledge, its ability to communicate).

He finishes his book about the iconic by demonstratively criticizing Sedlmayr and parting company with him. It is not a coincidence that Sedlmayr was chosen for clarifying Imdahl's relationship with the old tradition; rather, for Imdahl he is a perfect example of demonstrative, or rhetoric, hermeneutics with elements of didactics, which is truer about De Schilder konst; however, he chooses to focus on the Blind … purposefully.

Yet this 'parting company' is preceded by mentioning Erwin Panofsky and his three-part interpretation scheme in quite a positive way[1]. Imdahl sees only one problem with it: exploring meaningful levels in the picture, Panofsky, although pointing at a possibility of 'condensing' meanings so as to receive 'a meaningful whole', does not realise this possibility. Staying at the level of the summing up of these meaningful levels, he does not try doing anything beyond what they are – regardless of their presence in a visual structure – in other words, in an optical and consequently historical event, in a specific representative and performative situation, which could be named only 'iconical'.

In Imdahl's view, one can achieve this adequate way of perceiving a work of art only through iconics. Because it takes into consideration 'the iconical evidence of a representation as a meaningful whole', it makes one experience 'iconographically and iconologically perceived pre-data'.

This appears to be kind of transcending, of overcoming the limitations of pre-established possibilities, i.e. a true 'transcending increase in the meaning'[2]. However, Imdahl argues, it retains the overcoming meaning inside itself, unchanged and, at the same time, up to date.

Imdahl claims that neither iconography nor iconology takes into account such an overcoming of the meaning of the original work of art. It should be pointed out that he undoubtedly uses a popular 'iconology lite' version, because the original complex version does consider 'the inner meaning' at the third level of interpretation. Probably Imdahl is not satisfied with Panofsky's slightly Neo-Kantian orientation towards immanent transcendence, actually towards a transcendentally, or direct and unambiguous way out into zones of existential symptoms, into the reality of 'reell' experience, using Husserl's terminology.

Symptomatically, Imdahl's discontent increases when it comes to Sedlmayr, whose texts 'dig into' deeper layers of the interpreter's personality even more radically than Panofsky's. Imdahl's questions to him are far more serious; his attitude might be unforgiving because they seem too similar to each other; for this reason Imdahl can't help noticing even minor differences.

What do they have in common? Apart from the focus on a particular work of art with its 'visual gestalt and particular order or meanings' (Sedlmayr's

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[1] Giotto. Arenafresken: Ikonographie, Ikonologie, Ikonik, pp. 99–101.

[2] Ibid. The iconic uses iconography and iconology as raw material, with an aim to "overcome" its meaning. Generally speaking, iconic relates to *icon* in the same way logic relates to *Logos* and ethics to *ethos* (S.92). Above all, iconic is an "iconic way of seeing" (Ibid.), i.e. a praxis of seeing and not the system of knowledge.

words quoted by Imdahl), it is attention to the 'special qualities' that orig-inate from 'the condensed' – the famous Verdichtungen. In this case in-terpretation is the next stage of creation in the form of 'poetry' (Gedichte), which is always 'truth', if the 'flesh' of art, the unshakable 'now' of a live creative act is taken into account[1].

Yet the differences between these two 'poets of the meaning' are more important. Imdahl emphasises their different understanding of what 'meanings belonging to a work of art' are, and how 'they enter the work of art by themselves'[2]. We argue that here is the origin of Imdahl's un-awareness and mis-understanding – his neither seeing nor accepting the things Sedlmayr writes about. The latter is not prone to deal with isolated meanings, 'contingently' popping into a work of art – and then popping out in order to meet the spectator's eye.

While examining Imdahl's interpretation of Sedlmayr, one notices the following accusations:

1. Sedlmayr is found guilty of building his interpretation according to 'layers' supposedly characteristic of the representation itself; as if the latter has a multi-layer and, what is even worse, both hierarchic and systematic structure of meaning. Imdahl believes that the idea of lay-ers is based on Sedlmayr's false conception of one original pre-perceiv-able layer that, however, has a certain 'mood'. This 'mood' penetrates all the other layers, which altogether form a system of analogic quali-ties represented at each level in different ways. Consequently, the ma-jor problem, from Imdahl's point of view, is that the meaningful whole, a kind of final meaning, comes as a result of the mutual neutralisation of the variety of meanings, its merging into the all-penetrating pre-conceived meaning.

2. Imdahl claims that his approach is different. In his view, the represen-tation, being built in the process of 'seeing sight' – sehendes Sehen[3], of contemplation, is 'coincidental' by nature, which means its visual and meaningful aspects, especially opposite to each other and com-peting, coincide in the moment of vision thanks to the active eye of

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[1] Giotto. Arenafresken: Ikonographie, Ikonologie, Ikonik, p. 99.

[2] Ibid., p. 100.

[3] 'Seeing sight' – *sehendes Sehen* is related, or rather juxtaposed to 'cognitive sight' – *erkennendes Sehen* (Ibid., p. 26ff). The last one is aimed at recognition of the well known meaning of the familiar objects of the external world, whereas the first one is a figural creative act, a real repre-sentational praxis aimed at and fulfilling the creation of meaning. However both ways of seeing are linked in integration of 'perspective projection' and 'stage choreography', both immanent for representation (Ibid., p. 20). On the one hand, actual sight really and literally makes a drama while moving the narrative, f.e. of Biblical story (thus making the script to play), on the other hand, the iconic turns the iconography of a scene into the emotional experience of a real event, concerning both soul and spirit – so that they both are examples of the higher range of spiritual and intellectual activity respectively. (p. 91ff.).

the spectator, who is aimed at 'evidence', i.e. the visibility and vivid-ness of his experience in a state of 'audacious equivalence'[1].

3. Nevertheless, all the accusations against Sedlmayr, who allegedly ig-nores the multiplicity of contradictory meanings, seem groundless. Moreover, Imdahl appears to consciously or unconsciously misrepre-sent the situation, which becomes obvious if one reads the final part of Sedlmayr's text in which he writes precisely about 'the multiplicity of meanings' (Dante's term). In this context the 'iconic' alternative to Sedlmayr's structuralism seems a mere extension of the latter's princi-ples and procedures.

4. It appears Imdahl misunderstands or ignores the core of Sedlmayr's idea, because Sedlmayr on purpose begins by mentioning the exper-iment with the tachyscope[2] that immediately demonstrates 'visible character' and inevitably draws attention to the 'endothymic' level – that of noesis rather than the representation[3]. In Sedlmayr's work we see the interpretation of the meaning-building work of noesis and clar-ification of the implications of the interpreting acts as such, which can be only cohesive because the nature of noesis is historical. The acts of 'understanding', with the help of language efforts, draws noesis out of its pre-rational condition. This is why this type of interpretation not only informs the spectator, but also transforms him / her by means of such a strong remedy as devisualisation of visual images. Without say-ing this directly, Sedlmayr offers his text as an experiment aimed at a representation of the author's position: putting the spectator and his /

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[1] Ibid., pp. 108-109. The last phrase (audacious equivalence - 'kühne Äquivalenz') occurs six (!) times in the two partially full pages of Imdahl's book, thus appearing like an incantation, espe-cially because these are the last pages of the book...

[2] Indeed Sedlmayr connects the tachyscope (an early version of the projector with revolving cylinder, slides and the source of light inside) and stroboscope (designed to make flashing lights to illuminate the picture).

[3] In his efforts at interpretation Sedlmayr refers to Philipp Lersch: according to Lersch, the endo-thymic level endorses 1) 'the tectonic of psyche'; 2) analogies to the structure of the brain (the deep brain as a connection element and the integrity of the brain as a part of the human body – key to the organic level of all brain performances, including representation); 3) the equivalency and isomorphism of all structures, including the semantic and exegetical (levels of meaning such as arrangement, formation and construction). The e,ndothymic level implies on its lower level a static pair 'sense of life' – 'sense of himself', and on the higher level – a system of emo-tions such as endothymic affections (their own *pathoses*). The latter are related to the 'personal superstructure' with its functions of thought and volition as well as its longing for control and responsibility. But below this endothymic base level (*Grund*), there is a true subconscious level, in other words, according to Lersch, memory, or traces of events and remains of the previous life. This dynamic model of psyche as interaction of static and dynamic levels implies the un-certainty and blindness (!) of the endothymic level, which however has an "*id*-image" character and remains outside the personal 'ego-image' channels (P. Lersch, Zum Personverständnis in der Psychologie // Idem. Der Mensch als Schnittpunkt, München, C. H. Beck, 1969, pp. 104-124).

her vision in the situation of non-seeing, of blindness – for the sake of Unseen.

5. For this reason we argue that Imdahl's criticism is a kind of self-defence against such attacks on both the spectator and their vision, and also the representation and probably its creator. However, Sedlmayr emphasises that there is no need to defend Bruegel, because the latter himself tended to critically shift these traditional positions: creator – picture – spectator. So Imdahl's reaction is primarily resistance to Sedlmayr's experiment, a move to look deeper inside, immediacy as the sole reliable condition. But it results in cognitive rather than optical blindness, rigid knowledge rather than vagueness, uncertainty and the permanent transitiveness of the foundations of one's consciousness.

6. In fact Imdahl uses the same device but he makes it more vivid and thus seemingly more convincing. Where Sedlmayr considers a macchia, Imdahl sees a diagonal, a vector determining and directing the sight (the diagram works as an instruction). This diagonal should 'express' polar opposites, or more exactly it provides their simultaneous presence in the representation, whereas for Sedlmayr everything seems to move successively. The structural analysis would not accept 'as well as...' This is evident in the scene of the Raising of Lazarus, where the gesture of Christ means omnipresence and omnipotence, represented by this diagonal[1].

7. Imdahl acts like Sedlmayr, both directly and indirectly, when he takes a separate visual motif and runs it through various themes. Yet Sedlmayr talks about an unformed motif, or rather a state of form (a patch), whereas Imdahl speaks of pure abstraction (a line). Where Sedlmayr indicates shifting, falling and scattering, Imdahl sees permanent wholeness achieved through the simplicity and singleness of the motif (line), and through its reduction. Nothing can happen to the line, because it completes and stops both visuality and hermeneutics, whereas the patch contains within itself without concealing, giving not just a possibility but a necessity, the inevitability of executing and constituting the meaning. The patch is not something initial, but it is awakening, eye-opening and dark-rejecting; in the tachistoscopic experiment the patch is a result of the meeting between dark and

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[1] Ibid., p. 105. Strictly speaking, when the ability to 'express' something (even the gesture of Jesus, overcoming the time at *Exactly-Now*) is attributed to the diagonal line, Imdahl's arguments fail to describe the real situation directly and precisely: the diagonal as an instrument of expression leads us back to the same level of allegory and metaphor, i.e. to the level of iconography. Leaving out all semantic 'metabolism' and achieving the 'anabolism' of the meaning is only possible through the intermediary stage of optical 'catabolism', a paradox of negation instead of uplifting the visual in the representation. This is exactly what Sedlmayr is doing, or to be more accurate, what his text is doing together with its readers. And one of them is – or was Max Imdahl (see below).

light, between a flash and the return to darkness. Nevertheless, thematically 'blindness' works in the same way as 'all-presence'. It is the same 'visible character' (Imdahl does not mention it when he characterises Sedlmayr); although it has different contents, its influence is all-embracing.

8. What is the reason for this strange situation? Indeed, such inability to see and recognise the obvious resembles blindness. Yet let us suppose that this is not conscious distortion. To explore this phenomenon, let us go back to two factors in Sedlmayr's work: 1) He writes about understanding rather than the meaning; he analyses the process of interpretation, the structure of the hermeneutic act which cannot be coherent in a simplistic way due to the nature of human consciousness; he considers the stages of understanding, not the layers of the meaning, and only at the end asks if these things were implied by Bruegel himself. 2) Such understanding demands the whole spectator, who must empathise with the characters of Bruegel's 'play', both performatively and transformatively; one's efforts to understand stem from one's blindness as the inability to accept what he/she sees because it is more than undesirable: it is disgusting. The spectator turns away, preferring not to see the fact that, being blind, he is not able to recognise himself in the blind.

9. Sedlmayr's major hypothesis is as follows: this situation of non-identifying oneself with the characters was modelled by Bruegel himself, who purposefully destroys, literally 'decomposes' the situation of wholeness, singleness, coherence and cohesion of not the representation but vision as the ability to recognize things and situations. Vision is connected with reminiscing, with one's efforts to identify with an already familiar content. And such exposure of the shortcomings of vision with the help of the representation is achieved through repeated use of macchia which literally patches, splits the objective order of the representation, penetrates the colour, turns even the space into a kind of millstone that revolves, grinds and plunges into the abyss everything and everybody, even including an uninvolved and uninterested passer-by. This is why Sedlmayr's tachistoscope works as a stroboscope![1]

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[1] Let us recall here once again that in the effect of macchia itself, which blinds or reveals blindness, emerges in connection with the primary experience of perception, with the continuous flow of stimulus-qualities, a sensory field, which is then subject to synthesis into the discrete elements of the conscious experience. Macchia is touching our consciousness with partially structured data. This is not the very *fundus*, including *fundus oculi*, but periphery, side vision, the flow of sensory texture with inevitable blind spots, since the retina does not catch everything in its field. And at the same time this means destruction of the whole mechanism of metaphor, as well as of the perspective with a single vanishing point, its defocusing, displacement of the virtual 'vanishing point' by a real optical spot, meaning escaping the two dimensional planimetry of picture (See Imdahl. Op. cit., pp. 126-127. Anm. 82-83).

10. Macchia is repeated visible, artificial and consequently instrumental introspection, visual autopsy, optical anatomy (imitating the figurative). The problem is to what extent Bruegel used it consciously? The pre-war article implies it was unconscious, and for this reason can be seen as a symptom relating to a diagnosis. In the 1958 text the interpreter follows and imitates the artist's ways, which means macchia is considered as a means of exegesis rather than diagnostics. Importantly, Imdahl finds himself in a kind of gap between ideology and methodology. The problem is whether this situation was provoked by Sedlmayr, or was it an inevitable shortcoming of his method? Is it possible that Imdahl somehow performs a decomposition of gestalt-structuralism?

11. Or is it the inevitable logic in the substitution of the objectivity of the text about the object (representation) for the objectivity of the object itself? In Imdahl's work the collision between perspective and planimetry is symptomatic. Is this not the same 'drama' we see in Imdahl's reading of Sedlmayr? Here we also find exegesis (with Paul substituted for Icarus on purpose), and this is justified as an experience of metalepsis (not metaphor!) as long as we acknowledge that the text on a work of art generates its own object, its own creation which substitutes for the original not only inevitably but also justifiably, given that the text is also a work of art in its own right. So Imdahl displaces Sedlmayr's text by his own. The question is: what kind of thing do we have at the end of this 'decomposition chain'? Could this be the only way to build real 'polysemy'? Are we not all involved in this process?

12. Is seems Imdahl prefers not to see all this magic exegesis transforming into mystical eschatology, which focuses not on the picture and what is in it, but on both the spectator in front of it and what is in him[1]. He does not see certain things in Sedlmayr's work in order to give his reader an opportunity to recognise his own hermeneutic innovations and the discovery of the 'iconic', because otherwise it would be difficult to discern them through the curtains of 'iconographies' and 'iconologies' invented by others. Imdahl appears to use such device as 'visual aposiopesis', which prevents the reader from seeing something familiar in Imdahl, his similarity to Panofsky, Sedlmayr and many others. One can appreciate his courage when, anticipating all possible comparison with his predecessors, he takes the initiative and compares himself with them, without giving his reader time to be a spectator, observer, witness or judge...

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[1] Imdahls identification of 'gestalt vision' with 'subject matter' of the visual motiv, as well as his allegation that Panofsky would disregard the non-objective emotional dimension of the representation, both sound almost like a provocation. Let us repeat once again that the blinding light spot, the flash, breaks through the surface level of visualization of objects and reveals the deep layers of meaning, connected not with the endothymic base, but with something more profound and at the same time Sublime.

13. Another form of such methodological camouflage seems to be Imdahl's transition from easel to mural painting, whose characteristics are, so to speak, transferred to the qualities and results of their analyses. However, he does not appear to notice that there is not a mere difference but a conflict between the two types of representation: easel painting in its objective definiteness (it is initially a thing) implies, provokes and stimulates 'de-thinging', whereas mural painting always implies an architectonic environment, and trying to affect it with the help of phenomenological epoché-decomposition has more serious implications than provoking the spectator and reduction of vision. This leads to the destruction of praxeological and existential space, rather than illusive, optical and visual. Moreover, in the case of Giotto's Capella del Arena, which Imdahl chooses for the application of his conceptual programme, this space is also a place of the Presence of the Sacrifice – the Gift and Gratitude.

14. However well intentioned, this cognitive reductionism casts doubt also on constructiveness, on the world and on physicality. This is more challenging and even more dangerous. For this reason it is tempting to look for a point of balancing, a period of truce, to go back to the representation and credit it rather than one's 'synthetic intuition' with immediate, simultaneous and, consequently, unshakable reality and almightiness. However, we ought to remember that, according to Panofsky, it is the 'synthetic intuition' that is responsible for reaching the ultimate level of 'intrinsic meaning'.

15. Let us try and see the situation at another angle: Imdahl is approaching Sedlmayr as a reader. He cannot see in Sedlmayr's text something that is not there because it is a consciously modelled text offering itself for experimentation. Experimental is the original situation of tachistoscopic examination of the picture, and tachistoscopic is the final, textual, picture of what was read. In accordance with its nature, the text, first, replaces the visual and the objective, which is not there as something real because we talk only about its representation; and second, it is linear, not simultaneous. Moreover, as a text constructed especially for experimenting with the reader who considers himself a spectator, it provokes this reader to elude the experiment. He has the right to turn down this proposal, especially if he feels he is forced to accept it not as a paradigm of interpretation aimed at pictorial art, but as a gestalt of universal reflection, because this puts in danger his spectator's and reader's existence as such. The reader may choose to reject the experiment; however, paradoxically, this way he will choose blindness, a descent into darkness, into the death shade. That said, Imdahl might have objected that being an object of experimentation feels awkward and is not necessary, especially if one can offer some obligatory, from his point of view, paradigms.

16. Thus we can say that Imdahl, reading Sedlmayr literally, uses his right to protect his Ego (he uses this word when describing Sedlmayr's

method, although Sedlmayr himself does not). It is a kind of uncontrolled counter-transference, by which the 'patient' Imdahl reacts to his 'therapist' Sedlmayr... Imdahl builds a wall between himself and Sedlmayr; however, he immediately covers it with various graphs and agraphs, if not breaks.

17. Yet such psychoanalytic and bibliological metaphors also comprise a more superficial layer of interpretation of the interpretation of interpretation... Such endothymic 'archaeology' might also conceal a basis, a 'continent', the layer of the completely unconscious where an excavation might turn into an involuntary, reflector autopsy, inevitably leading to hiding, concealing, burying oneself either in protective layers of Ego, or in crypts of Id.

18. The endothymic character of this process, controversial and unhealthy because it is unconscious and reflectory, relates also to the fact that its basis might be much simpler than we imagine, even primitive in the sense 'original' and 'archaic'. Imdahl approaches Sedlmayr's text as an outer object, alien or alienated from him. He sees it as fragmentary, in a decomposing manner, because any text is inevitably tachistoscopy and discrete, particularly a rival text. The only problem is that he is not completely satisfied with this original and archaic effect. He wants to use Z's textuality as raw material for his own 'contingent' construction. He builds or imitates an elusive, in fact, scenic, situation, in which, supposedly, such a level is achieved that there is nothing more to recognize and remember; one can only start from the beginning and build a relationship with the other through its consistent rejection.

19. Thus Imdahl's experience is an attempt to tackle somebody else's interpretation as an object of one's own experience. Patching is inevitable – a read text cannot stay 'spotless' because it is an object of manipulation: at first this might come in the form of envy (also an act of vision!), then – of a careful privatization (also a fact of awareness!) Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the condition of spontaneous, involuntary and apparently (but only apparently) unbiased perception is one's blindness, one's insensitivity towards the perceived text. It is also tachistoscopy, although organized at one's own discretion; it resembles blinking – as when you get a speck in your eye (hopefully, not a log). However, once again, this might be an involuntary and uncontrolled effect, like twitching.

20. Yet once there is no vision, once non-seeing is the basis of unawareness as the condition of freedom, independence from another opinion, then one could still depend on hearing. However, without hearing there is only the text, which in its primary silence is hard for the unseeing to read. Having escaped from the fire of visual hermeneutics developed by others, we get trapped in our own unconscious textual rhetoric. The text allows us not to see the author, to ignore him or just forget, but it does not make you free, because 'its name is legion'.

> Instead of the patch it offers diagrams, calligrams, vectors, structures and all kinds of geometric figures imitating writing, and consequently – the essence of activity. The 'diagrammatology' of the iconic dictates its own rules and blinds the reader with its illusive shining, suggesting that he can do everything according to his will and forget about his blindness given to him for the sake of seeing Unseen.

Yet because this blindness is selective, it does not involve the whole field of visual hermeneutics; the blind spot is functional; macchia is not glaucoma, breaking the representation into meaningful layers is neither, so to say, retinal detachment, nor the tearing of exegetic nets. This is rather their repair and airing by the artificial fire of the interpretation conflict.

Falsification as a reaction to the textual hypothesis-experiment, followed by visual revolt in the form of self-blinding, is in the very nature of the optical exegesis. It is not possible to divide the visual from the textual and the text is not only changing its object (we look at the text about the representation, not the representation itself. We have to start all over again: whereas at the beginning there is an uncertain and pure material-stimulus, in the case of the text I must construct the whole situation (allegory), stop to recognize it, stop to understand it (eschatology) in order to reveal the hidden as present and given for my conversion (tropology). But to achieve this – one must at first – die.

Resurrection is another light, and seeing face to face.

Marina Toropygina

Iconologist in Cinematography.
Fantasia and Style as Seen by E. Panofsky

Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) is regarded as the founder of iconology, a method of interpreting the content of works of art. The article considers interpretation examples from Panofsky's articles, books and correspondence that expound his creative method and his attitude to the problems of form and style in particular.

Two reproaches are most frequently made by critics of the iconological method: first, carried away by deciphering the content, the iconologists and iconographers forget about artistic quality and problems of form, and, second, in none of his works did Erwin Panofsky himself use the interpretation model he had proposed. For this reason I would like to begin with recalling the history of the appearance of the model table and to ascertain its significance to the method. This will be followed with some examples of Panofsky's interpretation and his reasoning both about painting and motion pictures. Addresssing cinematography is all the more interesting since, unlike many of his educated peers, including art historians, Panofsky loved and respected the cinema. Meanwhile, his famous work Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures is, as it were, at the periphery of his traditional interests – Western art of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The history of the appearance of the table and its subsequent modifications are considered in detail in my book[1]; for the sake

Erwin Panofsky

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[1] Toropygina, M.Iu. *Ikonologia. Nachalo. Problema simbola u Aby Warburga i v ikonologii ego kruga* (Iconology. The Beginning. The Problem of Symbol in Aby Warburg and in Iconology of His Circle). Moscow, 2015.

of brevity I will list the main facts. Panofsky presented the table for the first time in his report to the neo-Kantian Society meeting in Kiel. It had three horizontal lines (correspondingly, three strata of interpretation): phenomenal meaning (subdivided into objective and expressive), content meaning and documental or essential sense (Dokumentsinn), and three vertical columns: subject matter, the subjective source and the objective corrective of interpretation. His essay was called "On the Problem of Describing and Interpreting Works of the Visual Arts" and the word "iconology" was not used in it yet. A new version of the table appeared in *Studies of Iconology* (1939). Another column was added to denote every stage of interpretation. The first stage was pre-iconographic description and pseudo-formal analysis, the second iconographic analysis in the narrow sense of the word. Even though the general title of the collection contains the word "iconology", the third stratum of the analysis is designated as "iconographic analysis in a deeper sense" (iconographic synthesis). The third strata would be called iconological in yet another version of 1955, when the text would be included in the collection *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. We are thus witnessing the birth oft he method: the art historian first makes a report to philosophers, observes how the interpreter operates (including himself) and argues about the interpretation possibilities and limits. His second and third versions appeared when he taught at Princeton, with every stratum of interpretation getting its own denotation and the drive of observation and reasoning in general giving way to a somewhat educational intonation, which made the table look subsequently as a guide for action. Let it be noted that even in this version the method is the synthesis of different levels of perception, understanding and interpretation of an artwork and should not taken for an instruction requiring consecutive step-by-step execution. One can well begin with the iconographical level, that is, with the identification of characters and a search of sources. It is important to move within the table horizontally rather than vertically from top to bottom: in the 1939 version Panofsky even braces the third vertical column with correcting (1955) – controlling (1939) principles of interpretation and inscribes: "tradition history" (in the 1955 version this name would become the column title).

Comparison of the tables prompts the assumption that the method implied above all the interpreter's active reflection on his interpretation: at every level of interpretation he is aware of the process of his understanding based on the knowledge of tradition. It is not coincidental that the collection *Meaning in the Visual Arts* was supplied with a subtitle: *Papers In and On Art History.*

In fact, the iconographical level of interpretation was a concession to the 19th century with its historicism and archaeology. In a letter to a student[1] who was interested in Panofsky's creative method, the scholar explained why iconography was necessary: "I would not say that iconographical

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[1] E.Panofsky – William H.Woody, 13.11.1958. *Panofsky E.* Korrespondenz, Band 5, S.358-362.

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and historical knowledge increases our aesthetic or emotional reaction in all cases (in mine, it does), but I do believe, that we have to go into these problems as a matter of sheer politeness if and where an artist of the past or present has gone to the trouble of telling a "story"... If we were to tell a visitor, after he has spoken to us for half an hour, that we really didn't listen to what he was saying but only enjoyed his intonation. In other words, the application of the iconographic method is not a postulate <u>per se</u>, but a postulate which derives from the nature of the work under discussion"[1].

Apparently, in order to draw a distinction at the terminological level, Panofsky "revives" the word "iconology" to denote his method. For Panofsky it is not an identification of content, the depicted personages, attributes and symbols, nor just an extended interpretation of meanings loaded into the iconographical programme (i.e. in an appropriate text), but a possibility, or at least desire to restore the connection between visual art and world outlook, between image and idea, the artist and the viewer. Therefore, all levels of analysis are important to the observation how this connection is established and operates.

Panofsky himself always found the meaning hidden behind the formal aspects of a work of art important. Although, to get at that meaning, it is still important to realise, Panofsky points out, that Michelangelo depicted the fall of man and not luncheon on the grass, or conversely, that peaches in Renoir are not a symbol of sin, but the proof of renewed interest in still life. The latter statement linked with the understanding and specifying of the genre presupposes knowledge of the history of ideas, that is, in this case the interpreter from the outset references the third level amendment.

The attention Panofsky attached to the interpretation of formal aspects is clear from his polemic with Wölfflin over *The Foundations of Art History* (1915)[2]. Panofsky tries to specify and develop certain theses of his mentor, taking the problem of the development of style from "linear" to "painterly" beyond "pure vision" or the relationship of eye to world (Verhältnis des Auges zur Welt). After all, vision as physiologically objective perception of the surrounding world cannot assume the style-forming function. All artists at all different times have the same eye structure. The relationship of eye to world is the relationship of the soul to the world of the eye[3]. If the artist chooses some possibility of a representation, it is not merely a possible outlook on the world (Anschauung der Welt), but a way of world outlook (Weltanschauung). In this sense the second and third strata of iconological

[1] E.Panofsky – William H.Woody, 13.11.1958. *Panofsky E.* Korrespondenz, Band 5, S.358-362.

[2] *Panofsky E*. Das Problem des Stils in der bildenden Kunst // *Id.* Deutschsprachige Aufsätze / Hg. K.Michels, M.Warnke. Berlin, 1998. Bd.2. S. 1010.

[3] Wer ist imstande, die – im Sinne des Ästhetischen – noch völlig ungeformte Gegebenheit eines Wahrnehmungsorgans im Sinne eines diesem Wahrnehmungsorgan selbst ganz fremden künstlerischen Formschemas zu interpretieren? Die Antwort kann nur eine sein - die Seele. Verhältnis des Auges zur Welt ist Verhältnis der Seele zur Welt des Auges. – Ibid.

interpretation go back to the first: after all the style of representation, be it the peculiarly built perspective or expressively distorted figures in the Art Nouveau period, is also the carrier of sense and meaning.

Panofsky develops the same theme in *Perspective as Symbolic Form* (1924-5) and in his work on *Early Netherlandish Painting*.

Perspective is also a formal indicator that is subject to be chosen (or sought) by the artist and that can be defined as the carrier of meaning and sense, Panofsky asserts. What is behind it is not the experience of the eye, but the experience of the mind. Mistakes in perspectival construction (from the contemporary point of view) or the complete absence of perspective have no effect on the artistic quality of the work. It is a stylistic characteristic, but it can be designated as a "symbolic form", because in this case "spiritual content-meaning (geistiger Bedeutungsinhalt) is combined with a concrete sensually perceived sign (sinnliches Zeichen) and turns out to be innerly linked with it"; precisely for this reason not only the presence of perspective in different epochs and regions is essentially important, but also what sort of perspective it is"[1]. The different forms of perspectival structures also reflect the different concepts and ideas of the organisation of the world and space.

Comparing Van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait* with the San Clemente (Rome) fresco showing the death of St Ambrose[2], Panofsky points out that the Italian master uses light as the quantitative and insulating principle (with shadows forming the shape of objects he arranged them in the picture space and positioned the viewer before the depicted space. Van Eyck, on the contrary, uses light as a qualitative and unifying principle: he is interested in refraction, reflection and light diffusion – reflexes on the metal or glass surface, the shine or fur and fabric, glints, representation of fire, mirror reflections and colour chiaroscuro. From the point of view of building perspective, in the Italian case space is interpreted as complete and enclosed in the picture. The front plane section in Van Eyck's picture suggests that space is expanding and the viewer becomes part of it: in this case Panofsky speaks about "osmosis" between the closed room and the Universe.

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[1] Das scheint nun an und für sich eine rein mathematische und keine künstlerische Angelegenheit zu sein, denn mit Recht darf man sagen, daß die größere oder geringere Fehlerhaftigkeit, ja selbst die völlige Abwesenheit einer perspektivischen Konstruktion nichts mit dem künstlerischen Wert zu tun hat. <...> Allein wenn Perspektive kein W e r t m o m e n t ist, so ist sie doch ein S t i l m o m e n t , ja mehr noch: sie darf, um Ernst Cassirers glücklich geprägter Terminus auch für die Kunstgeschichte nutzbar zu machen, als eine jener „s y m b o l i s c h e n F o r m e n" bezeichnet werden, durch die „ein geistiger Bedeutungsinhalt an ein konkretes sinnliches Zeichen geknüpft und diesem Zeichen innerlich zugeeignet wird"; und es ist in diesem Sinne für die einzelnen Kunstepochen und Kunstgebiete wesensbedeutsam, nicht nur, ob sie Perspektive haben, sondern auch w e l c h e Perspektive sie haben. – Ibid. S.268.

Here Panofsky cites Cassirer E. *Der Begriff der symbolischen Form im Aufbau der Geisteswissenschaften [1921/1922] // Id.* Wesen und Wirkung des Symbolbegriffs. Darmstadt, 1956. S. 171-200. Hier S. 175.

[2] *Panofsky E.* Die altniederländische Malerei. Köln, 2006. Bd.1, S.15–17.

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Therefore, perspectival contruction has different functions: to enrich the picture optically (in the North) and to attain stereometric clarity (in the Italian version). Panofsky links these distinctions with the northern striving after individualisation, attention to detail and the study of individual things the way they were, on the one hand, and with searches of an ideal, a common principle governing the existing or manmade things that were characteristic of Italian mentality of the Renaissance period, on the other.

In his essays on cinematography Panofsky also begins with analysis of formal aspects. The main idea of his paper "On Movies" (1936) is apologia of the cinema as a kind of art. It was a lecture read at the Museum of Modern Art in the New York City, where a movie archive was being founded. Addressing the museum public and curators, Panofsky speaks not about the content, educational or ideological importance of the motion pictures, but about the formal and stylistic specifics of conveying content, which account for the cinema's special place in art. In the later editions[1] "style and medium" were added to the title, literally pointing to the carrier of content. The very enthusiasm about defining the peculiarities of style and expression in different kinds of art cannot but bring to mind Lessing's *Laocoon*.

Space and time became central concepts with Panofsky: they were pivotal not only to the Kantian discourse, but also suggested influence of the topical problems of natural sciences; at any rate Panofsky knew Einstein from Princeton. The basic characteristic of the new kind of art was that it offered new opportunities for the interaction between time and space. Panofsky called it dynamisation of space and spatialisation of time. At the very beginning of the article Panofsky writes that the pleasure the spectator experiences at the cinema is unrelated to a certain story or the play of forms, it is the pure joy of observing moving pictures. But perhaps the reason why Panofsky liked the film The Navigator was not only Buster Keaton's exceptional acting abilities, but also because it was especially interesting to observe the relations between time and space in the conditions of the closed and at the same time movable space of the ship.

Giving due to the iconographic tradition, Panofsky points out in the early motion pictures motifs, types, characters and emblematic details that helped cinemagoers recognize eternal themes of pictorial art. A femme fatale and a virtuous maiden are a parallel to the wise and foolish virgins, with details, such as a checkered tablecloth as an indispensable attribute of a picture of a poor but decent family. The iconographic use of the colour gamut: night scenes are printed in blue or green. And, finally, another example of stable iconography: showing the seemingly small and weak score victory over the seemingly large and strong. Here Panofsky draws a parallel between the Mickey Mouse stories and David contesting Goliath.

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[1] There are three versions of this paper: "On Movies", 1936, "Style and Medium in the Moving Pictures", 1937, and "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures", 1947. See Lavin I. Panofsky's Humor // Panofsky E. Stil und Medium im Film & Die ideologischen Vorläufer des Rolls-Royce-Kühlers, Frankfurt/Main, 1999, S. 10.

As Panofsky uses the attribute "small", it stands to reason that we have chosen Donatello's David rather than that of Michelangelo for comparative illustration in this report.

Let us, however, take as an example Panofsky's reasoning and appraisal in which formal and iconographic aspects are combined in a peculiar way. I mean Walt Disney's *Fantasia*.

Panofsky attended the premiere at the Broadway Theatre (then called Colony, 2000 seats) in New York City on 13 November 1940. *Fantasia* was a "new form of entertainment"[1] that mixed the traditions of the musical, silent movies with music accompaniment, concert and even lecture. In a live action introduction to *Fantasia* the composer and music critic Deems Taylor said that the audience was to see designs and pictures and stories that the artists imagined under the impact of music. According to his introduction, three kinds of music were used in the film: "First is the kind that tells a definite story, then there is the kind that while it has no specific story, does paint a series of more or less definite pictures; then there is a third kind, music, that exists for its own sake"[2]. *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor* by Johann Sebastian Bach is "absolute music, even the title has no meaning beyond a description of the form of the music"[3]. Work with music is thus considered from the point of view of its narrative potential and possibilities of its representation.

In his letter to John Abbott[4] dated 15 November 1940[5] Panofsky explains that, in addition to his gratitude and admiration for Disney's work he would like to share "some ideas which occured to me when I tried to rationalize my impressions".

To begin with, it is a matter of the relationship between music and picture. As if in response to Deems Taylor, Panofsky asserts that "the only thing which matters is whether or not the music is self-sufficient, that is to say, whether or not it demands, or at least tolerates, the accompaniment of visible movement in space. This has nothing to do with the value of music, nor with its 'content', but is merely a question of character: all types of dance music (not only ballets, but also... Strauss waltzes, or Brahms' Hungarian dances... all operatic music, Händel's *Water Music* belong ipso facto to the second class. Exceptions – Menuet movement in the symphonies, Bach's suites". According to Panofsky, "...the basic and entirely low-brow fact is, that music is either intended to be listened to or to

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[1] *Fantasia*, produced by Walt Disney, 1940. Introduction by Deems Taylor, 2:12.

[2] First is the kind that tells a definite story, then there is the kind, that while it has no specific story, does paint a series of more or less definite pictures; then there is a third kind, music, that exists for its own sake. - *Fantasia*, 02:57 – 03:03.

[3] Ibid., 03:04-03:17.

[4] John E. Abbott was the husband of Iris Barry, the founder and first curator of the cinema section of the MOMA. It was the two of them who gave Panofsky invitation tickets to the premiere on behalf of Walt Disney.

[5] Panofsky E. Korrespondenz, Band 2 (2003) S. 271-275.

serve as a stimulus to something going on in space. Only the second class ... is 'picturizable', and it does not matter what kind of pictures are selected, in this respect the imagination of the cartoonist is absolutely free"[1].

Later on in an article of 1947 Panofsky would recall *Fantasia* and describe this possibility for music to come into contact with a moving picture as a principle of coexpressibility.

In his letter Panofsky goes on pondering on the potential of metamorphosis that, according to him, is a distinguishing feature of animated cartoons as a type of art. Static objects start behaving as mechanisms or animals and animals as simultaneously as animals and people, that is, acquire a life different from that of their own. From this point of view Panofsky welcomes the representation of the elements, change of seasons or "the action of a lava stream as a drama". Ostriches that are both ostriches and ballerinas are another example of a felicitous metamorphosis. (The *Fantasia* bonus includes documentary takes showing a live ballerina posing for cartoonists drawing the movements of ostriches and hippopotamuses, Degas' picture in Walt Disney's study served as another source of inspiration.) From the point of view of iconographic interpretation metamorphosis makes it more difficult to describe and analyse because you have to decide whether the ostriches are shown as ballerinas or the other way round.

People in animation cannot be representd "the way they are": they should be "transformed". To undergo a metamorphosis, they "have to be dehumanized in order to live up to the standard of their environment". Some characters, like fairies personifying the forces of nature, are shown as "more than human" while others, like Popeye the Sailor man and his girlfriend Olive Oyl, "less than human". When people (or suchlike creatures) remain the way they are, the animated cartoon magic is destroyed. When Panofsky took up the theme in his article (1947 version), he compared the release of *Snow White* with The Fall because a human figure had appeared in animation. All those princesses, gnomes, baseball players and centaurs were veritable caricatures rather than metamorphoses. Going back to *Fantasia*, Panofsky pointed out that the "screening" of ostrich and hippopotamus ballets could be considered a success, whereas he found the fantasies on the themes of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony and Schubert's Ave Maria "deplorable".

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[1] The only thing which matters is whether or not the music is self-sufficient, that is to say, whether or not it demands, or at least tolerates, the accompaniment of visible movement in space. This has nothing to do with the value of music, nor with its "content", but is merely a question of character: all types of dance music (not only ballets, but also... Strauss waltzes, or Brahms' Hungarian dances...all operatic music, Händel's "Water Music" belong ipso facto to the second class. Exceptions – Menuet movement in the symphonies, Bach's suites. ... the basic and entirely low-brow fact is, that music is either intended to be listened to or to serve as a stimulus to something going on in space. Only the second class ... is "picturizable", and it does not matter what kind of pictures are selected, in this respect the imagination of the cartoonist is absolutely free. – Ibid.

The centaurs appear in that part of Fantasia where the Pastoral Symphony is used – music, according to Panofsky, closed for "screening". This is interesting because its movements have subtitles, for instance, *Scene by the Brook* or *Merry Gathering of Country Folk*, that enable presupposition of "pictorial" scenes. In general, centaurs, centaurettes, Dionysus, flowers and trees are associated with the pastoral theme. However, if we follow Panofsky's logic, the rendition of music originally did not presuppose any accompanying "movement in space", while the centaurs are shown too "true to life" and not meeting the "metamorphosis" requirement.

Another "unfortunate" case, according to Panofsky, is the narrative to Schubert's *Ave Maria*, in which music not intended for action is wrongly used. However, from the point of view of Disney's (and Taylor's) logic using that music was appropriate because it is connected with a certain story: Schubert composed *Ave Maria* as part of a song cycle after Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, setting to music one of Ellen's songs[1]. The artist Kay Nielsen who sketched action for that sequence was apparently inspired by mountaintops, Gothic arches and silhouettes in counter light from Caspar David Friedrich's paintings, while the final frame replicated the composition of the Tetschen Altar. On the face of it that seems to be nearly a perfect match: German romantic painting (and music) meet English romantic poetry. However, the romanticism of Friedrich somewhat differs in tone from the poem's lyrical and heroic motifs. Friedrich' themes were loneliness, the eternity of nature and frailness of life[2]. We can surmise that Panofsky felt the mismatched charge and the far-fetched use of iconography in Fantasiaʻs final fragment, that is, the borrowing of a form of expression without any correlation with the form of content, to use Hjelmslev's linguistic terminology.

In addition, in the letter cited above Panofsky made a rather sharp joke about the music arrangement, saying that "...what Stokowski has done to the music as such with cutting and re-orchestration ... I hope will come up on the occasion of the Last Judgement". In that sequence, too, Schubert's original was reworked: an aria solo was adapted for chorus and orchestra[3].

Obviously, the means of expression used by Disney and Stokowski were at variance with the cultural experience and memory of Panofsky. What is more, they had different professional objectives: as a practician Disney adapted classical heritage quite off-handedly but effectively gradually himself turning into a classic. As a viewer, critic and art historian Panofsky

[1] The Lady of the Lake, canto 3, verse 29.

[2] Die Zeit der Herrlichkeit des Tempels und seiner Diener ist dahin, und aus dem zertrümmerten Ganzen eine andere Zeit und ein anderes Verlangen nach Klarheit und Wahrheit hervorgegangen. (Friedrich, Aufzeichnungen) - Caspar David Friedrich. Katalog der Austellung der Hamburger Kunsthalle, 1974. München, 1981. S. 60.

[3] In this version with its stressed rhythmical accents the aria becomes short of dance music. In this form the melody is even adapted for figure skaters' programmes. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNeUgrM59r0

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deemed it his duty not only to share impressions and pass judgement, but also "rationalize my impressions". He closes his letter with a fairly optimitic "...how fascinating the experience has been".

One can have different ideas about why Panofsky did not like certain sequences of *Fantasia* and his own explanations may seem not quite convincing, including as far as the differentiation between metamorphosis and caricature is concerned. However, it is indicative that, when substantiating his preferences, he himself draws attention not to the choice of themes or the use of antiquity motifs or other iconography, but considers the phenomenon by describing and analyzing its form.

To sum up, the problems of style and form prove no less but perhaps even more important to the iconologist. If we go back to the table and method, it is obvious that Panofsky's method itself cannot be fixed "iconographically" as a set of some canonical actions and formulas and that an iconographic interpretation does not presuppose any final judgement closing the theme, but requires that the interpreter himself control his work and correlate his inferences with the history of tradition. At the same time Panofsky's method is an open system that is mastered through the interpreter's style and means, such as the clarity and logic of scholarly thought, classical erudition and interest in the "non-classical" art of the cinema, witty argumentation and elegant style.

Lev Lifshits

On Stylistic Replications in Early and Late 12ᵀᴴ Century Byzantine and Rus' Painting

In recent decades, historians of Byzantine and Russian art have significantly expanded their knowledge of painting in the Komnenian era, the peculiarities of painting techniques, composition and plastic form that determine the distinctive features of every stage of the development of style[1].

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[1] See, for example: Demus, O., *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, London, 1949; L. Hadermann-Misguich, *Tendences expressives des recherches ornamentales dans la peinture byzantine de la seconde moitié du XII-e siècle* // Byzantion, T. XXXV, 1965, p. 429–44; V.N. *Lazarev, Priyomy lineinoi stilizatsii v vizantiiskoi zhivopisi X–XVII vekov i ikh istoki* (Methods of Linear Stylisation in Byzantine Painting of the 10ᵗʰ–12ᵗʰ Centuries and Their Origins // Lazarev, V.N., *Vyzantiiskaya zhivopis* (Byzantine Painting), Moscow, 1971, pp. 147–69; Djurić, V., *La peinture murale byzantine: XIIe et XIIIe siècles* // *Actes du XVe Congrès international des ètudes byzantines*: Athènes, 1976. T. 3: *Art et archeology: Byzance de 1071 a 1261: rapports et co-rapports*, Athènes, 1981, pp. 3–96; Hadermann-Misguich, L., *La peinture monumentale tardo-comnene et ses prolongements au des recherches ornamentales dans la peinture byzantine de la seconde moitié du XIII-e siècle* // XVe Congres internationale des ètudes byzantines: Athènes 1976, Vol.3: *Art et archeology*, Athènes, 1981, pp. 99–127; Mouriki, D., *Stylistic Trends in Monumental Painting of Greece during the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* // DOP, Vol. 34/35, 1980/1981, pp. 77–124; Etingof, O.E., *Novye stilisticheskiye i ideinye tendentsii v vizantiiskoi zhivopisi XII veka (*New Stylistic and Ideological Trends in 12ᵗʰ‑Century Byzantine Painting): Extended Abstract of Cand. Sci. Dissertation (Art History), Moscow, 1987; Etingof, O.E., *K voprosu o napravleniyakh v vizantiyskoi i drevnerusskoi zhivopisi XII veka* (On Trends in Byzantine and Early Russian Art of the 12ᵗʰ century) // Lazarev Conference: Art of Byzantium, Early Rus and Western Europe: scientific conference materials, Moscow, 2009, pp. 62–78; Sarabianov, V.D., *Zhivopis serediny 1120kh –nachala 1160kh godov* (Painting of the Mid-1120s – early 1160s // *History of Russian Art*, Vol. 2/1: Art of the 1120s –1160s, Moscow, 2012, pp. 160–335.

However, this era still has phenomena that even experienced professionals often find misleading. Familiar concepts and methods of analysis turn out to be too general and do not work. A striking example of this discrepancy in dating is a discussion of the time of the creation of the famous painting of the Bachkovo Monastery ossuary in Bulgaria, which Elka Bakalova[1] dated late 12th century, after comparing it with the frescoes of the Cathedral of St Demetrius in Vladimir painted in the 1190s, while Doula Mouriki found in it features of the turn of the 12th century[2].

It is noteworthy that in most cases scholars opt for a later dating. For example, the icon *The Heavenly Ladder of St John Climacus* from St Catherine's Monastery on the Sinai, which was dated the turn of the 12th century[3] in early publications, was then dated late 12th century[4]. This was reflected in the catalogues of the exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum in New York[5] in 1997 and the Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles[6] in 2006, which to some extent summed up the research of the last decades.

However, there are also examples when it was possible to prove that works traditionally attributed by most Byzantine art historians to the late 12th–13th centuries were actually created at the beginning of the century. One such instance is the painting of the Monastery of Panagia Mavriotissa in Kastoria, Macedonia[7].

There are several reasons for this disagreement among scholars. Undoubtedly the most important of them is the imagery of the monuments themselves, the nature of the ideals that shaped the poetics of art in the early 12th century and the turn of the 13th century. They really had much in common. For the artists of both periods who worked in the capital the most important task was to achieve absolute balance and the full harmony of coexistence of two principles – the spiritual and the physical.

[1] Bakalova, E., *Bachkovskata kostnitsa* (Bachkovo Ossuary), Sofia, 1977.

[2] Mouriki, D., *The Formative Role of Byzantine Art on the Artistic Style of Cultural Neighbours of Byzantium (Reflection of Constantinopolitan Style in Georgian Monumental Painting)* // JÖB, Bd. 31/2, 1981, pp. 733–36. L. Mavrodinova dated Bachkovo paintings the first half of the century (Mavrodinova, L., *Sur la datation des peintures murales de l'église-ossuaire de Bačkovo* // ΑΡΜΟΣ: Τιμητικός τόμος στόν καθηγητή Ν.Κ. Μουτσόπουλο. Θεσσαλονίκη, 1991, Σ. 1121–1140).

[3] Weitzmann, K., *Ranniye ikony* (Early Icons) // *Balkanskiye ikony* (Balkan Icons), Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Sofia, Belgrade, 1967, pp. XIII–XIV, LXXXI, Table 19.

[4] Mouriki, D., *Icons from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* // *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* / Gen. ed. K.A. Manafis, Athens, 1990, pp. 107, 108, Pl. 24; Corrigan, K., *Constantine's Problems: The Making of the Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus*, Vat. gr 394 // *Word and Image*, 1996. No. 12, pp. 61–93.

[5] *The Glory of Byzantium. Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era. A.D. 843–1261*, New York, 1997, No. 247, pp. 376, 377.

[6] *Holy Image – Hallowed Ground. Icons from Sinai*, Los Angeles, 2006, No. 48, pp. 244–7.

[7] Zakharova, A.V., *Freski tserkvi Panagii Mavriotissy v Kastorye* (Frescoes of the Church of Panagia Mavriotissa in Kastoria // *Vizantiisky vremennik* (Byzantine Annals), Vol. 59 (84), Moscow, 2000, pp. 189–97.

The images they created had to be the visible ideal of holiness, and at the same time serve as proof of the original perfection of man as God's creation. At the same time artists of the late Komnenian period often found their inspiration in the works of artists who lived a century and sometimes two centuries before them, such as, for example, the mosaics of the Daphni Monastery Katholikon created around 1100. Close resemblance with them can be found in such monuments of the last decades of the 12th century as the paintings of the Cathedral of St Demetrius in Vladimir, the frescoes of the Church of Hosios David in Thessaloniki, and mosaic icons of SS George and Demetrius from the Xenophontos Monastery on Mount Athos. In some cases such close similarity between the original and a replica mislead scholars, including highly reputable ones, into taking the authentic features of the original for careful imitation.

Angel. Ossuary fresco, late 11th – early 12th centuries Bachkovo Monastery, Bulgaria

Another important reason for the discrepancy in dating the same monuments is the imperfectionof scientific methodology. Until now, many art historians have treated the technical and technological properties of iconography as a factor determined, primarily, by the tradition of the craft rather than by the specific *artistic tasks* the authorof the work set himself. In general, the history of Byzantine and Early Rus art studies has a tradition to regard works of Byzantine and Early Russian painting, at best, as works of high craftsmanship and, of course, iconographic art, in which everything was subordinated to technological tradition and canons, and did not allow a display of "artistic will" proper. Changes in the style of painting are associated usually with a gradual degeneration of the technical and technological tradition and skills, with the functional purpose of icons and murals, and finally, with relevant problems of a theological nature directly affecting iconography and the literary sources inspiring it.

To justify the proposed dating scholars point out traits that indicate, in their opinion, this or that stage of stylistic development. However, they rarely write about how these traits relate to the imagery of the work analysed and the principles which may be called formative. Most often painting style descriptions used to justify the dating are basically notes and descriptions of individual traits whose relationship to each other is not disclosed, so that the monuments themselves are beyond the framework of the stylistic context common to that time. For instance, the author of the article in the catalogue of an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art maintains that the traits attributing *The Heavenly Ladder* from St Catherine's Monastery on the Sinai to late Komnenian art are a distinctly graphic quality of brushwork, emphasising especially the "mannerist" manner of treatment with whimsically flowing drapery. She believes it to be
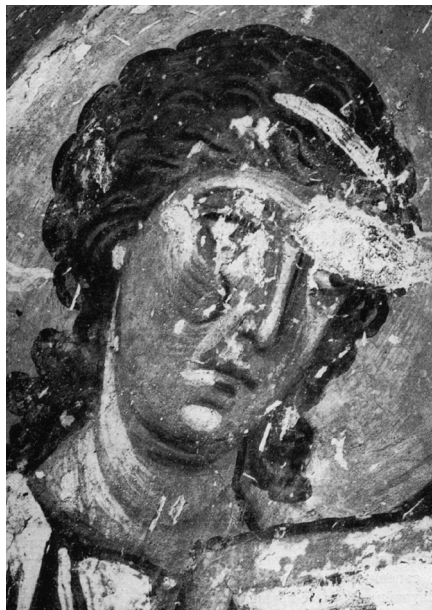
stylistically similar to the *Annunciation*, another icon from the Sinai, which has identical features and was commonly recognised as belonging to the late 12ᵗʰ century[1]. If we compare the descriptions of various monuments dated to the late 12ᵗʰ century, we will certainly pay attention to the fact that their characteristics are often contradictory. For example, in addition to linear stylisation motifs, the characteristics of the late Komnenian period include both the ornamental treatment of highlights, which turn into abstract patterns, and an uninhibited, almost impressionistic brushwork found both in Bachkovo and in the Cathedral of St Demetrius. In other cases, on the contrary, to justify the dating scholars point out the perfectly flat and smooth carnation (mosaic *Hodegetria* icon, early 13ᵗʰ century, from St Catherine's Monastery), lapidary forms outlined by a general contour, and the absence of any expressive manner characteristic in one way or another of Komnenian art as a whole up to the 1190s (*St Nicholas the Miracle-worker with Scenes from His Life*, also from St Catherine's Monastery on Sinai)[2]. Obviously, definitions of this kind, even if they match the outer form of the described phenomenon, lack something more important which is difficult to define. The very principle of a direct description of individual features of a monument is often ineffective.

Practice shows that to evolve better methods of analysing such monuments, it is necessary to pay attention not only to painting techniques and brushwork that characterise the master's individual style. The most important thing is to understand the overall organisation of the spatial structure of the image, the relationship of the plastic form with the background, the surface of the icon board, and in monumental painting with the wall, that is what could be called the "architecture" of the icon.

If we apply such a yardstick to the two Sinai icons, *The Heavenly Ladder* and *The Annunciation*, following the suggestion of Kathleen Corrigan, who authored the article in the exhibition catalogue *The Glory of Byzantium*, we will immediately see the difference in their architectural design. In the former icon the background is treated as a flat plane of gold, which gleams a little like a mirror surface, but does not allow light deep into the composition space. The light does not come in streams, lacks mobility and does not acquire the quality of the environment surrounding the figures. In fact, gold is treated

Angel. Fresco, 1190s
St Demetrius'
Cathedral, Vladimir

[1] Weitzmann, K., *Spatkomnenische Verkündigunsikone des Sinai und die zweite byzantinische Welle des 12 Jahrhunderts // Festschrift für Herbert von Einem*, Berlin, 1965, S. 299–312; *The Glory of Byzantium*, 1997, No. 246, pp. 374–75.

[2] *Вајцман К., Алибегашвили Г., Вольскаја А., Бабић Г., Хацидакис М., Алпатов М., Воинеску Е.*, *Ikone*, Belgrade, 1981, p. 67.

as a kind of material substance of light, whose density is equal to the density of the colour surface of the images, as if inlaid in the background and projecting only in some places like varicoloured low reliefs. Like the light, the compositional movement in the icon never goes deep into space, developing along the plane of the background at all points of its surface. Accordingly, the figures are mostly profile silhouettes.

Such a system of coordinates is fully consistent with plastic form. Here the distinctly dark (usually black, sometimes brown) contour lines as if traced in the background play the decisive role. Creating a kind of halo

The Ladder of Divine Ascent. Icon, early 12th century St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai

The Annunciation
Icon, late 12ᵗʰ century
St Catherine's
Monastery
in the Sinai

shadow, they separate the figures from the golden background and at the same time fasten them to it, fixing every pose and every gesture. Light does not spread over the surface of clothing that is mostly treated flatly and determines the configuration of slightly towering crests of folds. Only in some cases (the host of angels in the upper left corner of the icon) do the white highlights come into contrast with bright blue and pinkish-red flowers of the clothes, making the figures seem slightly more voluminous and rise a bit higher over the perfectly flat surface of the background. Basically, the icon painter uses the technique creating the effect of "subsidence"

of light that seems to be absorbed in the surface of the fabric. The artist achieves remarkable tonal mobility and diversity in characterising the movements of the figures by varying the power of light, sometimes adding different colours to white or changing the measure of saturation of colour spots, and giving preference to achromatic hues (spots of gold, blue, pink and white look particularly expressive against their background).

The Ladder of Divine Ascent. Icon, early 12th century Fragment St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai

In painting faces white is used very sparingly – mainly as tiny touches that emphasise eyebrow ridges, nose tips, frontal lobes, and grey strands of hair on the heads and beards of the elders. The artist employs the techniques of multilayer modelling of low relief only when painting the images of angels and Christ stretching his arms towards the righteous men who reached the highest rung of the Ladder. Apart from that, the faces are painted mostly in the same flat manner that allows the artist to create the impression of a continuous overall movement. Transparent spots of rouge are applied in a scumbling technique on the monochrome orange ochre underlayer. The delicate outlines of facial features and slightly vertically elongated heads serve as shadows here as well.

The massive gold background clearly dominates the images of figures collected in separate groups. It is evenly distributed in all directions, forming around them large but well-balanced spatial caesuras distinctly correlated with the symmetry axes – vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines that define the structure of the composition. Thanks to this strict hierarchical order, the icon painter managed to combine two seemingly different sensations – the vastness of the divine cosmos appearing before the eyes of a praying person and its intelligent architectural arrangement. Naturally, introducing his characters into this cosmos, which is the aim of spiritual ascension for a worshipper, the artist tried to organise the compositional movement, colour texture and palette in such a way so as not to disturb the calm mirror-like surface of the background or break the strict order and peace reigning there.

One of the closest parallels of this icon is the sheet with the image of the prophet Moses receiving the Tablets of the Law, from the Psalter created about 1088 (Cod. W 530b in the Walter Art Gallery, Baltimore)[1], which could

[1] Der Nersessian, S., *A Psalter and New Testament Manuscript at Dumbarton Oaks* // Dumbarton Oaks Papers, Vol. 19, Washington, 1965, pp. 155–83.
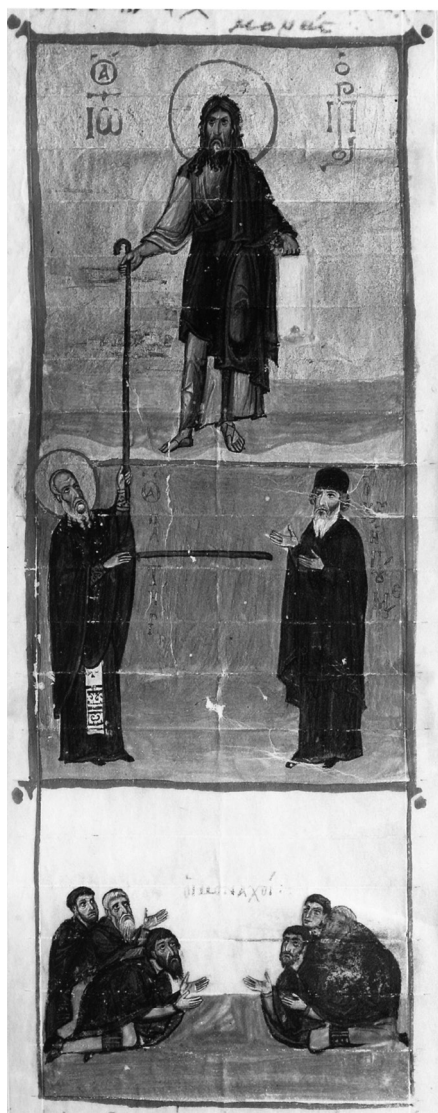
be an important argument in favour of dating *The Heavenly Ladder* to the late 11ᵗʰ – early 12ᵗʰ century. Interestingly, it was on display at the same exhibition in New York[1].

The Annunciation mentioned above is absolutely different. What immediately catches the eye is the powerful contrapposto of the figures of the Virgin and the Archangel, pushed into the space of the golden background. The movement develops here not along the surface of the background, but diagonally, which is also emphasised by the outline of the roof of a building behind the figure of the Virgin. The composition space is broken up into alternating levels – at the front is a symbolical landscape with a river, various waterfowl and birds; further on, on the second level, is the figure of the archangel, and further away, a little higher and further, is the Virgin, seated on the throne; behind her are the abovementioned chambers with open doors leading inside; finally, there is the gold background. All enveloping and occupying the foreground in *The Heavenly Ladder*, but the background in *The Annunciation*. The figures are distinctly separate from it; they do not exist in it a priori, but enter it, as does the archangel, the contours of whose wings touch the margins of the centrepiece, the border of the icon space.

These differences, which seem small at first glance, are fundamental. The scene loses its cosmic character and turns into an episode of the Gospel story while the action acquires temporal characteristics. The monumental scale of the compositional space of *The Heavenly Ladder*, which could be compared with the vast expanse of a large cathedral, is transformed here, becoming a confined space and acquiring features of intimacy.

Accordingly, the system of plastic form interpretation is also modified. If in *The Heavenly Ladder* every pose and every gesture are distinctly fixed, finding their unchanged position in the system of spatial coordinates of the composition, in *The Annunciation* movement is treated as a multi-phase process that unfolds in space and time. This explains the complicated nature of the postures of the archangel and Virgin Mary, the elaborate rhythm of contours fancifully twisted into a complex pattern, and the rich drapery.

The Prophet Moses Receiving the Tablets of the Law
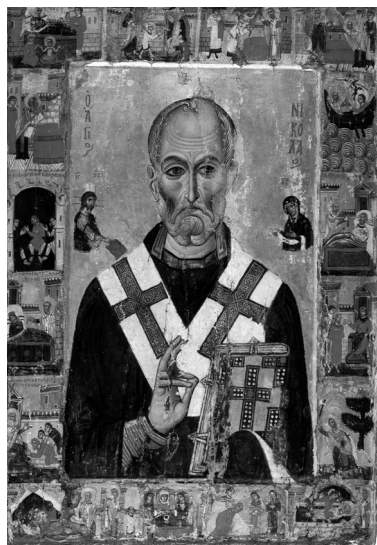 Liturgical scroll, last third of the 11ᵗʰ century Library, Russian Academy of Sciences

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[1] *The Glory of Byzantium*, 1997, No. 241, pp. 360–1.

Light and shade acquire mobility and tonal variety, embracing the entire scope of the figures and moving along their surface. They either go into the depth or turn into powerful gold highlights on the raised parts of the image. Contour lines expand and do not cut into the background, but merge with the shadow area. Completely losing the quality of material substance and the former link with the plastic form design, light and shade mix with different colours and are endowed with properties of volatile colourful reflexes.

The volumetric form itself, interpreted previously as a relief fixed to the wall surface, is also transformed. It begins to acquire properties that suggest comparison, if not with a freestanding statue, then with a high relief, the edges of which are immersed in space, while its major part noticeably dominates the background. The interpretation of composition movement also submits to the same logic. It develops here not along the background, but from the foreground to the depth of the proscenium. A trademark of the time, in line with the trend towards the expansion of the stage space, is the principle of direct interaction of the characters, whose heads and eyes now turn to each other and into the depth of the gold background. A special device has been developed for this purpose – part of the face turned to the viewer is considerably expanded, modelled by means of active contrasts of light and shade, while the part facing the depths of the stage is narrowed as much as possible and surrounded by a dark line of shadows. The edge of the form seems to roll up and immerse in the gold background. In its turn, the background loses its former density of mirror-like amalgam to become a kind of environment. What prevents the figures from getting fully immersed in it is only a thin pattern of their contours, emphasising their silhouettes and keeping them "afloat", as well as the principle of the organisation of the movement receding into the depth, characteristic of that time, and always returning to the foreground. Superimposed on the background, the figures and the architectural backdrop seem to form windows and openings of different size, giving a glimpse of the golden sky.

Outwardly the new principles of composition and the scenic nature of the action, which acquires
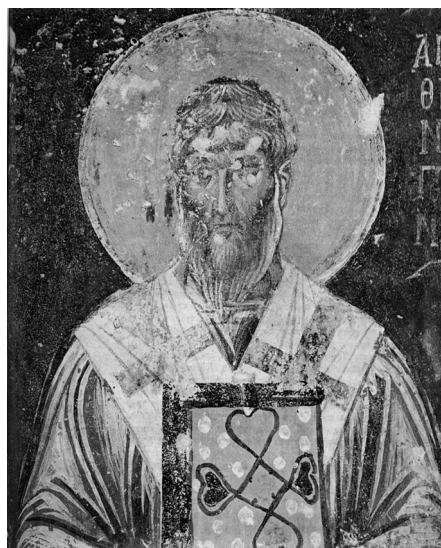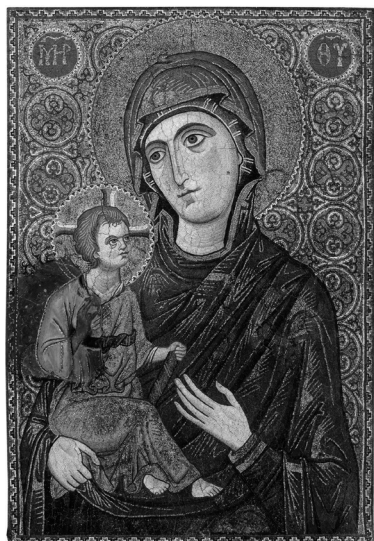
The Theotokos
Deksiokratussa. Icon,
early 13th century
St Catherine's
Monastery
in the Sinai

temporal and spatial reference points, as well as its drama, are reflected in a virtuoso mobile manner of painting and nervous and intricate form pattern, which accords with ornamental motifs, making colour and light-and-shade contrasts more active. The modelling of faces becomes more multi-layered and contrasting, with special attention paid to white colours that complete volume modelling and render the features of participants in the action emotionally expressive.

Thus comparison of the two Sinai icons, *The Heavenly Ladder* and *The Annunciation* makes a strong case for admitting that the first was painted about a century earlier than the second, which confirms its affinity with such monuments as the aforementioned Psalter miniature created about 1088.

The criteria for style evaluation received on the basis of the analysis carried out can be used to clarify the dating of a number of other paintings of the Komnenian period, whose dating can also differ by as much as a century.

The icon of St Nicholas with scenes from his life, also from St Catherine's Monastery on the Sinai like the monuments discussed above, is perhaps one of the most striking examples of incorrect dating recurring in scholarly and popular writings. Since its first publication it has been dated as the early 13th century, which seems to be corroborated by a number of features characterising the manner of painting[1].

This dating was based on many features, such as the strictly frontal turn of the figure, smooth calm colourful surfaces of the face and clothes and the total absence of any ornamental stylisation of forms typical of Byzantine art of the 1130s-1190s (no big spots of white or light-and-shade contrasts, emphasising the facial expression and the emotion of the whole image). However, comparison with other monuments from the turn of the 13th century and with paintings of the early 12th century reveals some features of the icon of St Nicholas not immediately apparent to the eye.

The first thing that should be noted is the complete unity of the golden background and the figure, which is not opposed to it as can be seen in icons of the late 12th – early 13th century, but slightly stands out from it. Such unity is further enhanced by the wide bands of the omophorion painted a luminous yellow saffron colour and adorned with large, ornate gold crosses. In comparison with works of the late Komnenian period the composition here is organised in a different way, with everything subordinated to the vertical axis of symmetry: the elongated oval-shaped head, the straight ridge of the nose, the deep cut formed by the omophorion bands, the gesture of two fingers of his right hand raised in blessing and the extended gold line of the frame of the large and high Gospel Codex moved

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[1] Mouriki, D., *Icons from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century*, 1990, Pl. 43.

to the middle of the centrepiece. The rhythm of ascending lines dominating the composition matches the outlines of the straightened and elongated contours of the saint's shoulders with the large bands of the omophorion. The rhythm develops freely, and nothing gets in its way. It should be noted that exactly the same principle of composition, plastic form and colour range can be found in the paintings of the Bachkovo Monastery ossuary. This similarity is an additional argument in favour of dating them to the turn of the 12th century.

Artists of the late 12th – early 13th century were guided by other principles. First of all, what we call the architecture of an icon changed; so did the relationship of figures with the background. The compositions, which used to be dominated by the rhythm of long straight lines correlated with the vertical axis of symmetry, now have horizontal lines dividing the surface of the background, and springy, arc-shaped, undulating, intricately curving contours. Along with them, the composition acquires motifs of movement, spreading in all sides and introducing a sense of the existence of extended three-dimensional space. The rhythm of vertical lines is constantly broken; the composition loses its architectonic clarity and structural precision. While the volume of forms does not seem to increase, they become more massive and bulky, and at the same time a little more fractional and closed-in. The overall orientation of movement changes to acquire a more specific and, one might say, more individual character. For example, in the early 13th-century icon, St Panteleimon from St Catherine's Monastery[1], the saint healer carries a medicine box, lifting it slightly, as if pushing it forward, toward the viewer. Equally vivid is the gesture of his right hand, which not only tightly holds the Cross, but lifts it and demonstrates it instructively to every worshipper.

The composition of another work of the early 13th century, the mosaic icon of the *Theotokos Deksiokratussa* from St Catherine's Monastery[2], is rendered in a similar way. Only here the Theotokos carries the baby Jesus in her right arm, slightly lifting him and demonstrating him to the world. This action of "carrying and demonstrating" which is inevitably, almost intuitively correlated with the sensation of a physical effort, is reflected in the pictorial structure of the icon. Thus, the action is not subordinated to the composition as can be seen in the *The Heavenly Ladder* and the icon of St Nicholas, but the composition is almost imperceptibly subordinated to the action, which has a certain aim in the space surrounding the saint.

St Panteleimon. Icon, early 13th century St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai

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[1] *The Glory of Byzantium*, 1997, No. 249, p. 379.

[2] *Holy Image – Hallowed Ground*, 2006, No. 8, pp.140–3.

St George. Reverse of two-sided icon, early 12ᵗʰ century Assumption Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin

As in the *Annunciation* discussed above, they have several parallel alternating horizontal planes. Thus, in the St Panteleimon icon they are formed by: a box in the hand of the saint that he holds forward, its lid pushed back; the right hand with the Cross; the folds of the upper garment markedly distinct from the tunic underneath; the shoulders rounded towards the background, which are slightly separated by a zone of shadows from the gold background surface; and finally, the gold background itself finishing the composition. What is especially important is that the artist wants to show that there are, though small, space intervals between these planes. To do this, he uses the principles of light-and-shade modelling of shapes, and light and colour contrasts.

On the contrary, in the icon *St Nicholas the Miracleworker* the composition space is not divided into planes; the Gospel, the right hand with two fingers raised in blessing and the omophorion are not located *one behind the other*, but either *side by side* or vertically *one above the other*. There are no spatial gaps between them, they tightly abut on one another and are almost inlaid in the surface of the gold background from which the figure of the saint is not visually separated. He belongs to the world in which there is no time, his gestures not associated with a specific action – they are just high symbols. The saint does not hold, but only touches the massive Codex, which rests on the lower boundary of the centrepiece as on an architectural foundation. Like in *The Heavenly Ladder*, nothing violates the established balance and order; everything is subordinated to supreme rather than personal will.

Face modelling techniques merit special consideration. The most important task for the painter of St Nicholas was to completely unite light and colour saturation in face modelling, the saint's clothes and the gold background. Of major importance here is the flat light ochre underlayer with a warm yellow hue, on which the modelling layers are applied in a scumbling technique. This tone is fully consistent with the colour of the omophorion bands whose dim glow also fully matches the soft radiance of the background. The same can be said about the cold light blue tone of St Nicholas' grey hair and the same colour of the Gospel Codex edge. This creates the effect of a restrained inner glow emanating not from outside, but from the depth of the surface of the image.

However, there is another way of achieving the same effect in painting faces based on stronger colour contrasts. By increasing the luminosity of white highlights, which are put on the most prominent places of the dimensional form, the artist simultaneously activates the effect of the golden ochre tones of the underlayer, showing through the transparent top layers of the modelling and interacting with rouge spots and rich green shadows.

This is what we see in the image of St George on the monumental two-sided icon of the early 12th century in the Assumption Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin[1]. Despite all the external differences, just as in the St Nicholas icon from Sinai the range of colours is based on colour-tone relations, with light coming from within the form in all the icons.

The meaning of all these methods becomes clearer when the St George icon from the Kremlin is compared with the icon of St Panteleimon from the Sinai, which is most likely a replica of an older image of this saint created in the 10th or 11th centuries. Unlike his predecessor, the icon painter of the early 13th century uses the principle of light-and-tone rather than colour-and-tone relations in modelling dimensional forms. As a result the thin layers of white give the impression of light shining on the surface of the face and not coming through from the depth of carnation.

As closer examination shows, these seemingly purely technical details are inextricably linked with the innermost layers of the imagery of the icons in question. For the author of the St Panteleimon icon one of the main aims was to create an image of not only the saint himself, but also of the space he faces and from which comes the light shining on his face. The concentrated expression of his countenance and the gestures of his hands brought closer to each other focus on the temporal and spatial point of their relationship. On the contrary, one of the main features of the Kremlin icon is a conscious violation of the synchrony between St George's gestures and his glance. He does not address the world as St Panteleimon, but opens to the viewer an infinite world in which he resides and whose light he carries.

A similar image, but in a more strict ascetic manner, was created by the author of the Sinai icon of St Nicholas.

Thus, the analysis of just a few paintings created at the turn of the 12th century and the turn of the 13th century gives an insight into the complex and sensitive system of their stylistic orientation, which depended on many often imperceptible nuances. But precisely these nuances show that in the first case the artists sought to embody the unchanging ideal of holiness, as if existing a priori, and in the second they showed worshippers a more intimate and concrete ideal of the images of people who had committed a feat of holiness and received a reward for it from the Saviour's hands – a crown of holiness, and admittance to heaven.

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[1] Ostashenko, E. Y., *Ikona Svyatoi Georgy iz Uspenskogo sobora i eyo mesto v russkoi zhivopisi do-mongolskogo perioda* (Icon of St George from the Assumption Cathedral and Its Place in Russian Painting of the Pre-Mongolian Period) // Uspensky sobor Moskovskogo Kremlya. Materialy i issle-dovaniya (Assumption Cathedral of the Moscow Kremlin. Materials and Research, Moscow, 1985, pp. 141–60.

Lev Maciel Sánchez

Russian Medieval Architecture in the 18ᵗʰ Century: Survival and Revival

Russian architecture of the 18th century is not associated with the Middle Ages. During the one hundred years that the best European masters worked in St Petersburg it became a full-fledged part of European Baroque and then neo-Classicism.

However, the vast Russia is not confined to St Petersburg. The architecture of Moscow, the old capital, retained many late medieval forms up to the 1750s[1]. Much more of medieval architecture remained in other regions of Russia, to which European forms seeped through, as a rule, through Moscow[2] and with great delay. Medieval Russian architecture of the 18th century is yet to be comprehended as a phenomenon, but studies and publications of landmarks made in the past decades provide sufficient material for preliminary conclusions about its nature. This phenomenon is not specifically Russian: it just manifested itself with greater prominence by dint of huge distances. Similar processes occurred in all European countries, as can be illustrated by the architecture of Lower Brittany, Lecce, etc[3]. English historiographers were the first to ponder on the

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[1] Sedov, Vl.V. "Elizavetinskoye barokko v Moskve, ili V teni Rastrelli" (Elizabethan Baroque in Moscow, or in Rastrelli's Shadow) // *Project Klassika*, No. 8 (2003), pp. 155–61.

[2] Pluzhnikov, V.I. Sootnoshenie ob'yomnykh form v russkom kultovom zodchestve nachala XVIII v. (Correlation of Dimensional Forms in Russian Religious Architecture of the Early 18th Century) // Russkoye iskusstvo pervoi chetverti XVIII v. (Russian Art of the First Quarter of the 18th Cent.). Moscow, 1974, pp. 81–108.

[3] See, for instance, Fréal J. Calvaires et enclose paroissiaux de Bretagne. Paris: Garnier Frères, 1981; Danieli F. Fasti e linguaggi sacri: il Barocco leccese tra riforma e controriforma. Lecce: Edizioni Grifo, 2014; Le gothique de la Renaissance / M. Chatenet, K. De Jonge, M. Kavaler, N. Nußbaum ed. Paris: Picard, 2011

existence of medieval forms in the stylistic environment of New Europe and to name the trend Survival in contrast to Revival, the deliberate replication of medieval forms in the period of Romanticism and Historicism[1]. I deemed it pertinent to use the existing English terms to describe Russian processes in order to stress their universal nature.

This text is about medieval forms in regional architecture of the 18th century, their latent survival and purposeful revival. Before passing on to examples illustrating the various aspects of the above processes, a brief survey of the general situation is called for.

St Petersburg was the indisputable centre of construction from the 1710s: a 1714 decree banned the construction of stone buildings outside the new capital. Although it was not enacted immediately and there were numerous exceptions, it did break the masonry tradition in Moscow and the rest of Russia. After it was rescinded in 1728–9, the tradition was revived everywhere in a different way. A new European type of building that presupposed a detailed plan and, consequently, the creator architect started spreading in Moscow and nearby provinces. in this case architecture could be (and more often than not was) a modest provincial replica of that of St Petersburg. Medieval forms *per se* did not survive in it. The old medieval method of building "after a fashion" survived and thrived in the remote regions, where the influence of Moscow and even more so of St Petersburg took time to reach. It did not presuppose any precise design, and the building was born from the interaction of the client, contractor, artel foreman and master builders, each adding something of his own to the image of the building under construction[2]. Such an approach did not make for any stylistic unity of the building, which could take on diverse stylistic forms. The present study aims to determine which of them go back to the medieval tradition and to trace the ways of their combination with one another and with new European forms.

As stylistic descriptions of forms of Russian architecture are ambiguous and at times controversial, it is necessary to briefly review terminology. Four basic styles can be singled out, whose forms are found in Russian regional architecture after its revival in the 1730s. Forms of the so-called *uzorochye* (patternwork), the leading style of suburban architecture of the 1630s-1680s, will be referred to as pre-Petrine. Architectural forms of Left-bank Ukraine that came to Russia in the 1680s and different variations of the emergent Naryshkin style are classified as medieval. Although the name of the latter and its stylistic essence

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[1] Gothic Survival // *The Grove Encyclopedia of Medieval Art and Architecture*. Vol. 2. Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 205–8.

[2] Buseva-Davydova, I.L. *Spetsifika arkhitekturnoi deiatelnosti v Drevnei Rusi i v pervoi polovine XVIII v.* (Specifics of Architectural Activity in Old Rus and in the First Half of the 18th Cent.) // Slovar arkhitektorov i masterov stroitelnogo dela Moskvy XV – serediny XVIII veka (Glossary of Moscow Architects and Builders of the 15th – mid-18th Centuries). Ed. I.A. Bondarenko. Moscow, 2008, pp. 667–85.

The Church of the Troitse-Scanov Convent, 1795–1808
Photo: Lev Maciel, 2004.

The Church of St Basil of Caesarea, Derevni, 1797, 1837
Photo: Nikita Rybin, 2012.

are a subject of debate[1], its distinction from the subsequent Baroque is fundamental to the present paper. The Baroque is usually divided into Petrine and that of Empress Elizabeth's period, but the exquisite forms of the latter rarely reached the provinces. The distinction between the different variants of classicism is even less pertinent to them.

Studies have been confined mostly to stone churches as the only fairly numerous and reliably dated type of buildings. As far as geography is concerned, regional architecture developed longer and most successfully in Northern Russia, along the Vyatka River, in the Urals and in Siberia, that is, in lands where nobility domains and hence estate culture were nonexistent. Distinctive regional schools also formed around ecclesiastical and administrative centres of Central Russia even in the immediate vicinity of Moscow (Suzdal, Yaroslavl, etc.). After summarising the vast empirical material, the paper cites cases illustrating obvious trends. The amassed material is, however, insufficient for a statistically precise analysis (including frequency and regional specifics), which is a job for the future.

The main survival mechanism is preserving the old spatial composition while renovating some of the décor. in general, spatial composition is the most conservative element of medieval architecture, whereas décor is more responsive to stylistic innovations. Thus, the type of church with piers and five domes modelled after the Moscow Cathedral of the Dormition (1475–9) survived successfully throughout the 16th and 17th centuries almost unaffected by patternwork, and on to the early 18th century. True, almost no church with piers was built after the 1710s (the Church of the

[1] "Severnyi manierizm" kak forma khudozhestvennogo myshleniya perekhodnogo vremeni. K voprosu ob osobennostyakh "naryshkinskogo stilya" ("Northern Mannerism" as a Form of Artistic Thinking in the Transition Period. On the Problem of Naryshkin Style Specifics) // *Iskusstvoznanie*, No. 2, 2002, pp. 334–73.

Dormition in Kineshma, 1745, was the last large church with six piers[1]), and their reappearance in the 1740s was a conscious Revival of that type sanctioned by a special decree of Empress Elizabeth[2]. A noteworthy fact is that this Revival was embodied not only in the forms of the Elizabethan Baroque (the St Nicholas Naval Cathedral of St Petersburg, 1753–62, S.I. Chevakinsky), but also in traditional forms (see below). The type of a five-domed parish church without piers (with a cloistered vault) that evolved in the 1630s proved just as lasting[3]. It successfully acquired first

The Church of Archangel Michael, Tobolsk, 1745–1749 Photo: Lev Maciel, 2003.

[1] Vdovichenko, M. V., *Arkhitektura bolshikh soborov XVII v.* (The Architecture of Large Cathedrals of the 17th Century). Moscow, 2009, pp. 334–6.

[2] Fedotova, T. P., *K probleme pyatiglaviya v arkhitekture barokko pervoi poloviny XVIII v.* (On the Problem of Five Domes in Baroque Architecture of the First Half of the 18th Cent.) // Russkoye iskusstvo barokko. Materialy i issledovaniya. Moscow, 1977, pp. 70–87.

[3] Tarabarina, Iu. V., *Russkaya arkhitektura pervoi treti XVII v.* (Russian Architecture of the First Third of the 17th Cent.) Extended abstract of dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Arts. Moscow: MGU Publishers, 1999.

the Naryshkin[1] and then Baroque décor and remained in use up to the beginning of the 19th century.

The Troitse-Scanov Convent outside Narovchat was a graphic example of the combination of the traditional church type with new décor. Built to a single plan, it comprises a five-domed church surrounded by an irregular square of the convent walls with built-in structures, three corner towers and a bell-tower standing on the church axis. The two-storeyed church was built in 1795–1808 and is one of the largest Russian churches of the turn of the 19th century. It is of the traditional type with four piers, but its apses are visually balanced out by a tall western narthex with a Baroque semi-circular gable. The presence of a tall narthex throughout the width of the church was quite uncharacteristic of the church type and was evidence of the influence of new architecture. The church has a wonderful décor of a spectacular, yet provincial version of early Classicism (which became outdated in St Petersburg by the early 1780s). The ground floor is decorated with fanciful rustication while the upper floor is nearly entirely covered with light décor. Wide and flat pilasters are especially outstanding with panels with representations of cherubim for capitals. The arrangement of windows does not correspond to the structure (four rows with two piers), which was already typical of 17th-century churches. That placement made it possible to liken the two central parts of each of the façades to a two-columned portico with a gable put on a cornice and squeezed in between the side drums.

[1] Merzliutina, N.A., *Traditsionnye besstolpnye khramy naryshkinskogo stilya* (Traditional Naryshkin Style Churches without Piers). Extended abstract of dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Arts. Moscow: GII Publishers, 2002.

The Church of the Transfiguration, Rogozha, 1756–1770
Photo: Lev Maciel, 2008

The Church
of the Ascension,
Saviour-Sumorin
Monastery, 1796–1801
and 1825
Photo: Lev Maciel,
2015.

Overall, the church of the Troitse-Scanov Convent is a graphic example
of provincial architecture trying to keep up with the metropolitan fashion.

The Church of St Basil of Caesarea (1797) in the village of Derevni near
Rostov Veliky is a colourful example of a five-domed parish church with
a new décor. It has a vertically elongated quadrangle typical of the Yaro-
slavl school and large onion domes (newly restored). Despite its late date,
its décor has even pre-Petrine forms, including an arcature belt in imita-
tion of *zakomar* gables and ogee architraves of the skylight windows. The
faceted drums, the apse and architraves with a broken pediment of the low-
er tier are all typical of the Naryshkin style. A panel over the doorway and
round window-like panels between the lower and upper rows of windows
bespeak Baroque influence. Only the bulky six-tier bell tower, built in 1837,
reflects the influence of Classicism with its pilasters, semi-columns and flat
pediments. The Derevni church thus combined all the stylistic layers possi-
ble in provincial architecture of that period.

Combinations of new compositions with elements of décor of the pre-
ceding style are rarer, yet not infrequent either. The Church of Archangel
Michael (1745–9) in Tobolsk, the then capital of Siberia, is a good exam-
ple. It is a two-storeyed church with one dome, a refectory and bell tower
on its axis, the so-called "ship design", which developed at the turn of the
18th century. The church and the bell tower are crowned with typically ba-
roque forms. The quadrangle has a high vault with the so-called *poluglavie*
(semi-circular pediments over the central wall segments) and the bell tow-
er has a vault with lucarnes. These compositions associated with the ear-
ly Baroque buildings in Russia (from the late 1690s) took final shape in the
architecture of the Church of St John the Warrior on Yakimanka, Mos-
cow (1709–17). Given its Baroque spatial composition, the Tobolsk church
comprises numerous Ukrainian elements in the upper tier and pre-Petrine

The Church of the
Transfiguration,
Vladimir, 1779–1811
Photo: Lev Maciel,
2015.

The Church
of St John the
Precursor,
Shirokovskoye,
1784–1793
Photo: Lev Maciel, 2002.

panels in the lower tier. The combination of motifs so heterogeneous in time is explained by the replication of the forms of the neighbouring Church of the Epiphany, the ground floor of which is of the pre-Petrine period (1690–1) and the upper floor dates from the time when Ukrainian masters were active in Tobolsk (1737–44)[1]. Each tier of the Church of Archangel Michael has retained "genetic memory" of the original combinations of forms, while overall the church turned out to be an unexpectedly modern "stylisation" of historical stratification for the mid-18th century.

Another bright example is the Church of the Transfiguration in Rogozha (1756–70) outside Ostashkov. It is of the "octagon-on-quadrangle" type, which was most common in the 18th century and whose origin is associated with the Naryshkin style. However, the octagon is crowned with five domes, not cross-shaped (oriented with respect to the cardinal directions) as is occasionally encountered in the Naryshkin style, but diagonal, which is almost mandatory for *uzorochye,* with befitting onion domes and *zakomars* at the base of the side domes. The bell tower is also archaic with its wooden tent-like top. The architraves are even more remarkable: pre-Petrine on the octagon and the ground tier and baroque in the

[1] Maciel Sánchez. L. Svet Lavry in partibus infidelium: "ukrainizmy" v arkhitekture Sibiri XVIII v. (The Light of the Lavra in partibus infidelium: Ukrainisms in Siberian Architecture of the 18th Cent.) // *Arkhitekturnoye nasledstvo*. Issue 54. Moscow, 2011, pp. 144–57.

middle tier and on the windows of the central tholobate. Overall, Rogo-
zha is the opposite of Tobolsk: in the latter the combination of forms of dif-
ferent styles was genetically justified while in the former all ties are, on
the contrary, broken: Baroque architraves decorate the pre-Petrine drum,
the pre-Petrine architraves, conversely, the Naryshkin quadrangle, and so
on. At the same time the details are expressive quality work, all propor-
tions are well coordinated and in general the building produces a harmoni-
ous impression.

There are curious examples of an approach when a church that is com-
pletely new in form actually reflects archaic architectural ideas. One such
example is the Church of the Ascension of the Saviour-Sumorin Monastery
outside Totma (1796–1801 and 1825, attributed to V.M. Kazakov). Scholars
cite this church as an example of Moscow Classicism[1], which is well justified
as far as its main structure is concerned. From the point of view of Survival
the refectory is noteworthy for its unusual height compared with the main
structure: its double-floor height area was superposed on a semi-basement.
The refectory has an elegant neo-Classicist décor in the spirit of Quareng-
hi, along with an unusual composition of the side façade: the narthex in-
corporated into the refectory structure is singularised by an additional
Italian window, which makes the façade asymmetrical. The rather unusu-
al forms for neo-Classicist refectories can be supposedly explained by the
local tradition of building two-storeyed churches of ship design with their
tall two-storeyed refectories. The asymmetric façade may be the result
of the custom to visually single out the refectory part below the bell tow-
er (e.g., in the village of Tsareva, 1779). Customary spatial thinking is thus
"articulated" here in the neo-Classicist architectural language.

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[1] Bocharov, G.N., Vygolov, V.P. *Solvychegodsk. Veliky Ustyug. Totma*. Moscow, 1983.

The Church of SS Peter and Paul in Severouralsk, 1767–1798
Photo: Lev Maciel, 2002.

In rare cases archaic forms survived practically in full with but a minimum of contemporary architectural forms. Some churches of Kargopol and its environs exemplify such archaism. A spectacular example is the Church of St John the Baptist (1751), a monumental five-domed church looking like 16th and 17th-century churches. It has a two-pier structure, low narthex, three semi-circular apses, relatively small windows and other features that are little different from those of 17th-century cathedral type churches. The octahedral windows topping the quadrangle typical of Naryshkin style churches are the only element of the Petrine period (but not Baroque!). As for the Ukrainian form of the domes, it is not clear whether they were original. This rejection of innovations by Kargopol clients and builders may be explained by the nearly complete absence of contacts between the Kargopol masonry tradition and other centres (Vologda, Ustyug and Arkhangelsk are hundreds of kilometres away from Kargopol) and, consequently, contemporary architectural trends.

Russian architecture also saw Revival, and even more than one. To begin with, a "Gothic taste"[1], sometimes referred to as pseudo- or false Gothic, appeared in the time of Catherine the Great in imitation of the English Gothic Revival. Although it could also be interpreted as reference to medieval Russian architecture[2], it had nothing in common with its forms. The distinction between native and West European Gothic was eventually drawn by the 1830s, when two Revivals – neo-Gothic *per se* and Russian

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[1] Khachaturov, S.V. *Goticheskii vkus v russkoi khudozhestvennoi culture XVIII v.* (Gothic Taste in Russian Artistic Culture of the 18th Cent.). Moscow, 1999.

[2] Kirichenko, E.I. *Russkii stil* (Russian Style), Moscow, 1997; Lisovskii V.G. *Arkhitektura Rossii XVIII – nach. XX v. Poisk natsionalnogo stilya* (Russian Architecture. 18th – Early 20th Cent. Search for a National Style). Moscow, 2009.

style – began to take shape and develop. The latter, which contemporaries sometimes called Moscow-Yaroslavl and pseudo-Russian in the Soviet period, is often referred to as Russian Revival by English-speaking historiographers. None of them is in any way related to the Survival processes considered above.

I have a hypothesis that the above medieval tradition, which "survived" in the 18th century, had its own Revival. I mean the conscious recourse of church builders to forms that had already ceased to be used in their region, a phenomenon yet to be understood by historiographers. The so-called Pokhodyashin churches of the North Urals constitute short of the only example described so far. Three stone churches – of St John the Precursor (1754–76) in Verkhoturye, of the Presentation of the Virgin (1767–76) in Karpinsk and of SS Peter and Paul (1767–98) in Severouralsk – were commissioned by the conservative merchant Maksim Pokhodyashin. They successfully reproduced the forms of local Naryshkin style churches of the early 18th century (above all, of the Church of St John the Precursor (1721–8) in Krasnoye already after the Baroque forms had become common there in the mid-18th century[1].

Analysis of various regional traditions makes it possible to presume that the above phenomenon was common and could take different forms.

On the one side, it could have been dictated by the desire to reproduce some admired specimen. Thus, a small church of St John the Precursor built

The Church of the Meeting of the Lord, Zaostrovie, 1808–1878
Photo: Lev Maciel, 2007.

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[1] Kaptikov A. Iu., "Pokhodyashinskie tserkvi Urala" (Pokhodyashin Churches of the Urals) // *Arkhitekturnoye nasledstvo*. Issue 38 (1995). Moscow, pp. 374–8.

The Church
of the Presentation
of the Virgin,
Kargopol, 1785–1802
Photo: Lev Maciel,
2007.

in the village of Shirokovskoye beyond the Urals in 1784–93 in minute detail reproduced the unique forms of the finishes of the nearby Cathedral of the Dormition of the Dalmatov Monastery (1707–20). These forms, which have not survived to our day, were the result of Naryshkin style masters' experiments with the cross-in-square five-domed church: the lucarnes serving as the base for the lateral domes were placed at the centre of the broken pediments stretched throughout the width of the quadrangle walls[1]. Despite the spread of exquisite forms of Tobolsk Baroque in the region in the 1770s (the Cathedral of the Transfiguration in Shadrinsk, 1771–7)[2], the builders of the small church in the village belonging to the monastery deliberately reproduced the archaic forms of the admired halidom.

There are even more specific examples. The Church of the Transfiguration (1164) built in Vladimir by Andrei Bogolyubsky was pulled down after a fire in 1778. Its foundation was soon used to raise a new church (the exact date of its construction is unknown[3]) with a quadrangle typical of the period topped with a small octagon on a high vault. Some details are provincial Baroque. The builders also wonderfully reproduced some features of 12ᵗʰ-century Vladimir-Suzdal architecture, most likely guided by

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[1] Maciel Sánchez L.C., "Artel Dalmatova monastyrya i arkhitektura Sibiri XVIII v." (The Dalmatov Monastery Artel and 18ᵗʰ-century Architecture of Siberia) // *Academia. Arkhitekura i stroitelstvo*. No. 4, 2012, pp. 21–8.

[2] Maciel Sánchez L.C., "Tobolskoye barokko" (Tobolsk Baroque) // *Academia. Arkhitekura i stroitelstvo*. No. 3, 2013, pp. 46–51.

[3] *Svod. Vladimirskaya obl*. Part 1. Moscow, 2004, p. 428.

the forms of the burnt-out church. Although reproduced not quite exactly, they are still recognisable. The band of blind arcades is not below the windows, but at their level, most likely due to lack of space. By analogy with Vladimir-Suzdal churches, the portal is a rowlock arch, keel-shaped as typical of the 15th-18th centuries, instead of the semi-circular one. As a result, the Church of Transfiguration in Vladimir is in spirit attuned to Gothic Revival in reproducing an old church as a fact of venerable age rather than an extratemporal thing of worship.

   Another Revival version is oriented to old fashion as such, to some archaic architectural image. That tendency grew stronger as regional architectures came to the end of their development as a sort of defence reaction of the outgoing medieval world outlook (and construction method) in the face of stifling neo-Classicist regulation.

   A good example is the Church of the Meeting of the Lord in Zaostrovie not far away from Arkhangelsk. It was founded in 1808, the upper floor altar was consecrated in 1827, and work on the church was completed in 1878. Despite its modest status of a parish church, it is of the five-domed piered cathedral type. Such parish churches were built in the environs of Kholmogory in the late 17th century[1], the last one of this type being the Trinity Cathedral of Arkhangelsk (1708–43). Later on churches topped with a small octagon typical of Northeastern Russia became common there. At the very end of the century the local church builders all of a sudden reverted to the extremely conservative type of building[2]. in the environs of Arkhangelsk they built the Church of the Epiphany in Emetsk (1792–1808, has not survived) after the Trinity Cathedral of Arkhangelsk and the Trinity Cathedral (1800–17, has not survived) in Pinega, in which Classicist features were more manifest. The Zaostrovie church is emphatically monumental: its décor (primitive Baroque and Classicist architraves) is fine and light, merely emphasising the might of the cubic space. The sanctuary apses are absent and the placement of the main altars on both floors (there are six of them) is uniquely designated with a narrow portico on paired columns. The domes have a spectacular exaggeratedly bulbous shape. Overall, despite somewhat coarse details, the builders managed to convey the image of an old northern church, impressive in its might. Due to the late date of its foundation and extremely protracted construction the Revival of medieval architecture merged in it with the Russian Revival of modern history: the church itself epitomizes the close of a long medieval tradition while its tent-like bell tower already reflects the influence of the Russo-Byzantine style projects of K.A. Thon.

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[1] Vdovichenko, M.V., *Arkhitektura severnykh soborov XVII v.* (Architecture of Northern Churches of the 17th Cent.) // *Pamyatniki russkoi arkhitektury i monumentalnogo iskusstva XVI–XX vv.* (Monuments of Russian Architecture and Monumental Art of the 16th – 20th Centuries). Issue 7, Moscow, 2006, pp. 27–62.

[2] Maciel Sánchez, L.C., Khramy arkhangelogorodskoi shkoly (Churches of the Arkhangelsk School) // *Arkhitekturnoye nasledstvo*. Issue 55. Moscow, 2011, pp. 77–87.

It is worth citing one more specimen of even greater archaisation. The Church of the Presentation of the Virgin was built in Kargopol in 1785–1802. It has nothing but Naryshkin ("ship design" and the faceted skylight windows) and pre-Petrine ("crown" architraves at the turn of the 19th century!) forms without any reference whatsoever to Classicism or even Baroque. Its appearance should not be surprising given the special conservatism of the Kargopol school. However, a close look at the dates of the landmarks will show that starting from the 1770s many of them featured both Baroque and schematised Classicist elements, to say nothing of the spectacular cathedral bell tower in early Classicist forms built by visiting masters (1772–8)[1]. in this context the pointedly archaic forms of the Presentation Church a mere 50 m away from the aforementioned bell tower can be interpreted not as latent Survival, but as intentional Revival.

The fact of Survival was on the whole never called in question, yet this vast realm of architecture represented by thousands of landmarks deserves more extensive and in-depth research. As for Revival, the above arguments attest to the need to ponder at length on this little known and fairly rare phenomenon. Its specimens are evidence that the ability to differentiate between layers of the historical past and interest in doing so began to spread from the mid-18th century also in the conservative and in fact still medieval environment of Russian regional clients and builders.

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[1] Maciel Sánchez, L.K., Kamennaya arkhitektura Kargopolya kon. XVIII v. (Stone Architecture of Kargopol of the Late 18th Cent.) // *Academia. Arkhitektura i stroitelstvo*. No. 3, 2015. P.58–65.

Alla Aronova

"Forgetfulness" in petrine architecture: the church of the nativity of the virgin in the village of podmoklovo

Flagrant neglect of the historical cultural tradition that can be traced in different spheres of Russian social life was characteristic of the Petrine period. Such attitude implying that things modern and western were better than something customary, time-honoured and traditional was sanctioned by the State as represented by Peter the Great. In other words, it was justified ideologically and realised as a sociocultural mechanism primarily in the new and old capitals of the Russian Empire.

After the triumphant Battle of Poltava, when the stress of the wartime burden gradually subsided, St Petersburg architecture, like litmus paper, manifested the above tendency. New urban space was organised according to the regular principle, which was not characteristic of the Russian urban development tradition. Residential houses had layouts, façades and even construction technology (timber-framing) that were unusual for that period. Last but not least, the church – an architectural structure of prime importance in the medieval world outlook – not only ceded ground to secular commissions for the construction of residences and public buildings, but acquired a fundamentally new image.

The ability of architecture to manifest the major cultural development tendency is confirmed by events well known to students of the Petrine period. In the first quarter of the 18th century Russian reality was swept by an avalanche of changes engineered from above: the state machinery, appearance, environment and lifestyle were all transformed. Starting in the two capitals, that process spread throughout the Russian Empire in the post-Petrine period.

Setting sights on things new and the mechanisms of attaining them were for Peter the Great a conscious choice of social and cultural strategy. They

enabled his country to get a positive historical perspective – not only to survive in the political situation existing in Europe by the early 18th century, but also to occupy a worthy place on the contemporaneous scene. The ubiquitous "forgetfulness" that we observe in Russian culture of the Petrine period did not presuppose or lead to the historical oblivion of one's roots. The head of state demonstrated that in public festivities, military triumphs and his first coronation, all of which took place in the urban space of Moscow, the old capital of the land. "Loss of memory" can be viewed as a special cultural mechanism of accelerated renovation and assimilation of a cultural code that helped implement the main government project – the shaping of a renewed image of the Russian State as an active participant in contemporary European life. Feofan Prokopovich, too, stated that in the ornate form of a baroque panegyric: when paying tribute to Peter I in 1725 he said that the Russian monarch was "the author of our innumerable advantages and joys, who resurrected Russia as if from the dead and raised it to such power and glory..."[1]

Studies of the applications of that strategy in the architectural practice of the Petrine period, especially based on material unrelated to the programmatic precepts implemented from scratch on the Neva banks in St Petersburg, are of great scholarly interest.

How was tradition abandoned in the conditions of Moscow, the historical capital of the state, and its environs?

In the first 15 years of the new century Moscow saw the building of structures whose features spoke of the desire of certain clients to distance themselves from the existing tradition, even in its late, "Naryshkin" incarnation. Church architecture accounts for most of the representative series of structures of novel design[2]. They were city churches commissioned by all sorts of clients, among them *slobodas* (the Church of SS Peter and Paul in the Captains' *sloboda*, 1705–19) and private clients (the Church of Archangel Gabriel in Alexander Menshikov's city mansion, 1707–9). Private churches raised on the estates of noble boyars outside Moscow: the Church of St Nicholas in Troekurovo (1699–1705, commissioned by Ivan Troekurov[3]), the

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[1] Feofan Prokopovich. *Slovo na pogrebenie Petra Velikogo* (Word on the Burial of Peter the Great) // Prokopovich Feofan. Writings. Ed. I.P. Eremin, Moscow-Leningrad: USSR Academy of Sciences, 1961, p. 26.

[2] Alongside churches built in Moscow and its environs, secular structures of new models were built as evidenced by the few surviving landmarks (e.g., the Lefortovsky Palace rebuilt by Menshikov) and written sources (see Aronova A., *Arkhitekturnaya praktika nachala 18 veka v svete gollandskikh vpechatlenii Velikogo posolstva* (Architectural Practice of the Early 18th Century in the Light of the Dutch Impressions of the Great Embassy) // *Iskusstvoznanie*, 1/02. Moscow, 2002, pp. 356–67). However, the ratio of secular to church construction remained the same in Moscow in the early 18th century, with church construction in the lead.

[3] Prince Ivan Borisovich Troekurov (1633–1703), who founded the St Nicholas Church on his estate outside Moscow at the end of the 17th century and had the lower sanctuary consecrated before his death in 1703, was closely associated with Peter the Great's retinue, even though he belonged to the older generation of Russian nobility. (For details see Kuptsov, I.V., *Knyaziya Troekurovy* (Princes Troekurov), Volgograd, 2011).

Church of St Nicholas in Poltevo (1706, commissioned by Feodor Apraksin[1]), the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Marfino (1701–7, commissioned by Boris Golitsyn[2]), the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Podmoklovo (1714–23, commissioned by Grigory Dolgoruky[3]), made up a noteworthy group of landmarks.

What were the hallmarks of the latter four churches?

Every one of these structures had a unique artistic design and lacked any traditional features in both composition and decoration. This is evidence of the variative nature of the model chosen by the clients to replace the old type church with a new one.

What do they have in common?

Orientation to the western model and disregard for tradition. No doubt the latter fact, too, was dictated by the clients.

They were Peter's associates of noble birth who unconditionally sided with him in his struggle for power. Among the aforementioned four clients, Feodor Apraksin might have been party to the Most Comical All-Drunken Council formed of members of Peter's select "company". The court game based on "Bacchic Mysteries", according to the American

[1] Count Feodor Matveevich Apraksin (1661–1728), who commissioned the Poltevo Church, was Peter's brother-in-law. His sister Marfa was the second wife of Peter's elder half-brother, Tsar Theodore Alexeevich. (For details see Bespalov, A.V., *Bitvy Severnoi voiny, 1700–1721* (Battles of the Northern War, 1700–21), Moscow, 2005; *Severnaia voina* (Northern War) 1700–21, Collected documents, vol. 1, Institute of Russian History, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2009; *Bumagi Petra Velikogo* (Papers of Peter the Great) ed. A.F. Bychkov // *Russkii vestnik 1841,* Book II, p. 214; Belavenets, P.I., *General-Admiral Feodor Matveevich Apraksin*, Revel, 1899; Verkh V.N., *Zhizneopisaniye General-Admirala grafa Feodora Matveevicha Apraksina* (The Life Story of General-Admiral Count Feodor Matveevich Apraksin), St Petersburg: N. Grech printing house, 1825; Dmitriev, S.I., *General-Admiral graf F.M. Apraksin. Spodvizhnik Petra Velikogo* (General-Admiral Count F.M. Apraksin. Peter the Great's Associate), 1761–1728, Petrograd: K.A. Chetverikov electrotyping printing house, 1914; "Feodor Matveevich Apraksin: Galereia rossiiskikh flotovodtsev" *(*Feodor Matveevich Apraksin: Gallery of Russian Naval Commanders) // *Morskoi sbornik*, No. 10, 1990, p. 32).

[2] Prince Boris Alekseevich Golitsyn (1632–1714), Peter's tutor and so-called *diad'ka*, was largely responsible for the monarch's western leanings. (Kurakin, B.I. "Historia o Petre I i blizhnikh k nemu liudiakh (History of Peter I and his Associates). 1682–95" // *Russkaia starina*, 1890, vol. 68, No. 10, p. 247). Golitsyn, together with Troekurov and other nobles, sided with Peter in his conflict with Tsarevna Sophia and actually took over all efforts to mount resistance to the Regent Tsarevna at the Trinity Monastery. Later on he took part in the battles of Azov and Narva, although he was well advanced in age (see Kobeko, D.F. *Sheremetevy i kniaziya Urusovy* (The Sheremetevs and Princes Urusov), St Petersburg: Leshtukovskaia Steam Printing House of P.O. Iablonski, 1900; Samye znamenitye dinastii Rossii (The Most Famous Families of Russia), Moscow, 2001).

[3] Prince Grigory Feodorovich Dolgorukov (1657–1723) was one of the four Dolgorukov brothers who actively supported Peter and took part in his transformations. (For details see Kolegov, S.S. *Postoiannye diplomaticheskie predstavitelstva Rossii v Europe vo vtoroi treti XVII – nachale XVIII vv.* (Permanent Diplomatic Missions of Russia in Europe in the late 17th – early 18th centuries. Extended Abstract of Dissertation for the degree of Cand. of Sciences (History), Yekaterinburg, 2011).

researcher Ernest Sitser, became "a true embodiment of the general processes of 'secularization' and 'westernization'"[1]. The others, too, might have attended Council "sessions".

Let us consider in greater detail the personality of one of them, Grigory Feodorovich Dolgorukov, through whose efforts a church was founded on his Serpukhov estate in the year when a law banning stone construction was enacted all over Russia[2], the church that was to go down in the history of Russian architecture under the name of Podmoklovskaia Rotunda.

As mentioned above, Grigory Dolgorukov embarked on his career at 14 when he was hired as cup-bearer at the palace; he later became captain of the boy-soldier Preobrazhensky Regiment of the young tsarevich and, together with his commander, took part in the Battle of Azov. From 1696 he was in Italy, Venice in particular, where he stayed until 1699. In Venice architectural training could be obtained either at the studios of practicing architects or at the Department of Hydraulic Works, which was in charge of the construction and maintenance of all engineering systems in the city[3]. A certain Dolgorukov might have attended that establishment because the volunteers of the Great Embassy sent to Venice had to study seamanship[4]. Indirectly, this is corroborated by the fact that the given reference book was written by a certain Cashpor Vecchia, "mathematician and architect", who apparently never built anything[5].

Dolgorukov's subsequent career had to do with diplomacy, further proof of his extraordinary abilities. Between 1700 and 1714 he intermittently served as the Russian ambassador to the Polish court. During his brief stay in Russia in 1714–7 the Prince started building the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in the village of Podmoklovo, work on which was mostly completed in 1723, when Dolgorukov finally returned to Moscow[6].

One of his descendants, Pavel Vasilievich Dolgorukov (1755–1837), gave a pithy description of his ancestor, saying that "Prince Grigory Feodorovich, a man of great mind, fine and sharp, and of most elevated soul, […] was one of the most remarkable Russian diplomats"[7].

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[1] Zitser E. *Tsarstvo Preobrazhenia: Sviashchennaia parodia i tsarskaia kharizma pri dvore Petra Velikogo*. Moscow: Novoie literaturnoie obozrenie (NLO), 2008, p. 181. (Ernest A. Zitser, *The Transfigured Kingdom. Sacred Parody and Charismatic Authority at the Court of Peter the Great.* Cornell University Press, 2004).

[2] Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire, Vol. 5, No. 2792.

[3] Blunt A. Barocco & Rococo. Architecture & Decoration. London, 1971, pp. 78–84.

[4] The Embassy volunteers in Venice studied at the Nautica school, but no Dolgorukov was among them (See Guzevich D., Guzevich I., *Velikoe posolstvo* (The Great Embassy), St Petersburg, 2003, p. 219.

[5] RGADA. F. 181. D. 258/463. L. 1.

[6] Kolegov, S.S. Op. cit., sheet 15.

[7] Cit. Fedorchenko, V.I., *Imperatorskii dom. Vydaiushchiesia sanovniki. Entsiklopedia biografii* (The Imperial House. Outstanding Dignitaries. Encyclopaedia of Biographies). Krasnoyarsk: Bonus Publishers, 2003, vol. 1, p. 405.

A certain Dolgorukov is associated with one scholarly intrigue, namely, the existence of a graphic manuscript in the Archive of Ancient Acts entitled "Civil architecture chosen from paladiush the glorious architect and many other architects from mathematician and architect cashpor vecchia drawn in venice year 1699 month september while there through the study and care of lord prince dolgorukov…"[1]

The question of the commissioner and owner of this manuscript has remained open. According to the architecture historian A.A. Tits, it was either Grigory Feodorovich or Vasilii Lukich Dolgorukov[2]. The latter was party, together with his uncle Yakov Feodorovich (Grigory's father), to the embassy to France in 1687–8. Some believe that Vladimir Mikhailovich Dolgorukov, too, might have had a hand in that document, as, together with Grigory, he was in Italy in the late 1690s, studying seamanship[3].

Church of the
Nativity of the Virgin
in the village
of Podmoklovo
1714–23

Church of the
Nativity of the Virgin
in the village
of Podmoklovo
Fragment of balustrade

[1] RGADA. F. 181. D. 258/463.

[2] Tits, A.A. "Neizvestnyi russkii traktat po arkhitekture" (Anonymous Russian Treatise on Architecture) // *Russkoe iskusstvo XVIII veka. Materialy i issledovania* (Russian Art of the 18th Century. Documents and Studies). Ed. T.V. Alekseeva. Moscow, 1968, pp. 17–31.

[3] The problem will not be resolved or even raised within the present article.
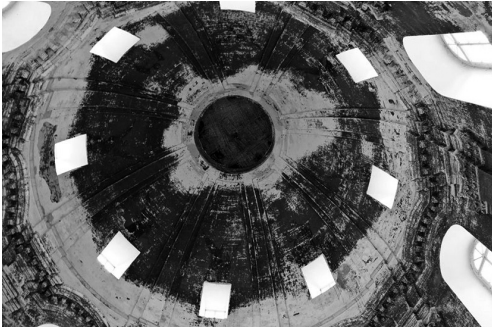
Church of the
Nativity of the Virgin
in the village
of Podmoklovo.
1714–23
Portal

Church of the
Nativity of the Virgin
in the village
of Podmoklovo.
1714–23
Dome space

Church of the
Nativity of the Virgin
in the village
of Podmoklovo.
1714–23
Interior. Corinthian
capital

Thus, childhood contact with western cultural values in his family circle, association with the pro-western tsar, studies abroad and long-time service in Warsaw, one of the notable capitals of Europe, beyond doubt determined Prince Dolgorukov's taste preferences. His Serpukhov estate acquired a unique specimen of European church architecture, the characteristics of which still evoke scholarly interest. Today this structure has a representative base of archival sources consisting of documents stored at the Archive of Ancient Acts and other archival collections in Moscow and St Petersburg[1]. Much is known, including dates, drawings, the original size of the building and its decorative details, the names of contractors, builders and foremen (the latter were exclusively foreigners), but the origin of the project itself remains an enigma because the drawings have not survived. Under the circumstances it is worth focusing on the specific features of the landmark because they may bring us closer to solving the riddle of its origin.

The church has a rotunda composition peculiar for its open external arcade. It is decorated with Corinthian pilasters and forms a wide terrace around the second tier of the church. The rotunda is topped with an egg-shaped dome with lucarnes and a huge lantern.

[1] RGADA. F. 156. Op. 1. 1716. D. 8. Ll. 38–39 ob., L. 101; F. 156. Op.1. Ch. 1. D.1038. Ll. 149 ob.— 150 ob.; KPV. 2 otd. Kn. 32 (1717). L.367; F.282. Op. 1. Ch. 1. D. 1035. Ll. 166–166 ob.; F.1239. Op. 2, D. 1732. Ll.179–179 ob.; F. 1239. Op. 3 D. 42520. L. 283; RGIA. F. 796. Op. 1 T. 34. D. 381.

The inner space of the church extends vertically in a powerful thrust to the lantern. This dynamic effect is achieved through the use of a colossal order, the pilasters transforming into the projections of structural ribs on the dome surface, and also owing to the inner space (up to the lantern crown) being 2.5 times as high as the dome span. In the interior the entablature crowning the order composition has a cornice of intricate plasticity with modillions. Its curves over the window openings of the second tier enhance the feeling of vertical movement.

Order devices are used consistently in the architecture of the church: fluted Corinthian pilasters, archivolts and moulded imposts and panelled Corinthian pilasters in the second tier; the fluted Corinthian pilasters of the lantern and full three-part entablatures adorning the façade. Giant order Corinthian pilasters grace the interior.

The order forms are occasionally interpreted in an interesting way. For instance, the gallery order sports a modified Corinthian capital that has lost the full-fledged lower tier of acanthus leaves but has received developed middle scrolls identical to those at the corners (instead of the classical underdeveloped ones) and flower garlands connecting their middle parts. The other Corinthian capitals are interpreted in the same way. All have fortified middle scrolls, yet detailing of both the acanthus leaves and scrolls noticeably changes in the second tier: the first tier of leaves is curtailed while the second and third are full-fledged. The scrolls are not so strongly curled as in the gallery and garlands are absent. The capitals of the lantern retain the underdeveloped first tier and again have garlands.

Sculptures decorating the building are a unique feature. The gallery balustrade is adorned with 16 sculptures (12 Apostles and 2 Evangelists, SS Luke and Mark)[1] made of Miachkovsky white stone and placed on pedestals.

Decorative details are notably original. Triangular panels filled with flowers are in the upper corner segments of the arch and order units, and small rectangular plates appear in every other unit of the gallery frieze. The panelled pilasters of the second tier are ornamented with flower garlands. There is an additional decorative floral frieze with cherubim in the area of the capitals under the entablature.

Architraves and portals are a case apart. The first-tier windows are decorated with simple rectangular frames with characteristic "ears" at the corners, while the portals combine this type of ornament with a more intricate design of figured brackets and a split rounded frontal with oval cartouche. The façade decoration reaches maximum intensity in the second tier, where window openings and blind windows alternate between the pilasters. The openings have an intricate configuration: the link between the rectangle and the arch lintel is intentionally articulated by a setback. The flat contour architrave revealing the shape of the opening is emphasised by an additional frame, which accentuates the windows and niches

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[1] For church sculpture decoration see Pilipenko, A.D. "Semantika skulpturnogo dekora" (The Semantics of Sculpted Décor) // *Vestnik MGUKI*, No. 6 (20), 2007, pp. 190–3.

of the second-floor façade plane. Window and niche decoration culminates in head mouldings, in which corner fringes with wings on exquisite brackets alternate with small rounded frontals with rectangular insets.

The roof lucarnes, open and blind, add the finishing touch. The former are square, framed with flower décor and crowned by triangular head mouldings with wings; the latter are oval, flanked by volutes and topped by curved moulding with a keystone.

There are no doubts about the Italian nature of the prototype, which has long been recognised by scholars[1]. It remains to establish what developments in Italian architecture it can be associated with.

The rotunda composition made a comeback in 15th century architecture[2] and stayed within the Italian architects' field of vision for several decades. A recurrent design employed by architects of different periods was a central polygonal dome space surrounded by a wreath of chapels along the perimeter (Chiesa di Santa Maria degli Angeli, 1437, unfinished, F. Brunelleschi; Chiesa di Santa Maria dell'Assunta in Ariccia, 1663–5, L. Bernini). Fifteenth-century graphic artists[3] and painters[4] began to develop the idea of an ancient rotunda, a round building framed with a colonnade. It was implemented in architectural practice in the early 16th century (Tempietto, 1502, D. Bramante). Another variant was a rotunda or polygonal dome space surrounded by an arcade of piers (Tempio Matatestiana, 1447–1503, L.B. Alberti) or columns. In the Renaissance period the latter was represented only in graphic works[5] and paintings[6], nor was it actually translated into reality later.

At the end of the 17th century the composition of a round church with an open arcade unexpectedly appeared in a design by Carlo Fontana,

[1] See Mikhailov, A. "Podmoklovskaia rotunda i klassicheskie veiania v iskusstve petrovskogo vremeni" (Podmoklovo Rotunda and Classical Influences in Petrine Art) // Iskusstvo, No. 9, 1985, pp. 64–70; Aronova, A.A. Arkhitekturnye sviazi Rossii s Severnoi Evropoi v poslednei chetverti XVII – pervoi chetverti XVIII vv. (Architectural Links Between Russia and Northern Europe in the Last Quarter of the 17th – First Quarter of the 18th Centuries). Dissertation for Cand. of Sciences (Art Studies). Moscow, 1993, p. 68; Kirillov, V.V. Klassicheskie tendentsii formoobrazovania v arkhitekture Podmoskovia petrovskogo vremeni (Classical Form-building Trends in Petrine Architecture of the Moscow Region) // Russkii klassitsizm vtoroi poloviny XVIII – nach. XIX veka (Russian Classicism of the Second Half of the 18th – Early 19th Centuries). Moscow: Izobrazitelnoe iskusstvo Publishers, 1994, pp. 15–24; Pilipenko, A.D. "K semantike skulpturnogo ansamblia khrama Rozhdestva Bogoroditsy v Podmoklovo" (On the Semantics of the Sculptural Ensemble of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Podmoklovo) // Vestnik MGUKI, No. 6 (20), 2007, pp. 190–3.

[2] Kuznetsov, A.V., Tektonika i konstruktsii tsentricheskikh zdanii (Central Building Tectonics and Structures). Moscow, 2013, pp. 203–68).

[3] Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Codex Saluzzianus 148. Fol. 84. Rotundas. (Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Tratatti di architectura, ingerneria e arte militare. Ed. Corrado Maltese. Milan, 1967. Facsimile manuscript edition.

[4] Unknown artist. Ideal City. Ca. 1470. Tempera on panel, 60x200. National Gallery, Urbino.

[5] Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Codex Saluzzianus 148. Fol. 84. Rotundas.

[6] Raphael Santi. The Engagement of Virgin Mary. 1504. Oil on panel, 170x117. Pinacoteca Brera, Milan.
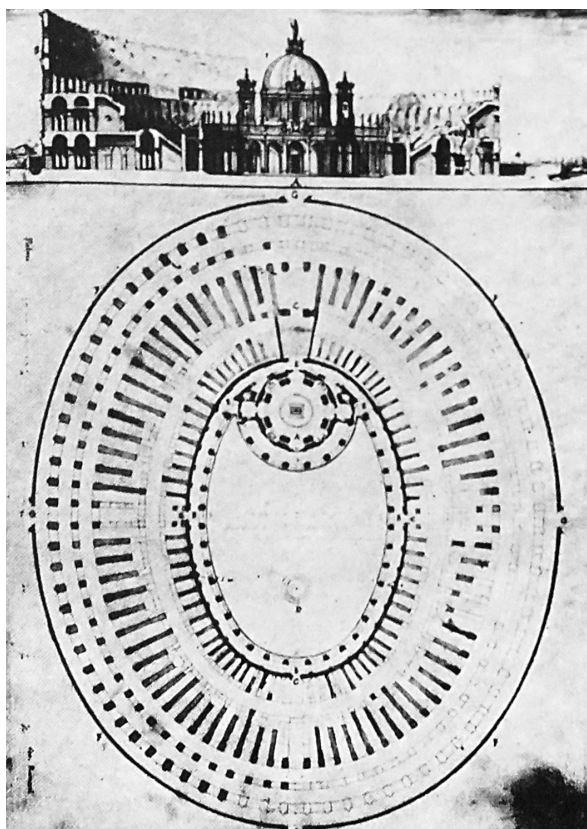
a disciple of L. Bernini and one of the most influential architects of Rome at the turn of the 18th century. In 1676–1679, Pope Innocent XI commissioned him to build a church in the Colosseum arena. The idea was to renovate the decrepit old structure and at the same time, in the spirit of Vatican's numerous construction initiatives of the 17th century, to reiterate the idea of "Ecclesia triumphans", the victory of the Christian Church over paganism. The idea arose in connection with the approaching Jubilee or Holy Year of 1675. Fontana's project did not materialize because the Pope's finances had been undermined by the war against the Turks. Twenty-five years later, when the following Holy Year (1700) was approaching, the project again came to the Pope's attention, and again remained unfulfilled. In the early 18th century Pope Clement XI showed interest in it as a patron of architectural initiatives. He established a competition in architecture that eventually was named after him, Concorsi Clementini[1]. Inspired by the new Pope's patronage, Fontana had finished work on a set of drawings of a church in the Colosseum, complete with the description

Carlo Fontana
Ecclesia Triumphans.
1675–1725
Project

[1] Architectural Fantasy and Reality. Drawing from the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in Rome. Concorsi Clementini. 1700–1750. / Ed. by Susan S. Munshower. N-Y, 1982, pp. 1–8.
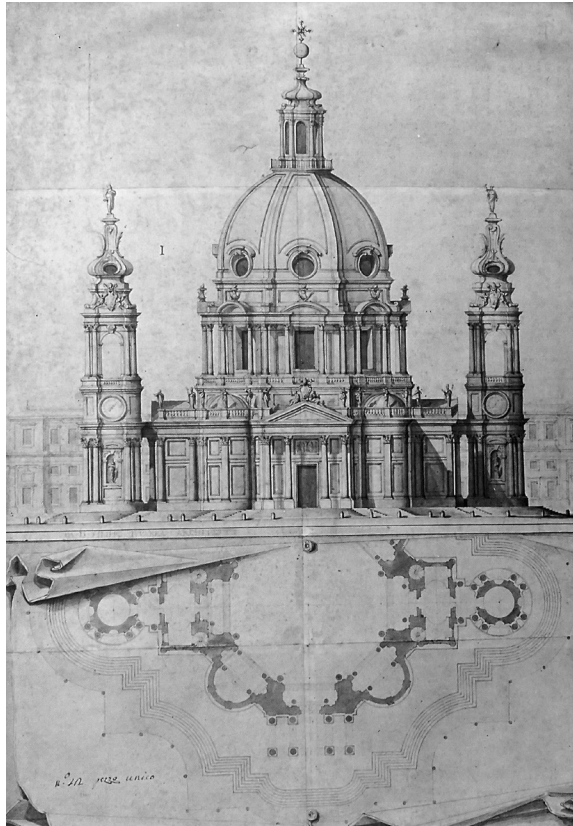
**Filippo Juvarra
Design of a church
for academic degree.**
Façade. 1707

of the project, by 1707. "Unpublished until 1725, it is still without question that the Colosseum church designs were on the drawing board, literally, in Fontana's studio…"[1]

The church building was designed in the form of two superimposed shapes, with the octahedral dome space and a wreath of chapels surrounded on the west side by an order arcade gallery crowned with a parapet of sculptures. Instead of a lantern, the dome was topped with a sculptural composition. Fontana's use of the order arcade was dictated by the artistic link with the main façade motif of the Colosseum. However, he used only Ionic pilasters (rather than Doric half columns as in the first floor of the Colosseum)[2]. What is more, as his task was to renovate the ancient structure, he suggested that the entire arena be surrounded by an order arcade gallery along the perimeter.

[1] Architectural Fantasy and Reality. Drawing from the Accademia Nazionale di San Luca in Rome. Concorsi Clementini. 1700–1750. / Ed. by Susan S. Munshower. N-Y, 1982, p. 143.

[2] In Fontana's design the capital pattern includes a garland; the same technique was used in Podmoklovo.

Of all the western church buildings or 17th- and early 18th-century designs known to date, "Ecclesia triumphans" is the model closest to the Podmoklovo rotunda.

Distinctions are in the detail. Fontana used no corner panels on the gallery façade, lucarnes or the lantern. He employed paired pilasters on the second floor. However, if we turn to his other works or projects of his disciples (the circle of architects working in his studio at the St Luke Academy in Rome), we can find some details present in the architecture of the Podmoklovo church. Fontana himself had only one structure circular in plan built: the Jesuit church and college in Loyola (1681)[1]. Jointly with L. Bernini, he also took part in work on another famous 17th-century rotunda – the Church of Santa Maria dell'Assunta in Ariccia. The two structures have light tholobates and parapets. The Jesuit church is decorated with a frieze in the area of the capitals and has a similar pattern of split head mouldings.

In 1707, Filippo Juvarra, one of C. Fontana's most successful and gifted disciples, submitted a design of a church, circular in plan, for his academic degree; he later reworked it to build the Basilica of Superga, a royal mausoleum, in Turin[2]. Scholars have repeatedly noted similar features in Juvarra's and Fontana's projects[3]. Let us dwell on only the elements of interest to us. The lower floor has a parapet with sculptures, the shape of the dome is slightly elongated along the vertical axis and has round lucarnes with fringes, and there is a lantern.

We can add to this the motifs that persisted in Roman architecture, although they dated from the mid-17th century. These include above all window head mouldings of diverse configurations, split frontals, and oval openings characteristic of Fr. Borromini (façade of the Oratorio dei Filippini, 1637–43). Finally, the use of a second ornamented frieze under the architrave in the area of the capitals that appeared in Late Renaissance architecture also formed part of the baroque repertoire (the façade of the Church of St Ignatius of Loyola, 1626–50, Carlo Maderna, Orazio Grassi).

Going back to the Podmoklovo rotunda, let us point out a number of facts that, alongside characteristic features of architecture, suggest tentative comments on the sources of the architectural forms of this landmark.

According to a contract record of 1 May 1714, masters agreed to build a "church circular in plan in the village of Podmokloe"[4] for Prince G.D. Dolgorukov. It follows from this document, as well as from some other papers[5], that the church was built according to plan. All construction orders repeatedly "refer" to it (or several drawings). However, neither the drawing itself

[1] Hager H. Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in Honour of the "Ecclesia Triumphans" in the Colosseum, Rome // *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. Vol. 36 (1973), pp. 319–37.

[2] For details see Carboneri 1979, pp. 5–9; *Architectural Fantasy and Reality*, pp. 144–5.

[3] *Architectural Fantasy and Reality*, p. 143.

[4] RGADA. F. 282. Op. 1. Ch. 1. D. 1033. L. 136 ob.

[5] RGADA. F. 158. Op. 1. 1716. D. 8, Ll. 38–39 ob., l. 101; F. 282. Op. 1. Ch. 1. D. 1035. Ll. 166–166 ob.; D. 1036. L. 176–178.

nor the author is known today, and we may presume that they will never be known. But this does not make it impossible to trace the origin of the church design.

All of the aforementioned features in the architectural design of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Podmoklovo suggest Italy as the place where such architectural techniques were common. The use of a construction plan was taken for granted in the Petrine period, as Peter had formalised that requirement in his decrees[1]. The Russians "discovered" the plan and learned ways of making it during the Great Embassy[2], as evidenced by Dolgorukov's manuscript architectural treatise. In Russia only foreign architects could devise such a construction plan: Russian architects could hardly have achieved it, primarily because there was no professional school of the western type (it was just in the making). It is highly improbable that Prince Dolgorukov could have commissioned the project from a foreigner in St Petersburg, where all foreign architecture specialists were concentrated. First, his return to Russia from Warsaw in 1712[3] had to do with his illness (the Prince most likely stayed in Moscow or in his estates outside Moscow during that time); second, in 1712–4 the only Italian in St Petersburg was D. Trezzini, who did not belong to the architectural school of Rome. The building of a church on his estate outside Moscow could have a dedicatory nature (the prince was already 57 at that time).

Apparently he had brought the plan from Warsaw. Dolgorukov not only performed diplomatic missions, but, like other envoys of the Russian court abroad, was busy hiring professionals. It was to him that Peter owed the invitation of Ch.A. Minich[4], whom the prince recommended above all as an architect[5]. Consequently, G.F. Dolgorukov had knowledge of architecture and was familiar with the architectural commissions of the Polish nobles and their enthusiasm, including that for Italian architects. The latter regularly visited the Kingdom of Poland starting from the 15th century[6].

In the early 18th century the situation in Italy itself was not very favourable for architectural practice: the elite was weakening politically and

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[1] The decree was enacted 14 September 1715 (Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire. Vol. 5, p. 169, No. 2932).

[2] See Guzevich D., Guzevich I. Op. cit., p. 217.

[3] He is known to have started thinking about a comeback in 1710 and mentioned it in his letter to F. Apraksin (TsGAVMF. F. 233. Op. 1. D. 1. L. 240).

[4] From 1716 Ch.A. Minich was in the service of King Augustus II of Poland and lived in Warsaw.

[5] "…I saw in practice how the marshal of the crown did a house that was of new fashion and among the best in Warsaw", G.F. Dolgorukov wrote to Peter in 1721. See Bantysh-Kamensky, D.N. *Biografii rossiiskikh generalissimusov i general-feldmarshalov* (Biographies of Russian Generalissimos and Field-Marshals). In 4 parts. Reprint edition of 1840. Part 1. Moscow, 1991, p. 157.

[6] For instance, during G.F. Dolgorukov's stay in Warsaw Baltassare Fontana (1661–1733), a member of the Fontana family, worked there. For details see Karpowicz M.I. Fontana di Brusata in Polonia // Stadi sui Fontana. Una dinastia di architetti ticinesi a Roma tra Manierismo e Barocco. Roma: Cangemi&Editore. 2008, pp. 399–410.

Nicola Michetti
Design of a circular
church. Circa 1722
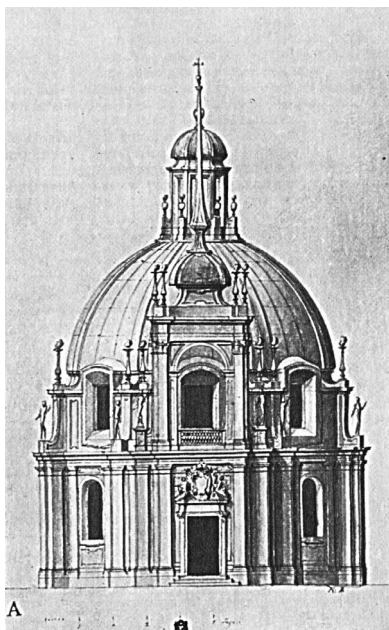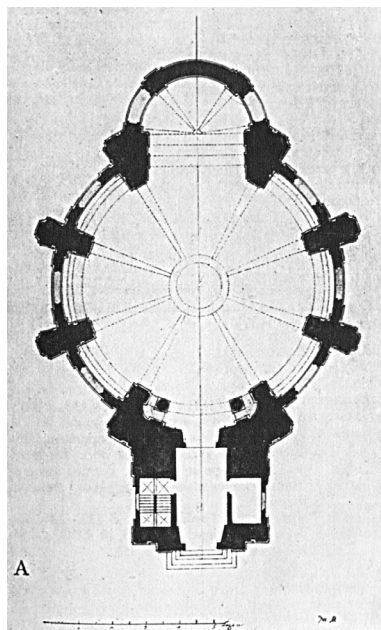
economically while the nobles and the Vatican lacked funds[1]. As a result, the number of unrealized project designs produced under architectural competitions kept growing and professionals started leaving the country[2]. With Italian architects looking for jobs in different parts of Europe, the well-known phenomenon of "architecture for export" arose in the first quarter of the 18th century. Along with the architects, their designs also circulated. They could be commissioned, purchased ready-made (if unclaimed), or else one could buy engraved sheets of the so-called "ouvrages".

A few suppositions to chart the subsequent quest for proof.

1. Prince G.F. Dolgorukov most likely brought the Podmoklovo church design from Poland, which was the only country he permanently resided in during the previous ten years (from 1710).

2. The search for design sources should be confined to the studio of architect Carlo Fontana[3] of Rome, since the landmark has typical features

[1] Wittkower R. Art and Architecture in Italy/ 1600–1750. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1999, pp. 240–4.

[2] Architectural Fantasy and Reality, pp.1–8.

[3] The Italian nature of the prototype has been frequently recognised by scholars, see: Mikhailov, A. "Podmoklovskaia rotunda i klassicheskie veiania v iskusstve petrovskogo vremeni" (Podmoklovo Rotunda and Classical Influences in Petrine Art) // Iskusstvo, No. 9, 1985, pp. 64–70; Aronova, A.A. Arkhitekturnye sviazi Rossii s Severnoi Evropoi v poslednei chetverti XVII – pervoi chetverti XVIII vv. (Architectural Links Between Russia and Northern Europe in the Last Quarter of the 17th – First Quarter of the 18th Centuries). Dissertation for Cand. of Sciences (Art Studies). Moscow, 1993, p. 68; Kirillov, V.V. Klassicheskie tendentsii formoobrazovania v arkhitekture

of Late Baroque architecture of Rome associated with the works of precisely that master.

3. The Podmoklovo church shows that the prince had a solid knowledge of architecture. This fact suggests that additional arguments should be sought at RGADA in favour of Dolgorukov being party to the church design or its supervision.

To sum up, let it be noted that among the Moscow structures the Podmoklovo rotunda design is close to the Petersburg line of the Petrine architectural process, which C. Fontana's disciple Nicola Michetti[1] joined in 1717. In fact, Prince Grigory Dolgorukov was ahead of his sovereign in the desire to get an "artful" piece of work from an Italian master but, unable to invite an architect, he purchased the design.

With his commission Dolgorukov graphically demonstrated the mechanism of "forgetfulness" which the Petrine elite assimilated. He did not mind that his estate was far away, that the design project could hardly be implemented to a high quality, or that the spatial organization of the project ill-suited the Orthodox church service. What mattered was the *novelty* principle, which had been approved at the recognized European centre and was in tune with contemporary policy pursued in Russia. In Dolgorukov's case the cultural initiatives of Peter the Great fell on fertile soil cultivated by education, the environment and communication, as a result of which this unique structure came into being.

Podmoskovia petrovskogo vremeni (Classical Form-building Trends in Petrine Architecture of the Moscow Region) // Russkii klassitsizm vtoroi poloviny XVIII – nach. XIX veka (Russian Classicism of the Second Half of the 18th – Early 19th Centuries). Moscow: Izobrazitelnoe iskusstvo Publishers, 1994, pp. 15–24; Pilipenko, A.D. "K semantike skulpturnogo ansamblia khrama Rozhdestva Bogoroditsy v Podmoklovo" (On the Semantics of the Sculptural Ensemble of the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Podmoklovo) // *Vestnik MGUKI*, No. 6 (20), 2007, pp. 190–193.

[1] In 1723 Michetti submitted a competition design of a rotunda church for the cathedral to be built on the spit of Vasilievsky Ostrov [*Arkhitekturnaia grafika Rossii. Pervaia polovina XVIII veka. Nauchnyi katalog* (Russian Architectural Graphics. First Half of the 18th Century. Scholarly Catalogue)]. Leningrad, 1981, pp. 76–8.

Sergey Karp

Travels of Counts Nikolai Petrovich and Sergei Petrovich Rumyantsev and Friedrich Melchior Grimm in Italy in 1775–1776: from Rome, the Symbol of Decline, to Rome, the Centre of the New World

Background

In the fall of 1773, Friedrich Melchior Grimm, the editor of the renowned *Correspondance littéraire*, arrived in St Petersburg in the retinue of Ludwig, Crown Prince of Hessen-Darmstadt, hurrying to the wedding of his sister Wilhelmine (Natalia Alekseevna) with the Grand Duke Pavel Petrovich. Grimm accompanied him as a mentor, and in the eyes of the Prince's mother, Landgravine Karoline, and Catherine the Great herself had the reputation of not only a talented journalist and critic, an interesting and witty companion, and a man of the world who could be very useful, but also of a recognised expert in all questions related to the education and upbringing of young men from noble families. It was then that Grimm was presented to Countess Yekaterina Mikhailovna Rumyantsev, wife of Field Marshal Pyotr Alexandrovich Rumyantsev and one of the first ladies of the court, and met two of her sons – the middle son Nikolai, 19, and the youngest Sergei, 18; their elder brother Mikhail was at that time in the army fighting against the Turks (in July 1774 he would be promoted to major-general).

The young Counts Rumyantsev had a brilliant career ahead of them. Nikolai (1754–1826) would become Chancellor of the Empire, Chairman of the State Council, philanthropist, art collector, and founder of the Rumyantsev Museum in St Petersburg; Sergei (1755–1838) would become a diplomat, minister of apanages, senator, member of the State Council,

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and the initiator of the decree on "free ploughmen" (1803). But at the time described they were still young men, and before they made their first steps up the career ladder, they had to complete their education abroad: their mother asked Grimm to accompany them to Leiden on his way back from Russia, where they were to take a one-year university course, and then go to Italy with them. Their journey has so far remained outside the field of scholarly study, and I will try to fill this gap at least to some degree.

Itinerary

On 27 September 1775, the Rumyantsev brothers left Leiden and went to Paris to meet with Grimm, who was there already as a Minister Plenipotentiary of the Duke of Saxe-Gotha. In September 1775 Grimm writes to Sergei Rumyantsev:

> Quant à notre route, vous pourriez dire que nous entrons dans l'Italie par Genève, Chambéry et le Mont Cenis, que nous irons à Turin, de là à Gènes, puis par Parme Boulogne à Florence[,] de là par Livourne Pise Luques à Rome. De là à Naples, puis revenir à Rome et par Loretto &c à Venise. Nous placerons Milan où nous pourrons de la manière la plus avantageuse.

Letters of the Rumyantsev brothers to Princess Amalia Golitsyn (wife of Prince Dmitry Alexeevich Golitsyn, Russian envoy in The Hague and a friend of Diderot), to Grimm, the correspondence of Grimm himself, including that with Catherine the Great, reports of Russian diplomats, as well as periodicals allow us to re-trace the actual travel itinerary, which was close enough to that originally scheduled: Geneva (2 November), Turin (17 November), Milan (12–13 December), Florence, Livorno, Rome (January), Naples (30 January, 10 February), Rome (21 February, 24 March, 11, 18, 19 and 23 April), Bologna (2, 5 and 6 May), Venice (15–22 May), and Milan (10 June).

Rome: Religion and Art

We don't know very much about the impression the Italian cities made on the Rumyantsev brothers. At first glance the surviving evidence seems surprisingly laconic and skeptical. Thus, on 17 November 1775 Sergei Rumyantsev writes to Amalia Golitsyn, "Very soon we will leave Turin and I think we will do so without the slightest regret." Nikolai Rumyantsev, in a letter to Golitsyn of 12 December 1775 confirms that Milan enjoys the well-deserved reputation of a city with a good society, which is able to provide a decent reception to foreign travellers, but then says that their stay in the city was during a fast, as a result of which a large part of entertainments was not available to them and they had to settle for visits to assemblies, which were too numerous and therefore tedious. We find an explanation for this reticence in his letter to Princess Golitsyn, written in Rome on 24 March 1776:

>Je vous avoue Madame que le voyage d'Italie si fameux par ses agrements, m'est à moi une peine et un travail aussi difficile que le serait la manoeuvre la plus fatigante; je dis plus: la curiosité folle de tout voir, et l'impossibilité d'y donner le tems nécessaire rendent absolument imbecile, et font que les objets se placent dans l'entendement, comme les figures du Perugin le sont dans ses tableaux, l'une à coté de l'autre; sans ordre, sans liaison, sans rapport. Ici de toutes les facultés[,] la reflexion seule est inactive, c'est à dire précisément celle par laquelle toutes les autres valent quelque chose.

Rome was the only exception to this rule. Our travellers spent more than two months there. Over that period they had time to ponder on what they had seen, and their letters to Amalia Golitsyn conveyed these reflections. Thus, in a letter from Rome on 24 March 1776, Sergei Rumyantsev exclaims: "What can I tell you, madam, about the Capital of the World, home of Catoes and Aemilii!" In response to this rhetorical question, he prefers not to express the widespread opinion about the decline of Rome. On the contrary, in his view,

>Rome moderne mérite <...> un meilleur traitement, et l'Eglise de Saint-Pierre, seule me ferait oublier les torts des Papes et de leur doctrine comme l'établissement auguste des Invalides me faisait oublier à Paris toutes les fautes de Louis quatorze. <...> On n'imaginera sans doute rien de plus elevé dans ce genre parce que le genie le plus hardi découragé par la vuê de cet edifice y verra s'aneantir toute la grandeur de ses idées.

Nikolai Rumyantsev shares his brother's opinion in the letter written already in Bologna on 6 May 1776:

>Je vous dirai Madame, qu'il m'en a beaucoup coûté de quitter Rome, et que j'eus preferer d'y rester au lieu de nous hater d'etre a Venise à l'assenssion. Un spectacle quelque beau qu'il soit peut-il dedomager de la perte qu'on fait en quittant une ville où tout vous rappelle des Evenements et des hommes celebres, et où vous estes continuellement dans l'adoration de quelque chef d'oeuvre? On se croit être d'une meilleure espece quand on est à Rome, parce que l'on y voit des ouvrages sublimes crées par la main des hommes, et quand on considere l'Eglise de St Pierre on se dit avec satisfaction que tout n'est pas perdû et que les modernes valent quelque chose aussi <...>

Rumyantsev's reflections on Rome have allusions to the famous Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns that flared up in the French Academy at the end of the 17th century around the relative merits of literature and art of antiquity versus modernity, and arose in Europe anew in the second half of the 18th century under the influence of Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Nikolai Rumyantsev continues:

><...> malgré la reputation de la noce aldobrandine et les tableaux de l'Herculaneum je ne crois pas que les peintres anciens ayent valu Raphael, le

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> Carache ou le Dominiquain, mais en revanche nos sculpteurs sont font in-
> ferieurs aux leurs. Cette preeminence des uns dans la Peinture et des autres
> dans la sculpture ne vient-elle-pas de la difference du Culte Religieux? Les
> anciens representoient leurs Divinités par des statues[,] les modernes ont
> coutume de representer les leur[s] dans des tableaux. Ce sont les Preters qui
> ont occupés Raphael, le Guide, le Dominiquain, C'est la nessessité d'avoir
> des images qui a fait fleurir leur art, C'est la nessessité d'avoir les statues
> des Dieux qu'ils adoroient qui apparament a fait fleurir la sculpture chez les
> anciens; Ce qu'il y a de certain c'est que leur religion pretoit au statuaire des
> sujets plus favorables que la nôtre, quand il etoit question de representer
> Mars, Apollon, ou Meleagre, c'étoit des êtres d'une Nature belle[,] robuste
> et noble qu'il falloit imiter, au lieu qu'aujourd'hui le sculpteur chargé de
> faire en marbre un St Bruno, un St Philipe de Neri, ou quelqu'autre fonda-
> teur d'un ordre religieux est obligé de prendre pour modele un être dechar-
> né, humble, et qui aye quelque chose d'un malade dans la phisionomie[.] De
> tels sujets sont peu faits pour la sculpture et s'ils occupent quelque fois de
> jeunes artistes[,] ils s'opposent certainement à la perfection de leur art.

So, in this text, religion is seen as the main reason for the rise and fall of
the arts of the Ancients and the Moderns; on the other hand, paganism and
Christianity are compared to each other within certain limits and consid-
ered only in terms of their impact on art. The original idea of the decline of
Rome is enriched by reflections on the role of religion in the development
of art, leading to the image of Rome as the centre of the world, united by
neo-classicist culture. We can attribute the development of such ideas to
the Rumyantsev brothers' reading experience, the education they received
in Russia, their training at Leiden University, the impressions of the trip,
their conversations with Grimm; Grimm, in any case, was not their only in-
terlocutor who could have influenced the formation of their world outlook
and artistic taste. Let us try to reconstruct the network of relationships and
contacts they established while travelling in Italy.

Sociabilité

In Italy of 1775–6 the Rumyantsev brothers followed roughly the same log-
ic of social contacts as most of the enlightened travellers of the time. The
name of their father – the winner of the Turks – and Grimm's company en-
sured them excellent reception everywhere. Their stay in Naples was or-
ganised by Abbot Ferdinando Galiani, Grimm's friend; in Bologna they met
Count Girolamo Ranuzzi and saw his palace (which housed a collection of
Anna Morandi Manzolini's anatomical models); in Venice they met patri-
cian Quirino Angelo, the author of a constitutional reform project (1761),
mason, scholar, patron and collector. But it was in Rome that the texture of
their relationships became really dense and the cultural milieu very rich.
We can distinguish in it several interacting centres of gravity:

- The Roman Academy of Arcadia
- Court of Cardinal de Bernis, the French ambassador to the Holy See
- Salon of Bailli de Breteuil, Ambassador of the Order of Malta to the Holy See
- Community of Trinita dei Monti (circle of Father Jacquier)
- Circle of the antiquary Reiffenstein

Let's start with Arcadia, a cosmopolitan society of poets and art lovers, founded in Rome in 1690 to counter "spoiled" literary tastes. For a long time it was thought that by the second half of the 18th century the academy had lost its importance and was in decline. This approach is consistent with the popular notion of Rome of that time as the periphery of the "literary republic" of the Enlightenment. However, Gilles Montegre recently showed that Arcadia played a primary role in the socialisation of travellers coming to Rome and their admission to the cultural life of the Eternal City. In many cases, the travellers themselves asked for permission to join this community. The Academy only accepted poets, both men and women, and poetry lovers. All members had pastoral names (of Greek shepherds) and met outdoors in masks and the costumes of Arcadian shepherds. So, *Diario ordinario* No. 136 of 20 April 1776 reported on the meeting of the Academy on 11 April. There Caroline Louise, ruling Margravine of Baden-Durlach, became a member of Arcadia under the name of Cleonice Delia; then Corilla Olympica (Maria Maddalena Morelli), famous for her poetic improvisations, asked for a theme for improvisation and "eruditissimo Monsieur Grimm Ministro Plenipotenziario del Principe di Saxe-Gotha in Parigi", proposed the following question: "Se il secolo, in cui le Donne sono più virtuose e più onorate, sia anche il Secolo più felice, e più onorevole per gli uomini"?[1] Corilla gave a brilliant improvisation. *Diario ordinario* No. 138 of 27 April 1776 announces the Arcadia meeting held on 18 April when new members were admitted—"i due conti Sergio e Niccolò Romanzoff, Monsieur Grimm Ministro plenipotenziario del Duca di Saxe-Gotha alla corte di Francia, soggetto ben noto per le sue eccelenti opere alla Repubblica letteraria". The Rumyantsevs received the names Leandro Ellespontiaco and Armindo Acrisiaco respectively, and Grimm became Focèo Epirotide.

The court of French Ambassador to the Holy See (from 1774) Cardinal François Joachim de Bernis, a friend and correspondent of Voltaire, also attracted a lot of people who found themselves in Rome at that time. The Embassy, located in the Palazzo de Carolis on via del Corso, functioned not only as a political institution, but also as an instrument of representation and cultural patronage. Virginie Larre and Gilles Montegre have shown that unlike his predecessors, de Bernis was able to make his residence a centre of long-term cultural influence, and he did it at the time when Rome as a high point of the Grand Tour began to attract a lot of foreign travellers.

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[1] "Is the century, in which women are most virtuous and respected, the time when men are most happy and respected?"

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and Friedrich Melchior Grimm in Italy in 1775–1776: from Rome, the Symbol…

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The main channel of this influence was the protection that the Cardinal gave to academies and other scientific and literary communities, scientists, artists, writers, both French and foreign. The Rumyantsev brothers and Grimm were presented to de Bernis by Ivan Ivanovich Shuvalov, who provided them with a letter of recommendation back in Paris. In his reply to Shuvalov on 17 January 1776 de Bernis calls them both "well-mannered people", and Grimm "a well-educated and nice person". Perhaps precisely because of these qualities, our travellers also got access to Bernis' intimate circle: in his correspondence Grimm repeatedly mentioned Abbot Des Haises (Deshaises), the cardinal's "right hand" and private secretary (also a member of the Arcadia); Nikolai Rumyantsev in his letter to Amalia Golitsyn of 24 March 1776 mentions Giuliana Giacometti, Princess Santa Croce, the Cardinal's mistress; Bernis in a letter to Grimm on 1 November 1778 gives him greetings from his niece, the Marquise de Puy-Montbrun and her little daughter, who also lived in Palazzo de Carolis.

The salon of Jacques Laure Le Tonnelier de Breteuil (le Bailly de Breteuil), Ambassador of the Order of Malta to the Holy See (1758–77), functioned in much the same way as the court of Cardinal de Bernis, differing from it only in a more modest scale of activity and a narrower specialisation–art. De Breteuil received his guests in the Palazzo della Religione di Malta in via dei Condotti, or in the villa Malta on the Pincian Hill, behind Trinità-dei-Monti Church. During his embassy he established his reputation as a passionate collector, philanthropist and a man willing to place large orders for the manufacture of objects of decorative and applied arts. Winckelmann himself mentioned him in his *History of Ancient Art*, Hubert Robert painted his Roman Salon, and the Paris Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture elected him honoraire-associé libre (1780). Charlotte Guichard in her recent work highlighted his role in the structuring of the artistic environment of Rome. The Archive of Ancient Acts in Moscow has fragments of the correspondence between de Breteuil and Grimm, which began when the latter left Rome in the company of the Rumyantsev brothers. Grimm's correspondence with Catherine the Great contains some more information about his relationship with de Breteuil: it was always built around works of art (richest table decorations, collections of carved stones), which he was selling or going to sell to the Empress.

Another focus of erudition and an intellectual centre open to modern forms of communication was at that time the Trinità dei Monti monastery. In the 1770s the majority of educated Romans and visitors were familiar with the name of the most famous minim of the monastery – father François Jacquier (1711–88), an outstanding mathematician and expert in ancient languages. He taught the Scriptures at the Propaganda Fide Collegium, mathematics and physics at La Sapienza, was a friend of Cardinal de Bernis, Abbot Des Haises and Clérisseau, corresponded with d'Alembert, Condorcet, Maupertuis, Voltaire and Ivan Shuvalov. He became famous thanks to his commentaries on Newton's *Mathematical Principles*

of Natural Philosophy (3 vol in-4°, Geneva, 1739–42), on which he worked together with father Thomas Le Seur; in 1744 Jacquier stayed at Cirey, helping the Marquise du Châtelet translate *Principles* into French. Jacquier was a member of the Royal Society of London (1741), corresponding member of the Paris Academy of Sciences (1743), a foreign member of the Berlin Academy (1749), who maintained relations with many scientific and literary societies of Europe, and courts of France, Parma and Piedmont. He led an active life, was not averse to secular society, was always courteous and gallant and gave ladies lessons in physics and mathematics. Jacquier willingly participated in Arcadia's activities, his name there being Diofante Amicleo (according to other sources, Diofante Ecateo). Visiting fathers Jacquier and Le Seur (d. 1770) was an obligatory stage of exploring Rome for many French and not only French travellers. The preparation of a critical edition of the correspondence between Catherine the Great and Grimm made it possible to discover the existence of correspondence between Jacquier and Grimm, who apparently became acquainted with him in January 1776, on his arrival in Rome with the Rumyantsevs, and then told the Empress about him.

Finally, the Rumyantsevs' and Grimm's stay in Rome was marked by their acquaintance with Johann Friedrich Reiffenstein, a renowned Roman antiquary, a person close to Winckelmann and Mengs, and later to Goethe and Herder. It is through him, beginning from the 1770s, that Catherine the Great placed most of her commissions in Italy. In his youth Reiffenstein and Grimm were connected with Gottsched: Grimm studied under Gottsched at Leipzig University in 1742–5 and corresponded with him from 1741; Reiffenstein also corresponded with Gottsched from 1743 as a secretary of the Deutsche Gesellschaft in Königsberg. Both Grimm and Reiffenstein were connected with the Saxe-Gotha court. During the young Prince August's trip to Italy (1771–2) Reiffenstein introduced him to the sights of Rome. August's elder brother Duke Ernest II rewarded Reiffenstein, appointing him a court advisor (Hofrat) on arts on 16 December 1772. This appointment brought many benefits to the ducal collections in Gotha: from 1772 to 1786, thanks to Reiffenstein's efforts, they received numerous works of art, books and manuscripts.

Reiffenstein's relations with Russia began in the 1760s. One of his first theoretical texts was *Gedanken zur Aufnahme der Zeichenkunst, nebst einer Vorübung in den ersten Gründen derselben, für gelehrte Liebhaber*, published in 1755 in the *Sammlung einiger ausgesuchten Stücke der Gesellschaft der Freyen Künste zu Leipzig*, a magazine edited by Gottsched. In 1762 it was translated by the young Denis Fonvizin into Russian and entitled *Discourse on Increments of the Art of Drawing, with Instruction in Primary Stages Thereof*; it was published in the magazine *Collection of the Best Works to Spread Knowledge and Bring Pleasure*. The magazine was founded by Johann Gottfried Reichel, professor of Moscow University (from 1757), where he had been invited thanks to Gerhard Friedrich Müller (Miller in Russia) and on Gottsched's recommendation. In the 1760s, Reiffenstein took under his wing

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pensioners of the Imperial Academy of Arts who found themselves in Italy. He became acquainted with Ivan Shuvalov, founder and first director of the Academy. Shortly after Catherine the Great came to power Shuvalov left Russia, found himself in Rome and from the late 1760s actively bought statues and casts of ancient and modern masters, as well as architectural models for the Academy, the Empress and her court's nobles. On Shuvalov's recommendation in January 1771 Reiffenstein was made an honorary foreign member of the Academy of Fine Arts with an annual allowance of 200 crowns. This appointment underlined Reiffenstein's role in the establishment and development of contacts between Russia and the cosmopolitan environment of Rome and Italy. Reiffenstein's letters to Grimm give us an idea about the true scope of this activity. The earliest of these letters, where only one passage is extant, informs us about close contacts between Reiffenstein and the Rumyantsevs and Grimm during their stay in Rome in January 1776. I would like to end my speech with a quotation from this letter:

> Je vous prie de présenter mes très humbles obéissances à Messieurs les Comtes de Romanzof en les remerciant du souvenir dont ils continuent de m'honorer. Les belles qualités de leur ame et de leur esprit, leur politesse, l'estime et l'amitié qui regnaient entre vous et ces aimables seigneurs ont donné un des plus beaux et des plus rares spectacles à tous ceux qui ont eu l'honneur d'etre admis dans votre société et ont laissé bien des regrets après votre départ surtout à ceux qui comme moi ont été pendant bien du temps les convives journaliers à une si belle fête dont la commémoration est devenue un de nos objets favoris dans nos promenades solitaires d'Albano où tant de sujets nous rappellent le plaisir et satisfaction que nous y avons goutés dans votre aimable compagnie.

Mikhail Sokolov

Images of Ruined Memory. Dispute between Medieval and Modern History in Russian Iconology of Ruins

Architectural ruins are among the most suitable loci of memory: they both consolidate and dramatically sharpen and traumatise memory. True, in his *Institutio Oratorio* Quintilian recommends not a ruined but a whole, I quote, "spacious building with many rooms" and "well-lit places arranged in strict order" as the ideal mnemonic topos. On the other side, Cicero (well before Quintilian) had mentioned precisely ruins as the ideal mnemotopos. Explaining why the poet Simonides of Ceos is usually regarded the inventor of "the art of memory", Cicero tells the following story: Simonides was dining at the house of a wealthy nobleman named Scopas of Thessaly when the ceiling of the banquet hall caved in. Simonides survived due to a mysterious and obviously miraculous occurrence (when he was chanting a lyric poem which he had composed in honour of his host and in which he also referred to Castor and Pollux, the sons of Zeus and Leda, he was told that two young men had requested him to come out, and he went out but did not see anybody); then Simonides helped to identify the crushed corpses for separate internment because he remembered the places which each of the guests had occupied at the table. Both examples are from the epoch-making book *The Art of Memory* by Francis Yates.

  Anyhow, in medieval theology order usually prevails over chaos and, consequently, architecture over anti-architecture (a conventional name for ruins). According to Thomas Aquinas, *integritas sive perfectio* (note the synonymy!) is one of the paramount properties defining the essence of the beautiful. And whatever is "ruined (or diminuta) is ugly". Indeed, the so-called fractured, for some reason fatally injured structures, and especially church buildings were not preserved in the Middle Ages, but dismantled

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at the first opportunity and rebuilt anew being, inasmuch as the original structures were concerned, a locus of oblivion rather than a locus of memories. Usually of incontestable value were not the buildings themselves but the holy relics kept in them, which were then taken over to a new church. It was those relics that accounted for the main contents of what they called the "throne" in Rus. The decrepit walls and ceilings remaining after the throne had been withdrawn were destroyed, and then a commemorative cross was sometimes (though far from always) erected at the site of the church. This destruction was not even marked by some special prayer, while many other seemingly far less significant affairs were regulated through prayer. It is noteworthy that when Emperor Justinian II of Byzantium decided (at the turn of the 7th century) to extend his palace and pull down the Church of the Theotokos to this end, he asked Patriarch Kallinik to give a blessing to that destruction. The patriarch's answer was: "We have prayers for the building of churches, but no prayers for their destruction".

Medieval art, including Russian art, too, preferred not to depict ruins at all or made do with all sorts of palliatives. They became an important and indispensable proscenium only as the gate of hell that Jesus Christ destroyed demonstratively, iconically during his Descent to Hell. As for the scenes of the Apocalypse, buildings in them could remain intact even in the most calamitous situations, and only tongues of flame indicated that they were doomed. Apocalyptic destruction could also be represented as being turned upside down. And finally, a building could be represented twice, intact and as ruins, the latter looking utterly shapeless and viewless. For instance, the Dormition Cathedral in Kolomna, restored in the 14th century, is shown in a miniature of the 2nd volume of the 16th-century Illuminated Chronicle Codex, the so-called Ostermann Codex (in the composition Russian Army Goes to Meet Mamai Khan), precisely two times – after the catastrophe which befell it and in the restored state, with the ruins looking like a heap of hewn stones piled up about the intact building. At times destruction was in general ignored: thus, illuminations in the manuscript *Book on the Election of the Great Sovereign Mikhail Feodorovich to the Highest Throne of the Russian Tsardom* (1673) represent the Kremlin in fair splendour as it was in the 1670s, but not at the time of the 1613 election shortly after having been devastated by the Poles. In fact, the Middle Ages were ashamed of ruins, as much as they were ashamed of death and avoided inordinately detailed pictures of decomposing flesh.

In the 15th–18th centuries the situation in Western Europe changed dramatically, and the poetics of ruins (to quote Diderot) moved to the forefront, virtually to the proscenium (taking into account their greater role in stage design). The dialogue of the epochs preponderating in the iconology of antique ruins chronologically went hand in hand with diacrisis – the discord between the times – as far as medieval, especially church ruins were concerned. After waves of reformatory iconoclasm that swept over the regions that had adopted Protestantism and especially after the devastating English "dissolution" (abolition of the monasteries), the latter were viewed

as remains of the barbarian "dark ages". Following historical logic, nothing whatsoever would have remained of them (as nearly nothing has remained of English medieval icon painting or "painting on panels") if it were not for aesthetic logic. Ruins rose in the eyes of the enlightened connoisseurs as wonderful examples of that category of the painterly which was fundamental both for the Enlightenment and for Romanticism. True, the situation was slightly different in the Catholic countries and devoid of such iconoclastic tenor (that is why the grandiose ruins of the Galgano Abbey in Tuscany, which was not ruined but fell into disrepair and which became famous in the 20th century thanks to Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia*, look uniquely monumental). The more so everything was different in Russia, with its exceptionally lively Middle Ages and after the explicitly anti-medieval Petrine reforms.

As it was in the Middle Ages, the post-Petrine Russia, too, sought to get rid as far as possible of decrepit churches, never even thinking of enjoying the sight of those remains. "Nowhere else do all signs of recent settlement disappear as fast as they do with us," the local lore historian Shepping wrote in the late 19th century. "Shortly nothing remains of not only peasant huts, but also of broken down stone churches and landlord chambers, apart from small bricks and holes that become overgrown with willows and weeds." He goes on to cite the aforementioned custom to mark the "place of the throne" with "wooden crosses". A graphic example is the Church of the Epiphany in the Ostrozh Castle. At first the idea was, I quote, "to support", "if possible, the remaining ruins... and to design a new building on the adjacent site", but then they still decided "to dismantle the ruins... altogether and build a new church on (their) solid foundation" in the same style (the construction project was finished in 1883).

Characteristically, the popular representation of the Kiev-based Church of the Tithes reproduced many times in the form of an overgrown wreckage turned out to be just a picturesque fabrication to adorn album pages. This first Russian stone church ruined in the 13th century during the invasion of the Batu Khan army was rebuilt anew under Metropolitan Peter Mohyla and then drastically reconstructed, in fact built anew, in 1828–42. It was thought for a long time that the drawing published in the art book *A Gallery of Kiev Landmark Sights and Antiquities* indeed pictured, to go by the caption, "A fragment of the southwest wall of the Church of the Tithes". The ruins (in the drawing) have a romantic aura: crosses askew, tombstones, ivy, moss, thickets..., but in fact the church, with fragments of an earlier building inlaid in its wall as architectural relics, could never have been so neglected; what was more, the Gothic windows look utterly out of place. So, as has been established now, it was nothing but an art book fantasy.

Overall, the ruin iconography developed in Russia belatedly, lagging behind the early modern history by over three centuries, until Peter the Great introduced it in Russia by decree. Geopolitical circumstances, too, were among the reasons: after all, Russia did not have any antique ruins of her own (until she annexed the Crimea). Hence the paramount actual stimulus

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to depict them was lacking as well. True, students had to draw ruins as a standard motif as early as the mid-18th century, however, they were not ruins from classical antiquity or the medieval period but foreign "castle ruins" copied from western engravings. Nature drawings were also made initially exclusively with Roman and, later, Crimean ruins, so *A View of Antiques in Staraya Ladoga* by Mikhail Ivanov (1745) seems a rare exception. However, in this case stage set design, including as exemplified by Gonzago, who had brought the experience of Piranesi to Russia, was a significant influence. It was thanks to Gonzago that "ruins overgrown with wild vegetation" (a remark for the opera *Ilya the Hero* by Catarino Cavos, for which he designed the stage sets), happily blended with the Russian scene and no longer looked like foreign exotics. On the whole, however, for a long time Russian churches could be represented in landscapes only in an official or at least neutral way.

In this respect garden and park design significantly outpaced painting and drawing because the western example in this field produced a far more powerful and inspiring impression. Let us focus precisely on temple ruins, the sphere in which the aestheticising process was especially innovative: after all, in this case native things were transformed whereas in antique ruins they just borrowed somebody else's. When laying a palace park at Bogoroditskoye in the 1780s, Andrei Bolotov created, according to him, "an image of some enormous crumbling marble house or temple" at the foot of the hill, or (another quote) "a portion of an old monastery with little towers and a gate" that "imparted remarkable beauty to this place"; that "image" looked quite real when seen from the Moscow-Tula tract, which ran along the other bank of the park pond. As a later example I can cite the chapel ruins built at Tsarskoye Selo in the 1830s. In both cases there was a certain romantic vagueness about anti-architecture that received a Gothic aura (in Tsarskoye Selo) because the chapel there was decorated with stained glass. Real church ruins, placed a la English style in the park view, were still unthinkable in Russia: medieval inertia was felt for a long time. Even real secular ruins were rarely transformed into a garden caprice. The so-called Romantic Ruins on the Kachanovka Estate in the Chernigov area were of this type. The surviving part of a former Polish castle was used as park décor: the dark corridors and dungeon-like premises with bars in the windows and iron rings in the walls exuded a gloomy charm a la Piranesi and, on the other hand, served as a visual reminder of the vicissitude of historical Fortune that betrayed the Poles, that is, the former owners of those lands. If you wish, the Kachanovka ruins could pass for antique ruins: it was as such that Konstantin Makovsky, who frequently stayed at the estate as a guest, pictured them in his *Spring Bacchanale*.

Let us turn to old writings that always serve as the best iconological commentary and focus on precisely medieval architectural remains. In Karamzin the poetics of ruins goes hand in hand with not only melancholic musing, but also ideological alienation. The old Benedictine monastery in Erfurt is seen by him quite in the spirit of a Gothic novel as, I quote,

"a grim abode of fanaticism" perceived by imagination as "a monster in all its infamy" (I trembled and cold horror spread through my sinews"). The ruins of the Tainitsky Palace are likewise pictured by him as grimly Gothic: "Mrs Ratcliff could have written a terrible novel about it" so that "the fearful thunder and dazzling lightning" (which happened when Karamzin visited the place) proved quite appropriate in this "wilderness". True, Karamzin balances old Moscow landscapes out with patriotic romanticism: for example, the "golden-domed Danilov Monastery" and other "golden domes" look resplendent in *Poor Liza*. However, the same story has "the Gothic towers of the Simonov Monastery lurking", and "a muffled moan of the times engulfed in the abyss of the past" can be heard from there (a moan that makes the author's heart "startle and tremble", when "sad pictures of local monastic life arise in imagination). Thus, in accordance with the Gothic "mystery novel" principle, the old building, which is outwardly quite intact and far from reduced to dust, was mentally ruined. True, it is worth noting that *Poor Liza* was written when the Simonov Monastery, abolished in 1771 (yet back in operation from 1795), could indeed look gloomy because in the early years after its closure it accommodated plague quarantine facilities.

The very notion of the aged in fact increasingly became synonymous with the word "ruins", irrespective of the extent to which that aged thing had survived. That fact implied that it could only be revived through capital restructuring. That was precisely what Vyazemsky meant in his poem *Byl'* (True Story), written to defend Karamzin from his conservative opponents. In the poem "a young artist" raised a new beautiful palace at the site of "an old church in Gothic style" (the "abode of owls, gloom and silence), in fact, of its ruins, and the owls scatter, "cockily crying fie" upon the architect.

The poet Fyodor Glinka pointed out that romanticist poetry "loves to roam through the ruins of knights' castles, deserted churches and abolished communities of monks". In his feature about Moscow he enthusiastically recalls "moss-grown churches" with their "sacred gloom". Even when eulogizing the capital in his famous poem *Moscow* (1840), triumphantly panoramic in spirit, he does not overlook signs of picturesque decay ("Trees are growing on your ancient churches..."). An enthusiastic *plantomane*, he dwells especially on garden ruins that graphically demonstrated how "young roots of new kingdoms are born anew" from what has been crushed by the "thunder-god of fate".

The poetry of desolation, or "Russian Gothic" of sorts, attains utmost drama in Gogol's *Viy*. The funeral service over the dead maiden is held in "the wooden church, black with age and overgrown with green lichen" (Gogol used the word "decorated" with green lichen, which just happened to transform spontaneous chaos into deliberate décor!), the church which adjoined the overgrown garden and as a result of the infernal invasion had a huge mass of monstrous creatures stuck in the door and windows, surrounded impassably by "the woods, roots, weeds" and "wild thorn". In other texts, not so grotesquely fairytale but cheerfully patriotic or local lore

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descriptions, desolation was often largely exaggerated in obvious contrast with historical reality.

For instance, in a letter to his brother N.A. Bestuzhev raves about Veliky Novgorod and rather inordinately compares it with the dead Palmira. And Count Sollogub, speaking about the Monastery of the Caves of Nizhny Novgorod in *The Tarantass*, tells his story in a fairly melancholy – historically not quite adequate – key ("church stairs have already become overgrown with grass", "everything was wild and gloomy there", "a strange carcass of a perished aged thing", "semi-crumbled structures"…), asserting in passing that one could "create the rules of folk architecture and trace its sources" only "by studying and dismantling the remaining monuments". Thus, the decline, albeit "wild" and "gloomy", becomes useful and in its own way even offers guidance, taking the aged structure to pieces and thus facilitating its study. However, the "perished aged thing" is such only in the writer's imagination because the Monastery of the Caves was at that time neither unimportant nor abolished, but continued to exist as a living abode revered by pilgrims. It was only the burnt-out wooden Church of the Intercession and the monastery fence partially damaged by a landslip that lay in ruins there. Judgements of this type inevitably bore witness to the antagonism between the clergy and the secular world, which found expression in the response of Archimandrite Rafail, superior of the St Cyril's Monastery of Beloozero, to the historian Pogodin's plea that old paintings at the monastery be preserved: "You historians judge your own way and the devout that of their own, you love decrepitude while the latter attribute it to the priors' negligence".

There emerged an insoluble dilemma, in which precisely "decrepitude" became a measure of charm perfectly in tune with the new aesthetic romanticism but ill-matching the old religious disposition. Baratynsky offered an excellent formula for this insolubility ("Prejudice! It is a scrap / of former truth. The church has crumbled, / but its offspring has failed to read the language of its ruins…"). The poet attached special importance to his verse: he translated it in prose into French, thus turning meditation on "esprit de ruines" into a philosophical mini-essay.

The Russian pictorial art of the romanticist trend turned to the motifs of national church relics far less frequently and downright evaded its anti-architecture in the form of remains. Only the ruins of antiquity had long been considered "good" ruins. As far as I know, there appeared no pictorial parallels even to Karamzin's melancholy landscapes, to say nothing of *Viy*. In this respect the Wanderers (Bogolyubov, Polenov et al.) stuck to the well-established Graeco-Roman, Egyptian and Middle Eastern motifs, avoiding any plastic address of domestic relics even in battle scenes. Even real-life flooding (as in Savrasov's *Volga Flood outside Yaroslavl*) seemed not overly disastrous since the relics, although partially inundated and partially on fire, continued to proudly dominate the dissenting elements. Yaroshenko's *Forgotten Church* (late 19th century) with sheep grazing inside an abandoned church can be regarded as a rare exception. A more detailed version of the

title, "An Early Christian Church on the Zelenchuk River", reveals that the artist drew a church in the North Caucasus that formed part of the Nizhny Arkhyz complex of the earliest Christian churches on Russian territory from nature. Yaroshenko's major project in which such an interior scene might have been used was the painting *Judas Tempted by the Pharisees*, allegorically hinting at the "betrayal" (according to Yaroshenko) of a number of leading Wanderers who joined the Academy of Arts.

The iconography of the 1812 Moscow fire offers a significant addition to this theme, the same as the poetics of ruins in Style Moderne and the avant-garde, where the process of destruction-construction, a sort of cata-construction, formed part of not only the story, but the very structure of the image. However, time does not permit an appraisal of all this.

Anna Korndorf

Mnemonic Programmes
of Eighteenth-century Russian Imperial Residences.
Memory Metamorphoses

Architecture of the past is always a symbol of memory or oblivion. No other image of disrupted memory is as expressive as ruins reduced to dust: after all, the very definition of architecture as "monumental art" encapsulates the idea of effective, awakening memory (the Latin word "monumentum" is derived from the verb "monere" meaning "remember", 'know" and the ending "mentum" meaning "effective means". The monument is thus an "effective means of remembering")[1]. Many landmark phenomena in the history of European architecture and culture originated at the meeting point of memory and oblivion: the Tuscan Order came out of a basket left on a grave and overgrown with acanthus; the origin of Freemasonry and modern construction technologies is traced to the confrontation of memory and oblivion; and the same designs to revive the memory of earlier grandeur move a pair of compasses in the hand of an architect and the emperor's hand on the battlefield.

  Structures and projects originally brought to life by the idea of memory occupy a special place in this continuous row of architectural and memorial associations. The history of art traditionally considers the link between architecture and memory on two planes: within the framework of studying memorial structures per se, the main function of which is to perpetuate

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[1] The word "monument" meaning "tomb", "grave" was used in Romanic languages already in the late Middle Ages, but in a broader sense, as "a structure or building raised in memory of a notable person, act or event", first appeared in European usage at the turn of the 17th century. (Online Etymological Dictionary: http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=monumentum&searchmode=none)

the memory of the dead or events, and as part of the rhetorical tradition, which assigns the role of the image of loci to architectural forms serving to stimulate memory and embodying spiritual and gnoseological intentions[1].

Both traditions have a long history and each represents a range of architectural monuments of its own such as tombs, mausoleums and temples, on the one side, and hermetic theatres of memory, on the other. Even though *ars memoriae* that have continued to thrive in the modern age significantly extended possibilities for architectural reflection by bringing it into the orbit of rhetoric and turning it into a receptacle of philosophical and even magical knowledge of the universe, structures outside the aforementioned range rarely succeed in presenting a "mnemonic programme" as a semantic factor of their existence. This may partly be explained by the fact that the purely iconographical and nominal succession of some structures with respect to others that offers inexhaustible food for study addresses not so much the social as the "inner" memory of architecture and implies some living continuity of forms and images within the framework of the selected type, continuity that has not been reflected upon. Another point is no less important here, namely, addressing an already existing structure as a model presupposes not only its perception, but also interpretation by the architect and client as a sort of receptacle of meaning that the building erected "in the image and likeness" has to translate.

That is why I would like to share some thoughts arising from the rare meeting of these two methodological approaches. Formerly architecture historians focussed on the memorial and iconographical traditions proper, which provided formal material for the study of authorship and the paths of influence and borrowings, as well as the exploration of general historical and biographical themes. What is studied today is not merely the memorial programme of the structure or its iconographical continuity – the "genetic" memory of its architectural prototype – but the very phenomenon of *memoria* in the architectural programme, its nature and means of expression. In this sense, it may be fascinating to compare different "cultures of remembering" with their specific kinds of mnemotechnique that fix the cultural memory traditions characteristic of these cultures.

The concept of a "mnemonic programme" to be discussed on the basis of three major Russian countryside imperial residences of the 18th century does not presuppose any definite type of architectural structures and is rather an instrument of historical research. Speaking of individual

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[1] The idea of using architectural structures as a mnemotechnical instrument goes back to Quintilian's Institutio oratoria. Classical *ars memoriae* presupposes choosing some spacious building having diverse premises and richly decorated with statues, niches, etc. A certain visual image of the forthcoming speech is associated with every one of them, and in order to refresh the memory of it and recite it precisely, it will be enough for the orator to mentally go step-by-step through the building chosen for memorisation, extracting from the engraved places images placed in them in strict order.

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buildings or entire architectural complexes as receptacles of "mnemonic programmes", we chart a certain way of studying them. It is believed that the discovery of an idea of memory in the architectural programme, an idea recognised by contemporaries (client, designer, visitors) but at times vague and hidden from descendants, makes it possible to tap into any new semantic level of the structure, one directly connected with the personal "story" of its creator and, more broadly, reflecting the "historical experience" and way of thinking of the period in general, together with relevant social actions. Of special heuristic value are not only the formal and iconographical analyses of architecture, but also the detection of the social context and relations in which those structures appear and function.

Therefore, the mnemonic component of 18th-century Russian imperial residences can be viewed as a mode of thinking and acting characteristic of the period and institutionalising an approach to memorial projects, and for this reason should be discussed comprehensively: from the memorial point of view as remembrance of something, from the iconographical point of view as addressing the architectural prototypes which can serve as a visual "recollection" of an object of memory or an "approach" to it, and from the historico-philosophical point of view as a means of translating and visualising cultural meanings and views of the period.

Strictly speaking, sacred architecture could be the only kind of commemorative architecture in pre-Petrine Russia. From the outset, the idea of building a dedicatory or votive church was to commemorate one event or saint or another. The tradition persisted under Peter the Great, but, like many other spheres, was complemented with certain novelties. The first to appear were occasional monuments such as triumphal arches, columns and tombs that mostly celebrated military victories in the Azov and Northern campaigns[1]. However, overall Peter was content with the old tradition of "cult" memorials and tried to enrich it not by building monuments and obelisks (regarded as "pagan monsters" and therefore tabooed by the Orthodox Church), but by transferring their memorial function to other secular structures that were legitimate from the Christian point of view.

One of these was the Lower Garden ensemble at Peterhof, which was built at Peter's will and under his untiring supervision between 1714 and 1725 and included three pavilions: the Monplaisir Palace, the Hermitage and Marly.

Their construction was long thought to be linked inseparably with the tsar's artistic impressions from visiting the country palaces of French royalty, Versailles and the Chateau de Marly. However, in the past few years scholars have succeeded in identifying the iconographical prototype for

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[1] There is a hypothesis that the first triumphal gate in Russian history was built in honour of Peter the Great's father, Tsar Alexis, in Vilno.

every one of these pavilions. The Monplaisir Palace, founded in 1714, was modelled after a small palace of the same name in Schwedt on the River Oder that Peter had the pleasure of seeing in July 1712[1].

The Hermitage Pavilion intended for secluded banquets and equipped with a mechanically hoisted table turned out to have been inspired by Peter's visit to the Eremitagen hunting lodge of King Frederik IV of Denmark in Dyrehaven, Jægersborg, North Copenhagen[2].And finally, Marly, the last pavilion built in parallel with the Hermitage, was conceived as an allusion to the Schloss Monbijou of King Frederick William I of Prussia and his consort Sophia Dorothea on the north bank of the River Spree outside Berlin, where Peter accompanied by Catherine and his retinue spent several days in September 1717. Small wonder that under Peter the new pavilion was called the Monbijou House, or Lusthaus[3]; after the emperor's death the ensemble was called Marly, after the neighbouring Marly Cascade, which was indeed modelled after the grand central cascade at the Marly-le-Roi Park of the French king.[7]

Moreover it has become clear that there was something additional to every pavilion concept, namely, a general memorial architectural programme, perhaps spontaneous yet clearly reflecting the military-political history of Russia through the prism of personal impressions of her monarch. After all, no matter who was commissioned to build "Lusthäuser" and fountains for Peter – A. Schluter, J. Braunstein or A. Leblond – Peter always remained the chief architect and author of the overall garden concept.

In that programme every pavilion of the Lower Garden, which in the eyes of the emperor and his retinue was linked directly with its European prototype, was assigned the role of a commemorative sign, a sort of "memorial landmark" in the grandiose foreign policy project to expand Russian territory on the Baltic Sea, which became the cause of Peter's life.

I will risk suggesting that one of the decisive factors in Peter's choice of the Brandenburg Monplaisir as the model for his favourite country residence was not so much the impression produced by the palace architecture as an event that happened there. It was in Schwedt on the Oder that Prussia signed the Treaty of Schwedt and thus joined the anti-Swedish coalition, and the personal sympathy between Peter and Frederick William I, who had

[1] S.B. Gorbatenko was the first scholar to draw attention to the similarities between the layouts of the ensembles of the Brandenburg Monplaisir and the initial sketch of the Peterhof Monplaisir drawn personally by Peter in 1713 or early 1714. Gorbatenko, S.B., Petergofskii Monplaisir – plod nemetskikh assotsiatsii Petra I (The Peterhof Monplaisir – the Result of Peter the Great's German Associations) / *Russia – Germany. Communication Space*. Papers of the 10th Tsarskoye Selo Conference, St Petersburg, 2004, p. 133.

[2] The pavilion was built in 1694 by Hans van Steenwinckel the Younger, court architect of King Christian V of Denmark.

[3] Dubiago, T.B. *Russkiye reguliarnye sady i parki* (Regular Russian Gardens and Parks), Leningrad, 1963, p. 141.

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just gained the royal title, promised to grow not only into a strong military alliance, but also into friendship between two heads of state[1].

Rapprochement with Prussia was a matter of special importance to Peter, who had nurtured plans to influence "German affairs" from the early 1710s and sought to establish close contacts with the duchies along the Baltic coast. His plans were dictated by the political and commercial interests of Russia, which wanted to consolidate its position on the Baltic coast. There was another reason: through political and matrimonial arrangements Peter sought if not to gain the status of member of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation, then at least to have an opportunity to bring pressure to bear on the other electors. The tsar thought that would add stability to Russian international standing and guarantee continuous support from Austria and other German states in the event of a Swedish revanche or Turkish attack. One of the means of attaining those goals was to be dynastic marriages[2] and another – a stronger alliance with Prussia and Saxony.

The Monplaisir construction project was launched when Peter, pinning great hopes on the Northern Union, expected a tipping point in the Northern War any moment and thought his victory was near at hand. Although his hopes failed to materialise, Monplaisir became for the tsar a memory of his first milestone success in the Northern campaign[3]. Contemporaries[4] were aware of the Prussian connotations of the Peterhof Monplaisir for quite a while, yet nevertheless the Monplaisir construction project was unlikely to have consciously aimed to perpetuate Russian diplomatic success in the memorial programme of the Lower Garden pavilions. One can think that Peter conceived such a plan only in 1721, when peaceful talks

[1] The Baths of Agrippina cascade, the second largest at Marly-le-Roi, served as the prototype for the Ruin Cascade in the Peterhof Lower Garden.

[2] Under the Treaty of Schwedt concluded on 6 October 1713, Prussian troops were to be deployed immediately in Stettin and on lands between the Oder and the Peene, "sequestrating" the area as a neutral force until the two warring parties withdrew their armed forces. The Prussian contingent occupied Stettin the following day, 7 October. The war came close to the borders of Brandenburg and East Pomerania, giving the Russian tsar reasons to hope for a speedy and victorious end to the operation. As it is the case with any international treaty, secret articles were the main points of the Treaty of Schwedt. These stipulated that in exchange for shouldering the Russian and Saxony military expenses in Pomerania Prussia was to get full power over the "sequestrated" Pomeranian lands at the forthcoming peace talks.

[3] In 1710 Peter married his niece Anna Ioannovna to the Duke of Courland, in 1711 his son Alexis to the Princess of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel, sister-in-law of the German emperor, and in 1716 another niece Catherine to the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. One more matrimonial union on which Peter pinned great hopes was in the making – the marriage of Charles Frederick of Holstein-Gottorp (nephew of King Charles XII of Sweden thought most likely to succeed to the Swedish throne) and tsesarevna Anna Petrovna formalised in 1725, already after Peter's death.

[4] During his second tour abroad Peter even commissioned a Schwedt Palace complex plan for his own library. This plan dated December 1717 now forms part of Peter's drawing collection at the library of the Russian Academy of Sciences (NIOR, F° 266, t.5, l.7.).

with Sweden were drawing to a close and after a seven-year break the tsar decided to go on with the Peterhof construction project.

Thus, the Hermitage was a tribute to the memory of the most glorious episode of the Northern War, when on board the *Ingermanlandia* the Russian tsar left Denmark, spearheading 70 ships of the united Russian-Danish-English-Dutch fleet. On 5 August 1715, the largest European squadron set out under the imperial standard towards Bornholm to deal a decisive blow on the Swedish troops and move the theatre of operations from the Baltic Sea to the territory of Sweden itself. The operation, which had taken several months to prepare, was fruitless, yet Peter could not forget that moment of European recognition of his talent as a military leader and Russian glory, even despite the overall fiasco of the landing operation in Scania, which was meant to force Charles XII to speedily seek peace and thus become a turning point in the Northern War.

In a bid to stress the link between his pavilion and the historic event, Peter not only used as an iconographical model the Danish king's Hermitage, in the environs of which, tired of waiting for the operation to begin and of his three-month-long stay in Copenhagen, he repeatedly went hunting, but also issued a special order "in Peterhof... at the Hermitage to make two oak balconies, like those on the *Ingermanlandia* ship, with iron railings of pure work on the windows" of exactly the same design as on the ship. To this end, the master Michel was to make a sketch of the railing on the Baltic fleet flagship. This seemingly insignificant episode bespeaks the importance Peter attached to the sole moment of his triumph in that rather inglorious operation due to the allies' indecision. The Hermitage on the Baltic Sea coast was meant to provide a memory of the tsar's visit to Denmark and simultaneously act as a symbol of Russian naval might.

Finally, Marly-Monbijou[1], the last pavilion of the Lower Garden, again actualized the Prussian connotations of Peter's foreign policy and was to serve as a reminder of Peter's stay at the Monbijou in Berlin in the autumn of 1717 as a guest of the Prussian Crown that was exceptionally promising

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[1] For example, the French envoy Jacques de Campredon wrote in a report to his king on 8 September 1723: "The tsar and the prince settled in the small house built in the garden on the sea coast and called Monplaisir in imitation of a similar house near Berlin..." Cit. Arkhipov, N.I., Raskin, A.G., *Petrodvorets*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1961, p. 170. For the sake of justice, it is worth noting that in this often quoted account the French diplomat who was in Prussia only in transit either made a topographical mistake (because Schwedt is not near Berlin but 85 kilometres away, which by Germany's standards is a big distance and, what is more, it is in Brandenburg), or he meant a different castle. Gorbatenko believes that Campredon meant the Monbijou Palace outside Berlin. However, in my opinion, for a person of the early 18th century the "nominalist" aspect was more important than a purely iconographical one and mentioning a similar "monplaisir" meant more than giving its exact location. It is precisely the same name that is a guarantee of the correctly understood continuity.

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from the political point of view[1]. What was more, Peter planned to play another card in the tricky North European political game while the pavilion was under construction. He placed his stake on the young Duke Charles-Frederick Holstein-Gottorp (nephew of King Charles XII of Sweden, considered the most likely successor to the Swedish throne) who owing to an alliance with Prussia managed to regain Holstein, which been occupied by Denmark. In June 1721 on Peter's invitation the Duke came to Petersburg as a bridegroom of one of the tsar's daughters (Peter had yet to decide which one) and was used as a trump of Russian diplomacy in discussing the terms of the Russo-Swedish treaty concluded on 22 February 1724. In November the same year Charles-Frederick was finally betrothed to Tsesarevna Anna Petrovna and married her in 1725 after Peter's death. Other structures of the Lower Garden were also assigned their role in that "memory theatre"[2].

Thus, the last of the Peterhof pavilions built by Peter – the secluded Hermitage banquet pavilion equipped with the latest technology and the Marly guest house – were not only prompted by reminiscences of the nearly two-year-long journey of the "tsar's delegation" across Northern and Central Europe, but were conceived as mnemonic images of sorts, of the places

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[1] It was Geyrot who first suggested in his *Opisaniye Peterhofa* (Description of Peterhof, 1868) the idea that the images of the country estate of King Frederick William of Prussia had been the source of inspiration for the Peterhof Marly ensemble, the suggestion Gorbatenko echoed later on. At first glance, the small one-storeyed Monbijou Palace, built by Eosander von Göthe the way it was known from the copy of the castle master plan and façade specially commissioned by Peter in 1717, has little in common with the pavilion built in the western part of the Peterhof Lower Garden. Meanwhile, it is important to consider two circumstances. First, Monbijou was rebuilt in 1717, and second, the original Marly plan underwent a number of radical changes in the course of construction. For instance, on Peter's orders a second floor initially not planned was added. Moreover, Peter interpreted rather freely most of the prototypes of his construction projects and reworked them to suit his taste. To follow the spirit rather than the letter, that is, the formal features of the model, was in general a tendency characteristic of the baroque. Therefore, speaking of the Marly construction project primarily in the context of its commemorative function, its link with the Prussian source, will be just as obvious as with the French namesake. All the more so since the same Marly-le-Roi Palace, Louis XIV's favourite residence, served as the prototype for the Prussian Monbijou Palace and the Copenhagen Hermitage.

Despite the later displeasure of the Prussian royal family with the behaviour of the Russian tsar and his retinue, as attested by the well-known eloquent memoirs of Wilhelmina, Peter himself was more than satisfied with the visit and the "grand assemblies" held in his honour at the castle. Furthermore, a mere month earlier an agreement had been

[2] Despite the later displeasure of the Prussian royal family with the behaviour of the Russian tsar and his retinue, as attested by the well-known eloquent memoirs of Wilhelmina, Peter himself was more than satisfied with the visit and the "grand assemblies" held in his honour at the castle. Furthermore, a mere month earlier an agreement had been reached with France and Prussia in Amsterdam providing for the propitious mediation of the two powers in the conclusion of a peace treaty between Russia and Sweden and obliging France to stop giving financial support to Charles XII.

associated with events of paramount importance to Russian prestige, and of the allied states that had largely ensured the Russian tsar's victory. In all likelihood Peter had been nurturing his construction plans ever since his return, but could get down to implementing them only when the outcome of the Northern War had been determined. The Russian tsar, who had just gained the title of emperor, could now devote time and effort to transforming his official residence to match his new status while his memories of meeting the monarchs of European power were touched by tones of his retrospective amicable alliance with them.

The idea to link the new structures with Russian foreign policy events in the wake of the Swedish treaty post factum included the Monplaisir in the common semantic field of the mnemonic programme. This additive principle of creating a whole ensemble by gradually building one independent structure and adding it to another was not new for either European or traditional Russian architecture. What was new was rather the ability of baroque mentality to form a special configuration out of the incipient mutual ties and mutual reflection of the connected projects.

This ability of parts to mutually reflect one another and produce a holistic semantic response, which was later on matched by Leibniz's monadology, proved a remarkable way of organising architecture that was discovered and put to use in the baroque period. The seeming lack of inner unity and integrity of the concept always presupposes a certain elusive layer in such architecture capable of setting a programme for the entire whole, be it the numerical ratios of the structure or a rhetorical paradigm. In our case, the unity of the whole is established by the integrated space of the tsar's personal memory, which incorporates everything there is in it, no matter how multifarious it could be. After all, according to Leibniz, it is memory that develops a quality of the power enabling the universe to hold the singular. However, baroque memory is not yet subjective, and the world cannot be experienced or reproduced within "I". As before, memory retains its ontological status and comes from being itself, as it were, overlaying man from without. It is before him and near at hand, like everything that comes his way, but not inside the interiorised historical process. That is why the emblem becomes the chief memory operation tool for the baroque, ensuring the mystery of communication and the perceptive equilibrium of "individual experience" and the objectivised world of the universals. The very possibility of such emblematic memory is ensured by the continuous allegorical interpretation of all things and phenomena, the tradition of "significative speech", which goes back to the historical sources of rhetoric and overlapping the baroque period.

The internal organisation of the architectural memorial programme fully stems from this type of memory. All the immediate impressions of life, including architecture, are invariably mediated semantically; any remembrance acquires representative symptoms and includes a historico-philosophical plane. Any situation jells up, transforming into a visual scheme that is there and then and becoming interpreted rhetorically and

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moralistically, turning into an emblem that expresses a general allegorical meaning. Therefore real events so easily transform into emblematic pictures of fireworks, multipart allegories of school plays or decorative gates celebrating Peter's victories and the other way round. Especially characteristic in this respect are commemorative emblems of the names of Peter's ships[1].

The architectural programme of Peterhof manifests this memory principle just as clearly. The tsar's memories of visiting residences of European monarchs and the events there refracted through the structure of mediatory functions come across as a set of architectural images requiring an additional verbal explanation. Just as an emblem does not appear arbitrarily at its "inventor's" whim, but draws on the rhetorical lexicon of readymade image words known from a multitude of relevant collections, so the already existing architectural prototype adapts itself to its objectives and is filled with its "own" memorial meaning. Even if the tsar just liked a certain building or its function, he could not mechanically transfer and reproduce it on his soil, but was bound to attach some meaning to it. That is why the building would necessarily get a meaningful name, or rather it is perceived already together with its name, inseparable from it and its function, just as word and motto are inseparable from the pictorial image of the emblem.

The transformation of an architectural project into an emblem presupposes not merely the contiguity of image and word, that is, a telltale name that is simultaneously a motto revealing the function ("my pleasure", "hermit's hut", etc.), but above all an image with a meaning to be sought, an image to be unravelled and that inevitably has an exegetical aura to it, if indistinct. The architectural prototype with its iconographical details turns out to be secondary in such a programme; it comes to mind not as a self-sufficient artefact, but as a function of the whole and exists not within itself, but within the framework of the semantic relationship with the situation in which Peter saw and received it.

The way today's historian sees the events of the Northern War most likely differs from the way its participants saw it, and it is therefore noteworthy that looking for iconographical images for his new garden ideas Peter turned to architectural impressions outside the mainstream of Russian foreign policy. It does not matter whether the historical events that impressed the tsar were significant or insignificant in historical perspective: they reveal wholly subjectively the hidden growth of memory in the tsar as a political figure and man, and in his attitude to the world that man is to master. The memory of them perpetuated in the architectural programme

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[1] There is, among other things, Peter's exact instruction about the cascades: "The Grand Cascade is to be made in every way the same as the Marly cascade which is across from the royal chambers. Its proportions can be found in the manuscript rather than printed book, of which there are two in my summer house". To carry through this project, Braunstein did not confine himself to the manuscript presented to Peter during his tour, but ordered requisite blueprints through the chief commissar Ulian Sinavin in France.

of Peterhof is not washed away by the flow of time and does not die away, yet it remains a hermetically closed balanced system.

The situation when a person has to maintain a balance between his personal actions and collective memory ends in Russia in the mid-18th century. In the reign of Catherine the Great the idea of memory representation breaks through the boundaries of emblematic thinking, which finds expression in the Empress's famous declarative rejection of the old memorialisation schemes. Preparing festivities to perpetuate the signing of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca for contemporaries and descendants, Catherine angrily lashes out in a letter to Grimm at the traditional repertory of architectural mnemonics: "A festival agenda has been drafted, and it is the same as ever: a temple of Janus and a temple of Bacchus, and a temple of a small-time devil and his grandma, ...outdated obnoxious allegories..." she wrote.

The Empress was right: now that the *Encyclopédie* had established memory's role as "mother" historia "which connects us with the past centuries, showing a picture of evils and virtues, knowledge and errors, and passes information about us on to the future centuries" (D'Alembert), while the relations of the temporary and eternity had changed radically in the bosom of memory, new effective means of memory representation were needed. From that moment onwards memory captured spontaneously not what there was but what was destined to be as "something significant" and worthy of "being perpetuated"; embodying not an event that happened (as one of the moments added up in time into a sum of such individual moments) or an impression, but the fate of the epoch and the fate of time. Erasing borders between themselves, time and history transform into the continuous infinity of historical memory. The objectification of memory for eternity goes beyond the boundaries of current time and even epoch itself and for this reason needs its meaning to be visually clarified in detail. Architecture ceases to be emblematic and starts "talking", while memory itself is transformed from emblematic to creative.

This simple yet decisive characteristic sets monuments of Catherine's epoch apart from all those types of commemoration that the preceding generations had been used to. All the earlier architectural programmes dealt with memory looking back or upwards to the universe, memory, as it were, recollecting the past or a new embodiment of the eternal, a continuation and interpretation of what had happened or was preset in the present. Instead they were the final point of memory coming from an old myth or tradition to the succeeding present; memoria, the continuing existence of which they sought to fix. In Catherine's architectural programmes memory does not stop at legitimising the present, but looks forward into the future. The projects undertaken by Catherine aimed not so much to build a bridge of tradition from the past to contemporaneity, or to support the myth of "*translatio imperia*" that was relevant to Catherine as addressed to the future from the present. That vector was also characteristic of Catherine's political projects. Now if the traditional political postulate "Moscow is the Third Rome and a fourth there will not be" is a metaphor oriented to

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the past, the new "Greek Project" is a call made to the future to liberate Constantinople from the barbarians, to overthrow the Ottoman Porte and revive the Orthodox Greek Kingdom under the aegis of the Russian monarch.

That is why the main goal of Catherine's monuments is to create an image of the present that would address future descendants, project a memory of today in advance to influence the shaping of that future and stake out a place there beforehand. An idea quite worthy of the Enlightenment Age. The Empress not only creates the first "real" monument in Russian history – the Bronze Horseman, columns and obelisks – but it is in her reign that the very word "pamyatnik" (monument) comes into general use in today's commonly recognised sense. It is noteworthy that in the 1750s dictionaries still "do not know" such a notion, and when Mikhail Lomonosov publishes his rendering of Horace's famous 3.30 ode, he gives his poem the title "Monumentum"[1] and starts with a paraphrase defining the expression "sign of immortality", which is absent from the Russian language. In the 1780s, when Falconet was working on the statue of Peter the Great, the words "monument" and "pamyatnik" were used almost interchangeably, and when Garviil Derzhavin translated the same ode of Horace at the end of the century, he conclusively chose the word "Pamyatnik" for the title.

Such vigorous interest in the problem of memory and the possible ways of immortalising it, from historical writings and collecting folklore to a rage for erecting monuments on the graves of favourite horses and dogs, of course, was not inspired "from above". The opposite is more likely:

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[1] The symbolic/allegorical naming of ships of the Russian navy and elucidating the symbol were common practice borrowed from Western Europe. It became especially popular after Peter had returned from his first journey abroad, where he had developed a passion for emblems, symbols and allegories. Here are but a few names and mottos of Russian ships: the *Bomb* with the motto "Woe to whoever gets me"; the *Tortoise*, "Patience will let you see the job done"; the *Sleeping Lion*, "Her heart is on guard"; the *Sword*, "Show me the essence of the laurel wreath"; and *Three Cups*, "Stick to measure in all things". The mottos and names were frequently written together on the stern and for this reason ships were often referred to by their mottos on a par with their names: for instance, the order to the Azov Fleet of 26 July 1700 reads, "…Captain Ivan Beckman to be given half a sagene of firewood to boil tar for each of the three convoy ships named *"By his death will ye be healed"*, the *Fortress* and *Door Open*. [3]. That is, the first of the ships mentioned in the order, the *Scorpion*, was referred to by its motto rather than by name. According to documental evidence, Peter and his lieutenants borrowed many names and mottos from popular West European books of heraldry and emblem collections. Beyond doubt, the book *Symbols and Emblemata* printed in Amsterdam (1705) on Peter's special commission played the role of the main reference book. As most of the shipbuilders and naval officers invited from abroad did not know Russian, for better mutual understanding many ships had two or more names, most frequently a Russian name and its translation into Dutch, English, German or French, e.g. *Baran* (Ram) – *Trommel*, *Yozh* (Hedgehog) – *Egel*, and *Kamen* (Stone) – *Stein*. There were ships with three to four names: *Soedinenie – Unia* – Einigkeit, *Bezboiazn – Sonderban – Sonderfrest – Onderfrest*, or even six names: *Blagoe nachalo – Blagoslovennoe nachalo – Blagoe nachinanie* (Good/Auspicious Beginning/Start) – *Gut anfagen – Gut begin – De segel begin* (http://sailhistory.ru/petrships.html)

Catherine's attention to perpetuating memory was a tribute to the pan-European fad.

Man's sudden awareness of the continuous and unidirectional historical process and the plenitude of masonic and mystic doctrines gave an extraordinary boost to the ideas of memory-related architectural structures in Europe. Tombs and cemeteries became practically the most popular theme of architectural fantasies and then real architecture. The widespread megalomania that captured the minds of architects led to the appearance of two new types of memorial structures: cenotaphs and memorial temples. The first cenotaph[1], designed by Étienne-Louis Boullée in the form of a giant sphere, was dedicated to Sir Isaac Newton, a great mystic and "mechanic of the Universe", whereas all the subsequent cenotaphs lacked any particular dedication and conveyed an abstract idea of memory stripped of anything transitory.

No less notable was Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's Temple of Memory in the Ideal City of Chaux, just as utopian in its grandiosity. Its centrally planned cruciform structure rising in ledges like a ziggurat with obelisks at the sides is reminiscent of the numerous reconstructions of Solomon's Temple. Representations of mythological scenes with heroic deeds by women covered the columns, and the temple as a whole was dedicated to motherhood and women regenerating a world ruined by warriors. For Ledoux his Ideal City of Chaux was a symbol of the shaping of a new man and a new world that he conceived as the alchemist's crystal of knowledge. In that way, under the impact of masonic ideas, the memorial temple transformed from a means of presenting all human knowledge and a method of memorising speeches into an education tool. At that time the masonic lodge itself – both as a spiritual structure and the ideal architectural project – was frequently conceived in the categories of the memorial temple[2].

It was within the framework of the above and similar ideas that Catherine conceived her own mnemonic architectural programme embodied in the complex of structures dedicated to the Russo-Turkish war and erected in the 1770s at the Empress' favourite summer residence of Tsarskoye Selo. Just as the Peterhof Lower Garden programme, that programme drew inspiration from Russian successes in the theatre of military operations. However, this fact makes the difference between them all the more obvious.

[1] The first Russian translation of Horace's Ode 3.30 *To Melpomene* (Exegi monumentum aere perennius...) written in 23 B.C. The best known of all odes by Horace, it serves as an epilogue to the three books of odes that formed a separate collection. Horace wrote and published the fourth book of odes much later. The ode was also translated and emulated by Gavriil Derzhavin (*Pamyatnik*), Konstantin Batyushkov (*In Imitation of Horace*), Alexander Pushkin (*Ya pamyatnik sebe vozdvig nerukotvornyi...*), Valery Bryusov (*Pamyatnik "Moi pamyatnik stoit, iz strof sozvuchnykh slozhen..."*), Afanasy Fet (*"Vozdvig ya pamyatnik vechnee medi prochnoi..."*), A.P. Semenov-Tian-Shansky, etc.

[2] Legend has it that the earliest cenotaphs (the Greek for "empty tombs") were built by Oriental rulers next to the only real one in order to confuse the robbers who would thus take too long to look for the right mound where the king with sundry material valuables had been buried.

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The idea of commemorating the triumph of Russian arms with relevant monuments occurred to the Empress almost simultaneously with the outbreak of the war. Moreover, the first of these monuments – the Ruin Tower at Tsarskoye Selo (Yuri Felten, 1771) – was to outline her aims and become a graphic symbol of the entire "Greek Project". The Ruin Tower "formed, as it were, a part of antique ruins buried underground with a small Turkish superstructure as an allegory of great Greece half asleep under Ottoman rule"[1]. It consists of a cyclopean-size Tuscan column sunk in the ground with a Gothic pavilion on top. A massive wall cut with a similarly huge arch abuts the column. The entire structure is made of red brick with cracks and dents on its surface to create the impression of age. The structure would hardly be associated with the Turkish theme were it not for the inscription on the arch keystone: "This stone was erected in 1768 in memory of the war declared on Russia by the Turks".

Every victory added something new to the Empress' triumphal memorial programme. The Orlov Gate, the Chesme Column, the Crimean Column and the Kagul Obelisk built in the 1770s to the design of Antonio Rinaldi consistently embodied the theme of antiquity as a "talking" memory accumulated in the space of the Tsarskoye Selo park to tell descendants about the victories scored by the enlightened Empress over the "barbarians". Raised in the middle of the Great Pond, the Chesme Column[2] made the pond a symbol of the battle scene, transforming it into the water space that now played the role of the Mediterranean, now the Black Sea in different spatial allegories, depending on interaction with different monuments dedicated to one victory or another. Catherine the Great wrote: "When this war is continued, my Tsarskoye Selo garden will look like a toy, with a decent monument erected in it after every glorious military deed. The Battle of Kagul … gave birth to an obelisk with an inscription … the naval battle of Chesma produced the Rostral Column in the Great Pond, the conquest of the Crimea and troop

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[1] Compared with the memory systems of Giordano Bruno or Guilio Camillo, the masonic lodge is a very simple memory temple. In fact, it is intended to obtain the initiation effect by memorising the images and symbols perceived in the course of physical movement "through" the temple-lodge. Every degree corresponds to one of the aspects of this temple. For instance, Apprenticeship is connected with the "remembrance" of the place of man in the cosmic scheme of things, in the macrocosm. The degree of Fellow-craft takes the initiated down from heaven to earth and corresponds to movement in the material word. The degree of Master makes it possible to descend even deeper into oneself, into the microcosm of the human psyche. Therefore the art of memory has remained an inalienable part of masonic initiation. The initiation method itself is called upon, on the one hand, to interiorize the memory temple in one's soul, and on the other, to create a corresponding atmosphere in the Lodge so that the spiritual road in this temple replete with symbols serves as a memory of the mystical edifice promised in the eternal "home" not of human making in heaven. In this way the Lodge managed to combine the virtual Memory Temple, the imaginary Temple of Solomon and concrete fixed memorial places full of symbolical images referencing these two loci.

[2] Shvidkovskii, D.O. *Yekaterina II: Arkhitekturnaya biografiya* (Catherine II: An Architectural Biography), Proyekt-Klassika, I–$5MI, Inorodnoye telo, Moscow, 2001, p. 136.

landing at Morea have been equally commemorated in other places … I have also ordered construction of the Memory Temple in the woods, where all the events of that war are represented on medallions".

The line from the Ode *To the Seizure of Ochakov*, "In plashes will you enter Hagia Sophia", was the key to the allegory encapsulated in the triumphal part of the ensemble. The phrase meant that the Russian troops would cross the Black Sea and occupy Constantinople, and was matched by the created architectural picture. Charles Cameron built the St Sophia Cathedral beyond the lake with the Rostral Column, the naval victory symbol. In the 18th century, it was thought to be a replica of the Hagia Sophia of Constantinople. Thus, the meaning of the park included the political future, the downfall of Turkey and the formation of the Greek Empire in lieu of the former Byzantium. Catherine's second grandson Constantine was expected to ascend the new throne: he had been named after Constantine the Great, the founder of Byzantium.

Representing the future in a park ensemble was a rarity in the 18th century, but even more noteworthy was the fact that at its heart was the perverted idea of future-oriented memory. Any Russian Enlightenment monument, therefore, had "the overarching objective" to engrave in the public mind a certain concept of history that would legitimise the political goals and moral principles of the time. It was that "content" that remained pivotal to the architectural programmes throughout Catherine's epoch, which had as a distinguishing feature not the emblematic allegorical, but the "talking" component of architecture, to quote Ledoux. The Tsarskoye Selo programme culminated in the official celebration of the Kucuk-Kainarca peace treaty[1], which took place on Khodynskoye Pole in Moscow in 1775 but condensed in an instantaneous impression the memorial idea of the Tsarskoye Selo ensemble, which had taken years to jell, with all the visual didactics of occasional properties architecture.

The discussion of different ways in which monuments and buildings were used in the memorial practice of 18th-century Russian imperial residences and memory metamorphoses can be concluded with another characteristic example. I mean the way the Pavlovsk Park ensemble formed in the 1880s, after the heir to the Russian throne, Grand Duke Paul, and his wife Maria Feodorovna had returned from their two-year-long incognito journey across Europe under the pseudonyms of "the Count and Countess Severny".

On Catherine's request N.B. Yusupov drafted the itinerary, which played a significant role in the creation of the Pavlovsk ensemble and those of other residences of the heir. It was not only because Grand Duke Paul and

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[1] Although the column erected by Antonio Rinaldi in honour of the victory of the Russian navy over the Turks in the Battle of Chesma looked like the monument commemorating Lord Grenville's naval victories in the English Stowe Park, which may have been given by the Empress to the architect as a prototype to follow, the Tsarskoye Selo monument was made more formidable and had the pictorial aspect of its allegorical content emphasized. Rinaldi put the rostral column on a powerful stone basement in the form of a separate manmade island.

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Maria Feodorovna returned from the Grand Tour with plentiful artistic impressions and trunks full of books, furniture, porcelain, bronzes, tapestries, paintings, clothes and jewellery. Rather what mattered was that ever since that time Pavlovsk and Gatchina developed actively to suit their owners' tastes and could be considered a special space formed in parallel with Catherine's epoch, but according to its own laws of a different incoming era. In this respect another memory metamorphosis that found expression in the architectural programme of the park pavilions built by Charles Cameron in Pavlovsk is quite noteworthy.

Now if Gatchina is more associated with the heir, Pavlovsk was the pet project of the would-be empress, who devoted forty years of her life to turning its alleys into her "memory routes", according to a figural expression of a contemporary. Even though he said this in the 19th century, already in the 1780s the architectural programme of the Pavlovsk Park prioritised sentimental commemorative tokens meant to touch the heart and awaken memory that had already recognised itself as such and in this sense become a key concept of sentimentalism. Embodied in architectural form, memorial signs can gather reflections, serve the rational purposes of re-creating antique specimens or, on the contrary, encourage a Rousseauist flight back to nature, but in any case, they become meaningful only when one reaches out to the very heart in the world of psychologically experienced memory. The focus of attention is steadily shifting from being and recognition of the value of the current historical situation to the inner state of man, his affects and emotions, because now a person is increasingly turning from "man" in general into a psychologically dissected soul. In his book on Rousseau Jean Starobinski introduces the notion "memory herbarism", meaning a special mechanism of memory operation in preserving its signs.

During his walks, Rousseau gathers flowers and plants and then arranges them in his herbarium. When he leafs through his herbarium after some time, recollections crowd in on him. Looking at a concrete plant, Rousseau mentally revisits the place he took it from. The flower becomes a "recollecting sign" [signe mémoratif]. Examining his herbarium, Rousseau awakens memories of his walks and the dreams that accompanied them, and relives the same feelings with the same intensity. Thus a commemorative token exists to commit impressions to memory and at the same time give access to memory. Now if Rousseau has dried plants picked at a certain place and preserved between book pages for such commemorative tokens, taking Pavlovsk as an example, we can see that an architectural form is as good a memory souvenir as can be. A plant from his herbarium revives in Jean-Jacques an image of a sunlit landscape and a wonderful journey and causes him in his current state of mind to recreate the former state of his soul, thus "...la plante aura *servi*, mais à une fin purement intérieure: elle aura rendu Jean-Jacques à Jean-Jacques. Le *signe mémoratif* est donc une médiation, mais qui intervient pour établir la présence immédiate du souvenir. On peut parler ici de médiation régressive, puisque loin de provoquer un dépassement de l'expérience sensible, elle consiste à la réveiller dans

son intégralité; il ne s'agit que de revivre un moment antérieur, tel qu'il fut vécu, sans y surajouter en effort de connaissance qui chercherait à saisir l'essence du tempes. La fleur sèche, plus efficace que toute réflexion, provoque le surgissement spontané d'une image du passé dans une conscience qui se veut passive. Retrouvée dans l'herbier, elle renvoie Jean-Jacques à lui-même et à son bonheur lointaine, à la belle journée où il s'est mis en route pour découvrir le spécimen rare qui lui manquait"[1] [...serves exclu-

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[1] The peace treaty of Kucuk-Kainarca between Russia and the Ottoman Empire brought to an end the first Russo-Turkish war and reasserted Russia's territorial gains within the framework of the earlier Belgrade peace treaty of 1739. In peaceful conditions, Russian merchant ships enjoyed the same privileges as the French and English vessels in Turkish waters; Russia received the right to have its fleet on the Black Sea and was allowed passage through the Bosporus and the Dardanelles. Celebrations were to be held in Moscow. The Empress personally drafted the scenario. Here is what she wrote in this connection in a letter to Grimm: "One beautiful morning I summoned my architect Bazhenov and told him: 'My dear Bazhenov, three versts away from town there is a meadow, imagine, this meadow is the Black Sea ...two roads lead there from the town – one of these roads will be Tanais (the ancient name of the Don. – D. Sh.) and the other Borisphen (the Dniepre. – D. Sh.); in the estuary of the former you will build a dining-room and call it Azov; and in the estuary of the other you will organize a theatre and call it Kinburn. You will outline the Crimean Peninsula with sand and put up there Kerch and Enikale, the two ballrooms; to the left of the Don you will place a refreshment-bar with wine and meat for the people, and opposite the Crimea you will switch on fireworks to represent the joy of the two empires at the conclusion of peace. Beyond the Danube you will make fireworks and on the land that is to stand for the Black Sea your will put up illuminated boats and ships; you will decorate the shores of the rivers to be represented by roads with landscapes, mills, trees, illumined houses, and there you will have a festival without any contrivance, but beautiful and especially natural...

"...I have forgotten to tell you that to the right of the Don there will be a fair named Taganrog. True, that the sea on solid ground does not quite make sense, but excuse me this shortcoming" (Shvidkovskii, D.O. *Charlz Kameron i arkhitektura imperatorskikh rezidentsii* (Charles Cameron and the Architecture of Imperial Residences). Moscow, Ulei, 2008, p. 304). Apparently, the Empress and the architect discussed the specifics of all structures expected to be built for the triumphant festivities. It was thanks to that discussion that the new artistic language of the Russian Enlightenment started to develop. Bazhenov was in charge of the Khodynskoye Pole festivities design, enlisting the services of his disciple M.F. Kazakov to make drawings and build pavilions. The festivities lasted several days and were said "to have been engraved in public memory for long". Furthermore, the "talking" architectural language evolved in the course of the 1775 festivities on Khodynskoye meadow formed the groundwork of a number of construction projects, including the imperial Petrovsky Palace (M. Kazakov, 1775–82) and Tsaritsyno Palace (V. Bazhenov, M. Kazakov, 1775–90s, unfinished). Similar structures started to be built on the estates of participants in battles with the same commemorative aim of perpetrating the memory of military victories over the Ottoman Empire. The Mikhalkovo Estate (now within the Moscow boundaries) belonged in the second half of the 18th century to P.I. Panin, hero of the Russo-Turkish war who seized the Bendery fortress in 1770. A mansion was built there, apparently, in the Gothic style reproducing "one of the fortresses seized by Panin" (has not survived). Only the redbrick "fortress" towers of several entrances have survived to this day. In Yaropolets, which belonged to Field Marshal General

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sively an internal end: it gives Jean-Jacques to Jean-Jacques. A recollecting sign is thus a mediation, but one that is introduced to establish the immediate presence of a memory. One can say that it is a regressive mediation as, far from provoking something beyond the sensual experience, it has to manifest it in all its entirety; it has to do only with the revival of a preceding moment the way it was experienced, without subjecting it to an effort of cognition that tries to grasp the essence of time. A dried flower is more effective than any reflection; it causes an image of the past to appear spontaneously in the mind that remains passive. The flower that has taken its place in the herbarium returns Jean-Jacques to himself and his distant happiness, to the wonderful journey he undertook to discover those rare subspecies of plants he lacked].

When Starobinski describes this model of memory as a trip through recollecting and recollections through travelling, he practically described the architectural programme of Pavlovsk. Contemporaries already saw that its images were souvenirs of the Count and Countess Severny's journey across Europe. For instance, one of them wrote: "the rose pavilion is reminiscent of that of Trianon; the chalet is similar to those Maria Feodorovna saw in Switzerland; the mills and several farms are built like those of Tyrol; ... the gardens bring to mind the gardens and terraces of Italy"[1], just as the theatre and the long alleys were borrowed from Fontainebleau.

When today we retrace the royal couple's itinerary and architectural impressions, we can identify with greater precision the originals that inspired one structure or another: for the Hermitage it is the monk's hut in the Etupes park of Maria Feodorovna's parents and for the Dairy Farm Pavilion it is the layout of the Dairy Farm of the Duke of Württemberg,

Count Z.G. Chernyshev (18 km away from Volokolamsk), the Mechet (Mosque) pavilion was built on the main alley of the park in 1774 to commemorate the victory over Turkey, with an obelisk erected nearby in honour of the victories achieved by Count Rumiantsev-Zadunaisky. On his other estate, Chereshenki, Chernyshev ordered construction of several structures in the Oriental style, including a Moldavian house and a Turkish house with a theatre. They were made of wood and likewise have not survived. Yet another estate, Troitskoye-Kainarji (21 km from Moscow) belonged to Field Marshal Count P.A. Rumiantsev-Zadunaisky, hero of the war. After the Khodynskoye Pole festivities were over, celebrations at conclusion of the Kucuk-Kainarca peace treaty continued there in August 1775, as a result of which the name of the memorable Turkish locality Kainarji was added to the old name of the village Troitskoye. A wooden pavilion reminiscent of one of the fortresses captured by the count was built in the park (has not survived), where squares at the alley crossings were called Rymnik, Kagul, etc. after the fortresses captured by Russian troops.

(For more detail, see: Shvidkovskii, D.O. *Rabota Kamerona v Tsarskom Sele i "antichnaya tema" v arkhitekture imperatorskikh zagorodnikh rezidentsii 1780-kh godov* (Cameron's Work at Tsarskoye Selo and the 'Ancient Theme' in Architecture of the Imperial Country Residences of the 1780s) // Shvidkovskii, D.O. *Charlz Kameron i arkhitektura imperatorskikh rezidentsii* (Charles Cameron and the Architecture of Imperial Residences).

[1] Starobinski J. *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La transparence et l'obstacle, suivi de Sept essais sur Rousseau.* Paris: Gallimard, 1971. P. 292–293.

which Maria Feodorovna had personally sent from Switzerland. The Volliere (Aviary) Pavilion decorated with antiques brought from Italy was Cameron's free fantasy on the theme of the Baths of Diocletian. The oval Island of Love was reminiscent of the island with the Temple of Venus in Chantilly, of which Paul had brought a book of sights to Russia, using it repeatedly as a reference for his commissions, and he borrowed the general name of the park – Le Sylvia – from the selfsame Chantilly.

Several prototypes can be found for the Apollo Colonnade, although the project was on the whole approved even before their departure. These include above all the famous colonnade of Versailles and several other similar garden temples that awaited the travellers in the luxurious residence in Schwetzingen of Charles Theodore, the Prince Elector of Pfalz, and also the Temple of Apollo that Maria Feodorovna's uncle, Duke Carl Eugen of Württemberg, demonstrated to his niece as evidence of his former prodigality and addiction to luxury at his Schloss Hohenheim outside Stuttgart, where he held a ball in honour of his dear guests in September 1772. It was under the impression of those visits that Maria Feodorovna decided to move the already erected colonnade to a more picturesque spot.

I will not dwell on other examples because the essence is clear. Walking through Pavlovsk alleys, Maria Feodorovna could reminisce about her dear Württemberg home and her journey. Personal family memories formed another theme that was launched with the building of the obelisk on the foundation of Pavlovsk and then found expression in the added Family Grove of trees planted by members of the family, the Temple of Friendship with the statue of Catherine in the centre and 16 columns around her (for every relation and child of Maria Feodorovna living at that moment), a monument to her sister Friederike that after the death of her parents was transformed into the Mausoleum of her beloved parents and, finally, the Mausoleum "To my Spouse-Benefactor", which appeared after the death of Emperor Paul.

The three important imperial residences have enabled us to trace the metamorphoses that memory itself underwent during that century, and the way architectural programmes reflected them.

Natalia Sipovskaya

Souvenir in Sentimentalist Topography

N.A. Sablukov, one of the most sensitive memoirists of the period of
Paul I, directly associated the structures built by Marie Feodorovna
in Pavlovsk with her impressions of the trip abroad by the Grand Duke and
the Grand Duchess. That was precisely how he explained the appearance
of "a rose pavilion reminiscent of that of the Trianon; the chalets similar
to those which she had seen in Switzerland; mills and several farms like
those of Tirol; … gardens reminiscent of the gardens and terraces of Ita-
ly", as well as of the theatre and the long alleys borrowed from Fontaine-
bleau[1]. This extended quotation is not only homage to Anna Korndorf's
report on mnemonic programmes of Russian imperial residences; in fact,
my report is about the same phenomenon, which I propose to view from
a different angle.

   Since the personification of memory, just as the personification of feel-
ings and apologia of personal sensitivity (which are perhaps the same
thing) were the chief discoveries and meaning of sentimentalist culture, we
cannot overlook the insistence with which this culture manifested the need
for these personified qualities to be visualised directly and virtually em-
bodied. I became interested in this question for the first time many years
ago, when, like any student of porcelain, I discovered that in the last de-
cades of the 18th century gift cups occupied the pride of place in the range
of porcelain products (of course, if we count table services as a single unit
rather than piece by piece). What is more, there emerged a sort of culture
of a porcelain "souvenir of sentiments" [I am using the term first suggest-
ed by M.A. Bubchikova, porcelain keeper of the State Historical Museum
(GIM)], in which porcelain cups could be rivalled only by medallions with

[1] Sablukov, N.A. Zapiski (Notes) // *Tsareubiistvo* (Regicide). Moscow, 1990, p. 59.

the portraits of the enamoured or locks of their hair, or else rare (and memorable by dint of their unusualness) embroideries with those locks of hair used as the thread.

Especially impressive are cups with "sentimental inscriptions", such as "dear even when not around" (Imperial Porcelain Factory (IFZ), 1790s; State Museum of Ceramics and Kuskovo Estate (GMK Kuskovo), "cherish to remember" (IFZ, 1786–96; State Hermitage), "neither distance nor time can set our hearts apart" (Gardner, 1790s; GIM), "Who shall I gift it to, I asked, and my heart chose you" (Private Factory, 1800s) or "the heart moaning when parted" encrypted in an amusing rebus on a piece from the GIM collection (Gardner, 1790s). Cups decorated with silhouette portraits and emblems of love (quiver, heart and anchor) and just landscapes, in which one can see, alongside memorable places, simple rural sights with strolling figures, the compositions traced back to the engravings from the first Amsterdam edition of Rousseau's *The New Heloise*, form a far larger group of such items. This list can be continued until we come to things with paintings "eternal" for porcelain that form part of sentimentalist poetics owing to the purpose of the object and the context in which it is presented rather than because of fashionable themes.

A vast range of specimens will be left outside the scope of this report – from cups with views of countryside residences produced in the first five years of the reign of Alexander I as gifts for the Dowager Empress[1] to the "name list" of things that generously adorned palace rooms and pavilions and that were connected with the memory of Marie Feodorovna's native Ludwigsburg, travel impressions and people dear to her heart, and up to the quite imperial set of 14 vases listed in the Dowager Empress' will as "memorabilia"[2]. I have already written about them at length[3].

Cup with cover
and saucer inscribed
with "cherish
to remember"
Imperial Porcelain
Factory. 1786–96
State Hermitage,
Saint Petersburg

Cup and saucer
inscribed with
"neither distance
nor time can set
our hearts apart"
Gardner Factory,
1790s
State Historical
Museum, Moscow

[1] For instance, a déjeuner service with Pavlovsk views framed with rose wreaths made in 1807 of old blanks marked with Paul I cipher. State Russian Museum porcelain collection 1616, 1620, 1622.

[2] *Russkaia starina*, May 1882, pp. 319–76.

[3] See Sipovskaya, N.V. "Farfor v sisteme sentimentalnoi obraznosti" (Porcelain in the Sentimental Imagery System) // *Dom Burganova. Prostranstvo kultury*. Moscow, No. 2, 2010.

Let us go back to the main theme. The appearance of a special culture of "souvenir of sentiments" was obviously dictated by the need for tangible tokens of personal "memory of the heart". There are other examples of the visualisation of newly fashionable trends, such as a vogue for artless naturalness, in particular, hairdos decorated with live flowers in the form of an ingenious engineering structure with little flat bottles shaped to the curvature of the head and filled with water to keep flowers fresh. This did not always succeed, as Baroness d'Oberkirch noted with regret when recounting the first testing of that sort of adornment by the Countess du Nord at a reception with the Queen Marie-Antoinette. To make her hairdo look even more natural, "the countess du Nord wore upon her head a little bird made of precious stones, so brilliant that no eye could gaze upon it steadily. It was fixed upon a spring; the slightest movement of the wearer put it into motion, when it fluttered its wings above the rose on which it seemed to be perched". Another exquisite invention of the period was a theatre eye-glass with a reservoir for an acrid composition that "made tears flow from the eyes" more effectively than the "darling Karamzin". There was a custom to take such glasses to "tearful comedies" as they called melodramas then. Seen now as a curiosity, those fanciful things were invented with the sole purpose of describing the indescribable. We view such things only as an allegory, deeming it an acceptable convention that Virtue is a semi-naked lady with a lily or that a crowned column is an absolutely unambiguous representation of the sacrosanctity of the ruler and his clan. However, allegory had for so long been the living language of *Ancien Régime* culture ex contrario, that is, by dint of *concreteness*, with which an abstraction (Virtue) transformed into a tangible image.

"…Did you ever see such a thing as a drawing of a muchness?" Lewis Carroll asked when describing three little sisters drawing things that begin with an M—. Owing to the language of allegory, *Ancien Régime* art managed to do that for a long time. The question is how it was reflected in the culture of sentimentalism, which enriched traditional iconography with

Sugar bowl inscribed with a rebus "the heart moaning when parted"
Gardner Factory, 1790s
State Historical Museum, Moscow

Cup and saucer inscribed with "Who shall I gift it to, I asked, and my heart chose you"
Gardner Factory, 1800s
State Historical Museum, Moscow

natural motifs. In this sense a curious clue is offered by the well-known portrait of Gavrila R. Derzhavin done by Salvatore Tonci in 1801 (State Tretyakov Gallery), or rather by the chance to relate this portrait to several commentaries: Derzhavin's Ode *To Tonci* as a sort of portrait programme; the poet's comments on the ode, as concrete as any statement of his; and the text inscribed by the artist on his canvas. Derzhavin was known to be happy at the prospect of being painted by Tonci, who was famous not so much as a painter but as a Sentimentalist poet and philosopher – the "Italian Shaftesbury" – and was well received in the circle of the Derzhavin-Lvov-Kapnist families and friends. The legend that the Ode was written in response to Tonci's indecision whether to portray the poet Derzhavin uniformed as the Collegia of Commerce president, complete with orders, or with the attributes of a poet is hardly true. The philosopher of an artist and avowed critic of mythological allegories, Tonci was from the outset ready to

Salvatore Tonci Portrait of G.R. Derzhavin. 1801 State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

produce something in a new taste. He presented Derzhavin "amidst Nature most harsh, / In brutal cold, his soul afire / In shaggy hat and wrapped in furs", as Derzhavin had suggested in his ode, which he apparently started simultaneously with Tonci's work on the canvas and continued to polish up to 1808, "To forge ahead, by Nature led alone / To brave all weathers, waters, rocks of flint". Explanations to the ode make it clear that the poet needs all of that in order – verbatim – "to <u>show</u>: first, that he became a poet almost without any schooling, by Nature alone; second, that in his service he had encountered many obstacles, but managed to overcome them through his character and without any patronage". True, in Tonci's portrait Derzhavin is not moving, but sitting stately, although in an uncomfortable landscape of cold and icy waters with a rock of flint. To avoid the meaning of his picture being misunderstood, the artist inscribed on it a maxim of his own composition in Latin: *Justitici in scopulo, restilo mens delphica in ortu Fingitur, in alba corque fides... (nive)* that can be translated as follows: "Justice in the rock, prophetic mind in the bright dawn, pure heart and honesty in the whiteness of snow". (In the Ode: "so that I am kind to children / and by duty alone a ruthless judge to all".) In other words, both the sitter and the artist saw the natural landscape in the background as an allegorical composition, with natural (in the idiom of the period) forms serving as emblems. Hence the need for commentaries that would facilitate understanding of abstract ideas and notions.

There are fascinating versions of this portrait: another canvas that was sent to Irkutskthe merchant Sibiriakov, who had gifted Derzhavin, "the premier Russian poet", the fur-coat and hat he had been portrayed in (legend has it that the portrait owed its appearance to that gift; Irkutsk

Picture Gallery), and a pencil sketch made by Alexei Egorov after the portrait composition to serve as an illustration for the publication of Derzhavin's *Anacreontic Odes* (State Russian Museum). In both the visualisation of the "Prophetic Mind", as we now know, as "the bright dawn" was enhanced by a mythological figure with a trumpet, that is, in the understandable language of the emblemata as the allegorical link "prophet and path of glory". In the sketch Fame writing on the tablets of history occupied nearly half of the composition. In accordance with the then accepted practice of "improving the portrait", at Sibiriakov's request an anonymous artist added to the Irkutsk canvas a winged genius with the inscription "May God grant more of such" coming from its trumpet. That addition can no longer be seen. In the 1870s it was erased and the exile artist Vronsky painted a view of Irkutsk instead (with that view the picture has survived to this day). This is but further proof that the natural pictures of sentimentalism existed in the classicist system of allegorical representation and that contemporaries perceived them as such.

This list can be extended in an interesting way, all the more so since Derzhavin and the history of the illustration of his Anacreontic poetry that became a sort of manifesto of Russian sentimentalist poetry offer copious material. I mean the so-called Red (by the colour of its leather binding), or Catherine's, Notebook with drawings by A.N. Olenin from the Public Library collection, which was presented to Catherine the Great in 1795, and the Green Notebooks compiled around 1805 (Anacreontic poetry forming part

Alexei Egorov
Pencil sketch
for portrait
of G.R. Derzhavin.
1800s
State Russian
Museum, Saint
Petersburg

of the 3rd Notebook) from the Pushkin House col-
lection. In those manuscripts verses have head- and
tailpieces sometimes copied from Olenin's drawings
and at times from later compositions of Alexei Egor-
ov (with whom Derzhavin signed a contract for illus-
trating his poetry circa 1802; the State Russian Mu-
seum houses a whole block of those sketches); some
of them were done by the young Ivan Ivanov, whose
hand is seen in most of the drawings incorporated
in the aforementioned manuscript. There are sheets
without any text with variants of head- and tail-
pieces, most of them supplied with "programmes"
of a fairly allegorical nature (the Olenin composi-
tions authored by himself while Egorov and Ivanov
worked on Lvov's and Kapnist's programmes). Over-
all, it is very interesting material that has yet to be
analysed from the point of view of the evolution of
allegories of Russian sentimentalism. For instance,
variants of the headpiece for the poem *Ruins* (el-
egy to the former glory of Tsarskoye Selo) demon-
strate the transition from a mythological composi-
tion to a fairly natural view of ruins, in which only
the winged wheel in the foreground hints at the
didactic meaning of the underlying programme.

Alexei Egorov
Sketch of head-
and tailpiece
for Derzhavin's
poem Ruins. 1802
State Russian
Museum, Saint
Petersburg

Derzhavin was very particular about the way his verses were illustrated
(even though he did not live to see illustrated publications of his poetry).
His well-known lines, "The poet's spirit may create, / It is the painter who
breathes life into creations", are indicative in this respect. Derzhavin was
not alone in his desire to see "life breathed" into the image created by the
poet. It was not only a matter of illustrations but of the pictorialism of the
literary "pictures born of the sensitive pen", or, to quote a latter-day stu-
dent of sentimentalist prose, "pictorialism emerged as the main text-form-
ing principle". Scenes of nature in works of Karamzin, Izmailov or Mura-
viev easily come to mind. Be they inventive or intrusive, they not merely
accompany the character's feelings but induce in him those feeling above
all through memory. The walls of the Simonov Monastery, which keeps the
memory of poor Lisa, *Rostovskoye ozero* (Lake of Rostov) by V. Izmailov,
Aptekarsky ostrov by V. Popugaev, the St Makarius Monastery at Zhyoltye
peski in *Neschastnaya Margarita* (Wretched Margarita) by an unknown au-
thor, a rose garden amidst four willows in *Bednaia Khloe* (Poor Chloe) by
Karra-Kakuello-Gurji or *Tiomnaia roshcha, Ili pamiatnik nezhnosti* (Dark
Grove, Or a Tenderness Monument) by P. Shalikov are above all memorable
places arousing sensitivity.

It is a very intriguing twist provoking thoughts whether the sensitivity of
sentimentalism is in fact the sensitivity of remembrance. This is something
worth thinking about. Already at first glance, two fascinating consequences

Ivan Ivanov
Headpiece
for Derzhavin's poem
Ruins. 1805
Institute of Russian
Literature, Russian
Academy of Sciences
(Pushkin House)

of the above hypothesis cannot be ignored. If it is true, the enlightened sensitivity of sentimentalism presupposes a prototype story that had already taken place and been registered by memory. This means that there is a gap, a distance that enables a concrete person to express his/her feelings in precedents already objectivised by cultural memory – something like Dido's faints or Penelope's fidelity, etc. – with which manifestations of personal feelings were identified directly, irrespective of their depth and sincerity, irrespective of whether the tears were shed naturally or due to a smart eye-glass. All that matters is that the moment is appropriate. This threshold tangibly distinguishes the sensitivity of sentimentalism from personal feelings, to which man will succumb in subsequent periods, and what is more, lays bare the mechanics of sentimentalist poetics manifested

in the literary genre of travels, among other things. A textbook example is *Pisma russkogo puteshestvennika Karamzina* (Letters of the Russian Traveller Karamzin), known for over a century to be an applique of fragments of the more authoritative literary writings of that period describing the highlights of the mentioned places (irrespective of claims against the quality and meaning of that indisputably original and highly substantive piece of writing).

That is one thing. Second, the remembrance mechanism that induces personal sensitivity reveals the nature of memory in sentimentalism that takes effect, as demonstrated earlier, within the framework of *Ancien Régime* cultures, that is, prior to reflection on time as existential. Memory obviously unfolded in sentimentalism not so much in the temporal as in the spatial perspective, like Kropotov's "landscape of my imagination"[1]. Hence the importance of memorable landmarks, whether a porcelain cup or a Pavlovsk park pavilion, that are nothing but souvenirs and commemorative tokens. By nature they are capable of representation (because a souvenir serves to visualise memories and feelings associated with it) and are decorative (because this type of visualisation brings into play the mechanism of textbook allegory that inherently strives to become an ornamental motif) and occasion-specific (as it is always associated with some concrete moment that provokes feelings and memories). This brings to mind H.G. Gadamer, who studied the perfection of occasionality, decorativeness and the "ontological valence of the picture" as the decisive characteristic of pre-modernist cultures. This also prompts an analogy with the polyphony of artistic forms, which was characteristic of art of the end of the century, when, as Eugene Lanceray remarked about the Gatchina Palace interior design, it seemed that all tastes and styles that manifested themselves in any way in the course of the 18th century had "trooped together" by its end.

Anyhow, it is to be hoped that this angle of view has shed some light on the origin of souvenir culture and its significance in the poetics of sentimentalism. After all, it is thanks to memorable things that the newly discovered space of personified memory ceases to be a terra incognita and comes across as a fanciful, yet observable and meaningful panorama.

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[1] A. Kropotov's writings were published under that title in a separate book in 1803.

Tatiana Yudenkova

Russian genre painting of the 1860s
in the light of Christianity

The purpose of the present article is to approach Russian genre painting of the 1860s from a non-traditional point of view. Instead of assessing it in the context of social history or economic and political theories, this paper will aim to look at the art of the chosen period in the light of fundamental Christian ideas.

No artistic creation exists in isolation from the religious context, to which it is always integrally linked. It is common knowledge that in 19th century Russia the common denominator of thought, both within the national tradition and the national culture was the Christian Worldview.

For a long time, however, Russian art of the second half of the 19th century was interpreted as a direct reflection of the democratic tendencies of the time. It is commonly accepted that, following N.G. Chernyshevsky, art was animated by "the portrayal of reality"[1], the recreation of life "as it is" without any "embellishments" and picturing "the truth of life". Despite this, however, in the published epistolary heritage of Russian artists of the second half of the 19th century the names of N.G. Chernyshevsky, N.A. Dobrolyubov, D.I. Pisarev, M.A. Bakunin, H.-T. Buckle, P.-J. Proudhon and others have been mentioned extremely rarely. Today, it is practically impossible to say how politically active and ideologically alert the Russian painters were, and how well acquainted they were with their contemporary socio-economic teachings. The theme of self-sacrifice and the political martyrdom of the regime, with its allusion to Godliness, was present in the prose of N.G. Chernyshevsky and the poetry of N.A. Nekrasov, as well as in the articles of V.G. Belinsky. Relying upon the religiousness of Russian

[1] Chernyshevski N.G. Complete Works. In 10 vol. Saint Petersburg, 1906. Vol. 10, p. 149.

man, the "narodniki" revolutionaries were implanting the concept of saint-liness "beyond Christ'.

One of the first critical articles written by Kramskoy (dated 1858) is filled with regret about the surrounding reality, which is immersed "in its own learned/scholastic results, … proud of its knowledge and worships *a different God* (here and below emphasis is my own – T.U.) "[1]. Poor mankind is defeated – complains the young artist – "decriers of eternal truth" declared the absence of the ideal, daring human curiosity "threw the cover off religion and the material being of this world," people "forgot the Words of God… that *the beauty eternal and sacred cannot be visible to the eyes of the impious, the deceitful, the temptatious"*[2]. Saying this, Kramskoy retains his youthful hopes and expectations and proclaims that soon the world will witness the arrival of a painter who is "faithful to the Ideal" and who will decipher the historical moment in present-day life. Accepting the changes brought by the reforms of Emperor Alexander II and being ready for them, Kramskoy soberly assesses the reality and stays in line with Christian Optimism.

Resulting from disappointment in the Higher Ideal, the attention of the public turns to what was happening around them, to the reality of everyday life. The two are naturally related to a strengthening of the positivistic attitudes of the 19th century, and partly to a decrease in the religious activity of Russian society. The latter does not mean the sharp and final split from the old tradition of Christianity, dating back centuries. When talking about the Russian art of the second half of the 19th century we should remember that society was "soaked to the bone" with the Christian tradition (this article does not intend to look deeper into the specific issues of mythological conscience of the pre-Christian period). Therefore any discussion of singularities of the national worldview inevitably has to make reference to a hierarchy of values – to the eternal understanding of the beginnings of light and darkness, good and evil, virtues and vices. This certainly applies to genre painting, which, being an integral part of the whole body of art of this period, only at first glance seems to be free of religious content. In the art of painting the presence of this important component of the artistic world vision shows itself – although indirectly – first of all in the form of moral and philosophical meanings, which are ever-present in the pictures. We have already admitted that the present work offers only a first attempt to indicate the dilemma with regard to the most "antireligious", but at the same time the "most saintly sixties". This duality definitely requires special and thorough further research. On the other hand, without considering this often latent Christian tradition, "which seems to have permeated into the mentality but has lost visual signs of existence", according to D.V. Sarabyanov, the analysis of the art of this period is now impossible.

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[1] Kramskoy I.N. Letters, articles: in 2 vol./I.N.Kramskoy (ed. and commented by S.N. Goldstein). M., Iskusstvo, 1965–66. Vol. 2, p. 272.

[2] Ibid. P. 273.

"This tradition acted as if above the stylistic evolution – "above barriers"... like the awakening of memory, mostly happening unconsciously, or to be more precise – subconsciously, the awakening of the conceptions, hidden away in the depths of time and in many cases rooted in religious feelings, in the East European interpretation of different world phenomena, in legends of the Church[1], wrote the researcher, who was the first in our field to outline the issue.

"The perception of the New Time epoch as unreligious is now in the past," comments I.L. Buseva-Davydova on the same matter. The literature, the memoirs and the epistolary correspondence all confirm that anticlerical, and especially antireligious, beliefs were adopted only by a certain social strata, while the rest of the population felt itself under the constant protection of divine forces, continues the author. "Such life with a "raised ceiling" was in the highest degree instrumental in developing individual piousness and the sense of both sensual and spiritual closeness to Christ... The Holy History has become extremely pertinent, gaining a direct relevance to the real life experience of earthly Man"[2].

The periodicals' illustrations of the 1860s were available as a reflection of the socio-critical issues and responded to them immediately, "sensed atmospheric fluctuations of public mood," according to G.Y. Sternin, whereas the art of painting, in its turn, appeared to be more conservative[3]. During the 1860s themselves not a single easel canvas was created that could be linked to some degree to the history of the revolutionary democratic movement. The genre picture of this period is lacking the positive type of thinking, powerful, strong-willed "new people" preaching democratic ideas, who were labelled as 'nihilists'. You could find them, however, in the portrait painting of that time – for example, in black chalk portraits by I.N. Kramskoy or in later works by N.A. Yaroshenko.

In the late 1850s to early 1860s, critical writing stimulated the development of the national school of art and the creation of genre painting in particular, warning at the same time against imitation of the styles of foreign

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[1] Sarabyanov D.V. Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory. M., 1998. P. 21.

[2] On the Peculiarity of Religious Conscience of the New Time. – see Buseva-Davydova I.L.

On the Spiritual Foundations of Late Russian Icons/ Voprosi iskusstvoznania. X (1/97). M., 1997, pp. 185,188.

[3] Facts of the real contacts between the young members of artistic circles and the representatives of "narodniki" intelligentsia, as well as those of the student democratic movement are very rare. The artist F.S. Zhuravlyov was placed under police surveillance because of his involvement with reading of "Kolokol" (a magazine, edited by A.I. Herzen) and printing of other illegal materials. V.V. Vereshchagin smuggled Herzen's writings into Russia. V.I. Yakobi was acquainted with N.G. Chernyshevsky, communicated with revolutionary activists and also created a portrait of M.L. Mikhailov in shackles. N.N. Ge and A.A. Ivanov met A.I. Herzen abroad, K.D. Flavitsky corresponded with the latter as well as with N.A. Dobrolyubov. Many pupils of the Imperial Academy of Arts supplied the capital's magazines with satirical drawings.

artists. The public "awaits a Russian subject from the artist,"[1] insisted P.M. Kovalevsky, stressing the necessity of looking for national motifs. The art of painting has to start speaking the language of truth, it has "to leave not a single doubt as to what is going on,"[2] what is happening in the picture. The art must be simple and easy for viewers to understand. Voting for the portrayal of momentary and transient events in life, the critics altogether chose as an example the work by A.A. Ivanov "The Apparition of Christ to

Vasily Khudyakov
Skirmish
with Finnish
Smugglers. 1853
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

the People" (1837–1857, GTG), focused on eternal evangelic figures. The reviewers frequently praised "genre painting with a meaning,"[3] which uncovers the imperfection of life. F.M. Dostoevsky acknowledged the difficulties met by painters while trying to recreate "the real truth." He saw the task of contemporary art as aspiring to the level of "artistic truth," which meant being able to look at life not with your physical, "bodily eye", but with "a spiritual one." [4]

A gravitation towards meaning has been typical of the Russian character ever since the Middle Ages, known as the epoch of enlightenment and apprenticeship. Is it worth searching for a hidden meaning or, as it were, for a "meaning between the words or between the lines", in paintings of the second half of the 19th century where, according to long-standing interpretations, all is very simple, obvious and sometimes even too straightforward? What ideas were feeding "the thoughtful genre" – the most sharp and critically tuned in the hierarchy of genre painting?

The genre artists of the 1860s were above all else honest presenters of surrounding life, capable of seeing in it the ongoing evil. They mostly depict the lowest of human passions: theft, fraudulence, treason, offering one's pride and honesty for sale, alcoholism, tyranny, violence, avarice, vulgarity – or, in other words, the breaking of the fundamental ethical laws of human existence, connected, in one way or another, to the ten Christian Commandments.

The subjects who populate genre canvases of the 1860s are the common people – middle class citizens, peasants, traders, insignificant employees, soldiers, the poor and the paupers, students, prisoners and convicts, maids, governesses, etc. The man from the crowd, "the little man", the man of an episode, who had just stepped out of the masses, was put

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[1] Kovalevsky P.O. On the Arts and Artists in Russia//Sovremennik. 1860. № 10. P. 381

[2] Polonsky Y.O. On the Exhibition. Letter 2/Smes'//Russkoie slovo. 1860. № 11. P. 70.

[3] Delo. 1868. № 10.

[4] Dostoevsky F.M. The Academy of Arts' Exhibition for the Years 1860–61/ Dostoevsky F.M. Complete Works in 30 vol. Articles and Notes. 1861. Leningrad, 1973. Vol.19, p. 158.
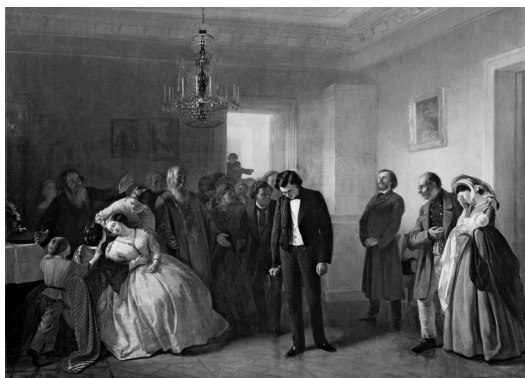
Adrian Volkov
Interrupted
Betrothal. 1860
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

by the painters under the spotlight, right in the centre of their pictures. Getting "on stage" by means of the art of painting, he was given the role of the principal prosecutor of contemporary life, representing a new type of humankind – suppressed, simple, sometimes miserable and voiceless, and in some sense a martyr and a victim of social inequality.

These pictures, with their tendency to condemn, are joined together by several constant characteristics that make genre painting of the 1860s easily recognisable. First of all, by the presence in the picture of two opposing beginnings which, one way or another brought into life through the plot composition and a certain distinctness of stock characters, appear in the end as the embodiments of light and darkness.

In genre paintings showing the "almightiness of evil in the world", the roles are strictly distributed between the bearer of vice and his virtuous judge, the same as a primitive folk picture, lubok or magazine illustration. In many of these pictures the line-up of evil people breaking the laws of human co-habitation – highwaymen, fraudsters, liars, rascals, hypocritical officials, family tyrants – is carefully worked out with much detail. (V.G. Khydyakov "A Skirmish with Finnish Smugglers", 1853, GTG; A.M. Volkov "The Interrupted Betrothal", 1860, GTG). Even more expressive are the portrayals of the tempters and cunning judges: in V.G. Perov's picture "The Arrival of a District Police Officer at an Investigation" (1857, GTG) in the foreground of the picture one can clearly see the carafe of vodka and basket of eggs which imply that police officers are prone to bribery. In accordance with the artistic mentality of that period the wrongdoer, even one who becomes so under pressure from unfortunate circumstances that turn him into a slave of reality, full of injustice and apathy towards mankind, inevitably represents the negative phenomenon, naturally linked to the idea of sin. Meanwhile the appearance of a clergyman, empowered with the highest authority, in pictures like "Tea-time at Mytishchi" (1862, GTG) and "Easter Procession in a Village" (1861, GTG) by V.G. Perov, or "The Ward" (1867, GTG) by N.V. Nevrev, and some others, emphasised the measure of sin.

Ideological counterparts to evil and fraudulent persons are the victims of their crimes – suffering and deprived of everything, "the insulted and humiliated". The most unprotected part of the population are the children, orphans, unhappy widows, young girls being forced to marry against their wishes, elderly men and women, vagrants and people from artistic professions. The female characters are less developed and bring to mind the typical portrayals of "widows" created by P.A. Fedotov and Y.P. Kapkov. All these images are similar in their resignation, shyness and obedience

Vasily Perov
The District
Police Officer
at the Investigation.
1857
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

Vasily Perov
Tea-party in Mytishchi
near Moscow. 1862
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

(K.L. Przhetslavsky "The Family of a Poor Artist and a Picture Buyer", 1857, GRM; M.P. Klodt "Abandoned", 1862, GTG; V.G. Perov "Dvornik (Caretaker) Admitting a Lady to an Apartment", 1864–65, GTG).

It seems that with the new themes and subjects, a new hero should have established himself in the art of the 1860s – a fair, morally impeccable protector shielding the poor from the world's misfortunes and sorrows. Nevertheless, in genre painting of that period you will not find a noble hero standing up to protect the needy, offended, homeless, etc. This position could not have been offered to a man: in Christian tradition this ideal and elevating role was intended for the Saviour himself.

**Vasily Perov
Easter Procession
in a Village.** 1861
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

**N.V. Nevrev.
A Ward.** 1867
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

The main part in canvases of the 1860s is usually dedicated to an inno-
cent victim who at the same time could not be called a hero in the straight
sense of the word. There is nothing heroic to find in his or her life. Most
often the victim was depicted in such circumstances where there was no
choice and the outcome had already been foretold. The bride is on the brink
of losing consciousness ("The Unequal Marriage" by V.V. Pukirev, 1862,
GTG), the daughter does not dare to contradict her father's decision (pre-
liminary sketch to "Marriage Arrangement" by N.G. Schilder, 1859, GTG,
earlier title – "Forced Marriage"), as no resistance could be shown by
either the "The Ward" (by N.V. Nevrev, 1867, GTG) or the lady renting an

apartment ("Dvornik (caretaker) Admitting a Lady to an Apartment" by V.G. Perov, 1857, GTG). The thief waiting for punishment ("The Arrival of a District Police Officer at an Investigation" by V.G. Perov, 1857, GTG) is asking for mercy more out of habit than from the hope of kindness from the power-bearing officials. In Schilder's "Temptation" (1857, GTG) the heroine looks as if she is trying to push away from her the old rag, offering her to trade her youth and honour in return for a gold bracelet. Behind the girl you can see her dying mother, but here the daughter's choice is not obvious for a viewer. In the last two pictures, the characters of victims remain untold and therefore do not arouse compassion.

The revolutionary enlightenment found realization in energetic actions capable of changing both the individual and society at large. N.G. Chernyshevsky insisted: "put the suffocating circumstances out of the way, and the human mind will immediately lighten, and his nature will become more noble"[1]. Through Bazarov's words I.S. Turgenev suggested: "improve the society and there will be no place for illnesses". Nekrasov dreamt of "re-creating the reality". The Christian tradition taught that by suffering the feebleness of the world man is being cured. "Suffering is the main fact of human existence...The destiny of every life in this world is suffering...Through suffering a human being is coming to communicate with God, in suffering he is feeling himself God-forsaken. Why does a human suffer? And is it possible at all to acquit God, with such an amount of suffering?"[2] asked N.A. Berdyaev at the turn of the 20th century. Characters of the 1860s personify docility, shyness, loneliness, fatigue, illness and death, provoking the viewer to pity "the offended and humiliated". Suffering and compassion is the principal motif of genre paintings of the 1860s and 1870s. "We can't ask for more poverty," admitted A.I. Levitov, a writer close to genre artists of the sixties. "I had many an opportunity to witness the cold and the famine ... silent depression in peasants' dwellings ...lifeless faces ... endless tragedy, and I simply weep quietly ... and suffer deeply from a moral pain."[3]

A.G. Venetsianov and P.A. Fedotov gave up on the dream as soon as they sensed world harmony in the preciousness of painting, in the

Vasily Perov
Caretaker Letting an Apartment to a Lady. 1864-5
State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

[1] Chernyshevsky N.G. Complete Works in 15 vol. Moscow, 1948. Vol.4, p.121.

[2] Berdyaev N.A. On the Purpose of a Human Being. M., 1993, pp.289–291.

[3] Levitov A.I. The Tragedy of Roads and Villages. M., 1866, p.102.

**Vasily Pukirev
The Unequal
Marriage.** 1862
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

calmly streaming light, in quiet laughter, in a smile, in irony and humour. And what about the painters of the 1860s? Having chosen to protect the fallen they lost their hope for a Higher Providence. Their world is full of lies and is powered by fraudsters, thieves, embezzlers and hypocrites. There isn't a touch of truth or beauty left in it. Harmony on Earth is impossible. In the conscience of a believer the presence of hell invariably means the inevitable presence – somewhere – of the other world, that of harmony and joy which are inseparable. In his short story "A Little Boy at Christ's Christmas Party" Dostoevsky states that if even the sinless children do suffer in this world, then there certainly is another better world. Similar thoughts were shown by M.E. Saltykov-Schedrin: "History does not stop simply because lowliness, ignorance and indifference temporarily become the law. History is aware that this will pass, and underneath it the truth and life are still simmering."[1] The earthly logic clashes here with some different type of logic, a deeper and totally inexplicable one. Judged according to earthly values, the events that are happening seem illogical and unnatural. However, if within the society there exists a reaction against the worthless, the vulgar, the crude – then eyes are opened and the truth of life reveals itself. The demand for justice, distinctly heard in all the paintings of the 1860s, is addressed to the Heavens.

Taking a closer look at the genre paintings of this period, on the fringes of many of them one will notice the image of St. Nicholas, who, from his icon, silently surveys the proceedings in the picture (from afar), the holy face of the Saviour from a gonfalon gazing at the evil happening all around, or a bell-tower in the distance representing for the human subject the connection between the Earth and the Heavens (I.M. Pryanishnikov "Jokers" 1865, GTG; V.G. Perov "Easter Procession in a Village" 1861, GTG). The everyday logic is upgraded to a new level – that of Providence (with a capital letter). The folk saying "Do not live your life as you want to, but as God directs you" reflect the ideas of Christian culture. The presence of Christian motifs in the picture makes its plot clearer. The story itself might be very simple, but another meaning lies beneath it, which is easily picked up by contemporaries, which takes you from everyday life to a different register of being.

[1] Saltykov-Shchedrin M.E. Literary Critic. M., 1981, p.184.

In light of the above, an especial-
ly striking example is presented by
V.G. Perov, leading representative of the
Moscow school of the 1860s. Through-
out the twentieth century his picture
"Easter Procession in a Village", re-
jected by the Academy Council because
of the "inappropriate depiction of the
members of the clergy", was described
as inadvertently anti-clerical[1]. Mean-
while, the acquisition of this work by
Tretyakov (whom contemporaries re-
membered as a pious parishioner of the
St. Nicholas church in Tolmachi and
mostly a man of conservative and pro-

Nikolay Schilder
The Temptation. 1857
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

tective views) shows that he saw it differently from the ideologically
charged art critics.

The foreground of this canvas is occupied by the figures of a priest puffed
up from drinking and hardly able to walk and an ugly "baba", a woman with
an expressionless, "empty" face. This creates the unsightly, depressing
scene in the centre of the picture, near the entrance to the izba (log hut).
Here one can also see the icons, paint peeling and turned upside down; the
icon with the nearly lost image of Our Lady, the holy book and the Eas-
ter egg end up in the mud. Yet the other members of the procession, who
are moving away from the viewer, have nothing about them to offend reli-
gious sentiments. V.A. Lenyashin drew attention to the orderly, decent fig-
ures of choristers, their righteous faces and their passionate involvement in
the singing[2]. Nature is not in unison with the unbearable and cruel reality,
it is uncomfortable and stormy: the wind is blowing grey clouds out to no-
where – the landscape in Perov's pictures is attuned to the author's voice.
The Holy Feast is turned into the opposite.

In V.G. Perov's paintings, as well as in F.M. Dostoevsky's prose, A.N. Os-
trovsky's plays and N.A. Nekrasov's poetry, nearly every little line or hint
that reveals "the world's evil and darkness" is at the same time filled with
the expectation that "the disgust of abandonment" which has descended
upon sinning Russia cannot be endless, and the hope for a bright dawn does
not die. These thoughts were in one way or another nourishing Russian
culture as a whole at that time, piercing through the severe reality of life.
Striking discrepancies in life became a point of interest not in themselves,
but because of the prospect they could be uprooted by enlightenment.
Dreams of eternal harmony – what is now called Christian Optimism –
were once the constant attribute of a traditionally strong Orthodox society,

[1] Vasily Grigorievitch Perov. Paintings. Drawings. Ed., introduction and chronology by M.N. Shumova.
    Leningrad, 1989, p.12.

[2] Lenyashin V.A. Vasily Grigorievitch Perov. Leningrad, 1987, p.54.

but were also seen as a far-away unearthly ideal. Pious conviction and hope formed the foundation stone of Perov's philosophy in his 1860s pictures, and were undoubtedly deciphered by his contemporaries.

In the same year that he completed his picture "Drowned Woman" Perov had created a serious and monumental altarpiece "Christ and Our Lady at the Sea of Life" (1867, GTG), which was gifted by the artist to the Moscow church of St. Kosma and St. Damian in Shubino. Our Lady and the child are positioned on a rock, with the "serpent of sin" glistening at the foot of it. It matters not how Perov himself named the genre of this piece[1]. What always matters for him is the respect and worshipping of the Christian tradition, leading to the issues of human existence. As a side-note, let us mention that Perov's literary creations are closely linked to the Holy Writing and full of evangelic images and Christian symbols. His short stories "Under the Cross", "The Great Sacrifice" and "Fanny under № 30" uncover his inseparable connection with the ideal of Orthodox belief.

Beauty, strength, magnificence and perfection of form did not inspire the artists of the 1860s. "...As for truth in art, this is still a big question. And what might always be more precious to us is that which never happened,"[2], argued in a debate with V.V. Stasov the Academy student and future creator of idyllic scenes à l'antique H.I. Semiradsky. Semiradsky's appeal "to depict that which never was and never will be" was seen by the artists of the 1860s as an absolute artistic crime. Turning their attention to everyday life, they certainly did think about world harmony, but to them it only appeared in the form of aspirations, hopes and dreams.

Interestingly, in the 1860s Perov contemplated the following two works: "The Rendezvous of a Sincerely Loving Policeman with a House Maid Neighbour" and "Convalescent Child", titles that concealed a kind, positive feel and elegiac and even joyful motifs. However, neither painting materialised. Why? Was the artist afraid of falsehood? Did such heroes lack parallels in real life? Was Russian society not interested in them? The depiction of happiness, quiet joy and beauty, a special theme that requires a change of focus for the genre painter, who initially aimed to uncover the imperfections of life. The rare exceptions only highlight a general pattern in art of the 1860s. (V.M. Maksimov, "Dreaming of the Future", 1868, GTG; "Grandma's Fairytales", 1867, GTG). The scenes of happy family

Vasily Maximov Grandmother's Tales.
1867
State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

[1] V.A. Petrov interprets this work as an "allegorical dream", proclaiming the necessity of "abstinence from passions"//V.Petrov. Vasily Perov. The Life of an Artist. M., 1997, p.116.

[2] Repin I.E. The Far-away Proximity (Dalekoie blizkoie). Leningrad, 1986, p.189.

life are unknown to the Russian genre of that period. According to a historian of theology in the so-called ascetic literature, a Christian family has never been presented as the perfect example of Christian ideals[1]. Could the teachings of holy fathers and the historians of religion have influenced the choice of subjects by Russian genre painters? Perhaps, in some roundabout way.

The death sentence to reality, proclaimed by Chernyshevsky as the main goal of art, was being interpreted in Russian painting of the 1860s from the standpoint of the Christian ethic[2]. The artists brought up in the traditions of Russian Orthodoxy were "breastfed" with the basic principles of Orthodox culture and in their way of thinking followed, consciously or instinctively, these ethical-religious rules known to them from childhood. It is important to understand that, despite the long-established assumption of widespread atheist views in Russia of the 1860s, these were adopted only by a certain social stratum of Russian society and did not become universal. Kramskoy, coming from a family of Russian Orthodox believers, was brought up in the traditions of "household religiousness". "What a sadness and suffering grip my poor mother," he wrote in the 1860s, "she can't make herself digest how it could be possible not to go to church, not to listen to priests, not to fast even during Lent. It is hard for her, her son ... is in the wrong, he is perishing."[3] To be wandering "in search of the exit from the dead end into which mankind has brought itself", to be looking for veritas, avoiding church rituals and precautionary dogmas, but at the same time not losing faith in Higher Reality – that was apparently the route followed by many of Kramskoy's contemporaries. One of the distinctive qualities of that epoch was described by archimandrite Feodor Bukharev as the perception of Christianity as something "elevated beyond reach, absolutely not available to all those labouring."[4] Many artists have walked away from the Church but the faith in a higher unapproachable reality was not shattered by anti-clerical moods. The Church, as the institution of power, as the guardian of strict Orthodox foundations, was gradually losing its authority, giving in under the pressure of the sober common sense of the people, who wanted to understand things "with their own brains" and explain the evolution of life with the help of scientific knowledge.

It is understandable that in folk culture ancestral beliefs remained practically unchanged, and in many artists who came from various distant places of provincial Russia world vision was not damaged by contemporary nihilism. The "men of the sixties" inspired by the noble idea of service to society were themselves people of enviable morals, ashamed of material prosperity, they were considered "moneyless" and aspired to live according to the saying "man shall not live by bread alone".

[1] Archimandrite Feodor (A.M. Bukharev). On the Spiritual Needs of Life. M., 1991, p.16.

[2] N.G. Chernyshevsky was born into the family of Saratov Cathedral archpriest Gavriil Ivanovitch Chernyshevsky.

[3] Kramskoy I.N. Op.cit. Vol.1, p.45.

[4] Archimandrite Feodor (A.M. Bukharev). Op.cit. P. 16.

The semi-religious tradition of moral edification allows us to read genre pictures, unmasking human sins and vices. Despite the seemingly vast thematic variety, all the subjects are orbiting the same planet – the idea of world sinfulness. The 1860s artistic vision of the world had no place for the bright side of human existence. "Beyond Christ" a human creature loses human appearance, declared the art of the sixties, transforming the prose of life into the area of a sacral dimension.

In the above-mentioned article of 1858, Kramskoy raised a question crucial to the Russian artistic conscience of the second half of the XIX century: "The ideal is nowhere to be found, or is it just not on the pedestal?"[1] Genre painting of the 1860s proves that the unseen presence of the higher Christian ideal and the visible acceptance of the world's imperfect nature are in fact two aspects of the same process and undoubtedly constitute an important characteristic of the epoch.

When one looks at genre painting with historical hindsight, it appears that many of those pictures, while condemning social evil, spoke a language easily understood and welcomed by their contemporaries. They appealed to evangelical teachings: "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour ...In your anger do not sin: do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen ...Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgive each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Acts; Ephesians, 4:25–4:32).

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[1] Kramskoy I.N. Op.cit. Vol.2, p. 273.

Tatiana Karpova

Nikolai Ge in the 20ᵗʰ century

The work of Nikolai Nikolaevich Ge not only brings to a close the 19th century, but also opens a new page in the history of 20th-century art. Although Ge was the oldest of the Wanderers, in his work he was closer to the younger generation. His disturbingly emotional expressive painting paved the way for the future language of pictorial arts[1]. Researchers unanimously attribute his drawings and paintings of the *Passion Cycle* to early Expressionism. Ge developed a new language in the Russian art of the 1880s-1890s entirely on his own, making an astounding breakthrough from the Academy classicism of his earlier works painted under the influence of Karl Briullov and Alexander Ivanov to the dramatic canvases of the *Passion Cycle* full of pain and passion.

Ge's influence and significance are not confined to the time of his life and active work. As before, the world of his images can fire one's imagination, arousing cold indifference or ecstatic worship in the artistic milieu.

This unusually kind person, who treated people with childlike enthusiasm and was blessed with the gift of compassion, took the difficult road of heretics and pathfinders both in his life and work – by far not a common lot. When his works were in disgrace, he put them on show at his friends' homes, anticipating the practice of "apartment exhibitions" of Soviet underground artists[2].

[1] Christoph Bolman, a Geneva student of architecture, who discovered Ge's drawings at a flea market in Geneva in the mid-1970s, took them for the work of a young artist (so fascinatingly active was their power). Acting on first impression he dated them to the 1920s – that was how he interpreted the language of the painter he had heard nothing about at that time. (See Interview with Christoph Bolman in *Russkoye iskusstvo* (Russian Art), No. 3, 2005.

[2] Mikhail Shemyakin recalled that he and his fellow nonconformist artists of the 1960s–1970s found inspiration and support in Ge's experience.
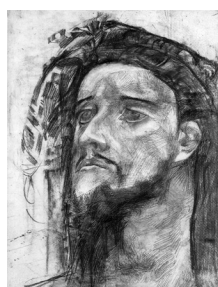
Nikolai Ge
Head of Christ. 1890
State Russian Museum,
Saint Petersburg

Nikolai Ge's painting, especially during the 1880s-1890s, was not understood by his contemporaries and considered sloppy and unprofessional. His art was always open to question, which was still there in the 20th century[1].

During his last years Ge was surrounded by young painters, students of Nikolai Murashko's School of Drawing in Kiev[2] and the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture[3]. They hung on his lips, adored and worshipped the old artist, but could not or would not follow in his footsteps.

Ge regularly visited Murashko's school and supported it by giving lectures and taking part in discussions of works by young painters, some of whom later came to see him at Ivanovsky farm in the Chernigov province, where he settled in 1876. They worked side by side with Ge in his studio, borrowed books from his library and had an opportunity to listen to the painter and discuss various questions of life and art. Some (like Yaremich) stayed for a long time, others spent weeks and months in his house. The reminiscences of Kovalsky, Yaremich, Kurennoi and Murashko himself focus on two main topics—"lessons of craftsmanship" and conversations about "major" issues of life, the purpose of art and human existence in general[4].

However, the work of Ge's students from Murashko's school, the so-called Ge gang[5], turned out to be a far cry from their teacher's daring endeavours. We can be certain about the impact of his personality on his students' life values, but we can find almost no trace of his artistic expressionist quests

Mikhail Vrubel
Head of the Prophet.
1904–5
State Tretyakov Gallery,
Moscow

[1] Ilya Repin called Ge "a failure"; Ivan Kramskoi believed he was taking a "slippery path"; Nikolai Ulyanov wrote in the 1930s that Ge was "still on probation"; in the early 1960s Sergei Romanovich asserted that "the importance and impact of Ge's art has not been recognised by many".

[2] S.P. Kostenko, S.P. Yaremich, V.D. Zamirailo, A.A. Kurennoi, L.M. Kovalsky, G.G. Burdanov, I.K. Parkhomenko, and G.K. Dyatchenko were in Ge's sphere of influence.

[3] N.P. Ulyanov, L.A. Sulerzhitsky, I.I. Bakal, V.E. Borisov-Musatov, A.S. Golubkina and Leo Tolstoy's daughter T.L. Tolstaya.

[4] "He gave all his soul and the warmth of his heart to young people, when he was with them he changed beyond recognition. As for people like me and of my age, and people he, perhaps, subconsciously, considered hopeless, he looked … above us or through us, but, in any case, not at us. He wasn't glad to share our company. So he always tended to give us a wide berth. He was always ready to serve young people, explain things and make long, intelligent and informative speeches. *Besedy i vstrechi s N.N. Ge. Stranitsy dnevnika N.I. Murashko*. (Talks and Meetings with N.N. Ge. Pages from N.I. Murashko's diary. *Published by L.V. Tolstova // Cit. Nikolai Ge. Vektor sudby i tvorchestva* (Vector of Fate and Work). International conference papers. Archival publications. Compiled by T.L. Karpova. Moscow, 2014, p. 357. Hereinafter *Collection*, Nikolai Ge.

[5] See I. Vydrin. *N.N. Ge v vospominaniyakh ego uchenikov* (N.N. Ge in Memoirs of His Students), *Iskusstvo*, 1971, No. 9.
"Pay special attention to how French artists hold their exhibitions", S.P. Kostenko wrote, "maybe you'll find it possible to have something like that for us, **Ge's followers** [emphasis added], in Kiev…" (Cit. E.M. Kuzmin, *Iz Kieva. 25 letiye risovalnoi shkoly Murashko* (From Kiev. The 25th birthday of the Murashko School of Drawing), *Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaya promyshlennost*, No. 4, 1901, p. 112).

Nikolai Ge
Christ and the Robber.
1893
Sketch
for the *Crucifixion* (1894)
Kiev Museum
of Russian Art

in his followers' works known today[1]. His favourite student and friend Yaremich eventually became a museum official (keeper of the collection of European drawings in the Hermitage), art historian, art critic and collector;[2] Kurennoi became a restorer at the Tretyakov Gallery.

Ge has more in common with Mikhail Vrubel, although they did not associate during Ge's life. It was Vrubel who derived his artistic impulse from Ge. No wonder Ge's hall at the Tretyakov Gallery brings the suite of giants of 19th-century Russian painting to an end and leads us to Vrubel's hall. Vrubel admired Ge's painting *In the Garden of Gethsemane*[3]. The coloristic – emerald and turquoise – strokes in Ge's *Conscience. Judas* brings to mind *Demons* and *Shells* by Vrubel. The portrait of Savva Mamontov painted by Vrubel in 1897 is reminiscent of Ge's portrait of the historian Nikolai Kostomarov (1870).

[1] This subject has been studied insufficiently; works of Ge's followers have been dispersed among museums and private collections, many of them lost.

[2] Unfortunately, Stepan Yaremich did not write a monograph about Ge, conceding the right to the artist's son, Nikolai Ge, Jr, who collected materials about his father's work and published a book with a small introductory article (Book of Artworks of Nikolai Nikolaevich Ge, Moscow-St Petersburg, 1903 (folder) (Moscow: Posrednik Publishers, 1904 (folder)), but did not write a monograph; the collected material, including Ge's manuscripts, he took with him to Switzerland was lost. Meanwhile, Yaremich published the correspondence between Ge and Leo Tolstoy: *Leo Tolstoy i N.N. Ge. Perepiska* (Leo Tolstoy and N.N. Ge. Correspondence). Introduction and notes by S.P. Yaremich, Moscow-Leningrad, 1930.

[3] "He rendered moonlight as if one saw it during a headache. Such effects are familiar to me, I have migraine myself sometimes." (*Vrubel*: *Perepiska. Vospominaniya o khudozhnike* (Vrubel: Correspondence. Memoirs about the Painter), Leningrad, 1976, p. 167).

Sergei Romanovich
Crowning with Thorns.
1960s
State Russian Museum,
Saint Petersburg

Mikhail Vrubel lived and worked at Ivanovsky farm in the Chernigov province for several years – in the summers of 1897, 1898, 1900 and 1901, when it already belonged to the painter's son Pyotr Ge. Vrubel stayed there with his wife, Nadezhda Zabela-Vrubel, a singer at Savva Mamontov's Private Russian Opera and sister of Yekaterina Ge, Pyotr Ge's wife.

In Ge's studio at the farm, where many of his works were still hanging on the walls and folders with his charcoal sketches to the *Passion Cycle* were lying on the table, Vrubel painted such works as *Lilac* (1900 and 1901), *Twilight* (1900) and *Swan Princess* (1900).

Vrubel's drawing *The Prophet's Head* (1904–5, State Tretyakov Gallery) reveals many similarities with the image of Christ in the paintings and sketches of Ge's *Passion Cycle* and proves that Vrubel carefully studied Ge's later graphic and painting legacy.

Valery Turchin singled out a pulsing dotted line of "inspired early Expressionism" in Russian art, going from Ge to Vrubel and from Vrubel to Kandinsky that "was a place where certain spiritual energy gathered and, feeling for a way out of 19ᵗʰ-century problems to those of the 20ᵗʰ century, correspondingly linked those centuries"[1].

Another twenty years went by after Ge's death, and the legendary "Makovets" group (1921–7) of Moscow artists, philosophers and poets appeared on that pulsating dotted line.

Our Prologue policy manifesto of the association, the main provisions of which were laid down by Vasily Chekrygin, stated: "Art must lead the people to the high culture of learning and feeling … a revival of art is possible only provided there is strict continuity with the greatest masters of the past and with the unconditional resurrection of everything **living and eternal** in it…" [emphasis added][2].

The "Makovets" artists – first of all, Sergei Romanovich, Vasily Chekrygin and Nikolai Chernyshev – had a kind of Ge cult. Nikolai Chernyshev's heartfelt and emotional essay on Ge begins with: "I think if I had met Ge in the street, I would have fallen to my knees and kissed his feet. I'm convinced he would not have been offended. He would have realised that he received what was due to him from the man who saw his greatness. But at that time we did not listen to the Divine word of his art, which drowned in the sound of copper cymbals. Neither his huge talent, nor his academic schooling, nor his knowledge of the masterpieces of European art earned him wide recognition among our major masters or the young people. Almost at the end of his life Tolstoy, a man of genius, cast aside the scum of the superficial tastes of progressive-minded society and recognised his art, but

[1] V.S. Turchin, *Ge + Vrubel + Kandinsky =… // Collection*, Nikolai Ge, pp. 236–41.

[2] *Makovets*, No. 1, 1922, p. 3.

For Ge's theory of "living form" see article by T.L. Karpova "N.N. Ge. The Art of "Living Form" // *Nikolai Nikolaevich Ge. Towards the 180th Birth Anniversary, 1831–1894* [The publication was timed to the exhibition "What Is Truth? Nikolai Ge. To the 180th Birth Anniversary" at the State Tretyakov Gallery, 18 October 2011–5 February 2012]. Moscow, 2011, pp. 12–35.

not without reservations … This means that society cannot understand a person of genius at once. It took Ge such a long time to fulfil himself. Despite his early flashes of genius, he often wandered in the labyrinths of public opinion. …His works showed what spiritual heights Russian art could reach after Ivanov… Only Vrubel followed in his footsteps. For a long time the force of social inertia weighed heavily on Ge. Only towards the end… did he lose faith in the importance of public opinion – …and without further ado, silently outgrew it"[1].

The "Makovets" artists collected materials about Ge, recorded memoirs of his students; Chernyshev gave Romanovich a photo of the interior of Ge's studio at Ivanovsky farm, and it hung in his home as a precious relic.

Ge's work was always in Sergei Romanovich's field of vision. His painting has a great deal in common with Ge's legacy both in the choice of subjects, brushwork and composition. As an artist Romanovich had to go underground in the 1930s, and in the 1940s through the1960s worked on a cycle of paintings on the Gospels: *Kiss of Judas* (1940s, Private collection), *Ecce Homo* (1950s, Private collection), *Mocking of Christ* (1950s, State Russian Museum), *The Crucifixion* (1850s, State Russian Museum), *Jesus and Nicodemus* (late 1950s – early1960s, State Russian Museum), *Laying the Crown of Thorns* (1960s, State Russian Museum) and others.

In 1963, Romanovich wrote a long, profound and talented article about Ge, which has lost none of its value even now that much has been written about the painter[2]. Romanovich was the first to appreciate the artistic merits of Ge's works. He wrote about the "burning inspiration", with which *The Calvary* (1893, State Tretyakov Gallery) was painted. Reading Romanovich's text, we once again experience the emotional atmosphere of the painting *What Is Truth?* (1890, State Tretyakov Gallery), in which lightning seems to illuminate the floor and the figure of Pilate and to split the world into two parts: "Here in this picture, just as in the later ones, we see liberated energy and a great struggle between Light and Dark"[3]. Reading Romanovich's article about Ge, we clearly feel that these are the words of a 20th-century artist, who extracts from Ge's creative lessons what is necessary for him and understands his work the way Ge himself might not have understood it. Romanovich's article about Ge is a view of an artist from the 20th century.

Nikolai Ge
Head of Christ with the Crown of Thorns. 1892
Study
Nizhny Novgorod State Art Museum

[1] Nikolai Chernyshev, /Exhibition Catalogue/, Moscow, 1978, p.150.

[2] S.M. Romanovich, "Nikolai Nikolaevich Ge" // S.M. Romanovich, *O prekrasneishem iz iskusstv* (About the Most Beautiful of Arts). Literary Heritage. Excerpts from His Correspondence. Reminiscences of His Contemporaries about the Artist, Moscow, 2011, pp. 118–47.
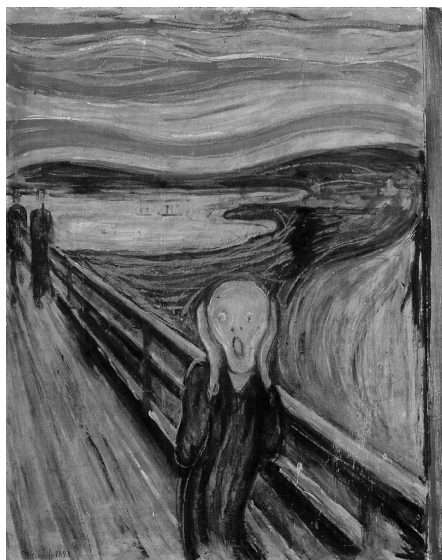
[3] Ibid., p. 127.

Romanovich held in high esteem the talent of Ge the colourist, the harmony and meaningful relationship between colour and light in his paintings:[1] "… And the colour – nowhere can one find this amazing range of tones, as though they were born together and for this work alone, and have exhausted themselves in it… Standing in front of the painting (*What Is Truth* – T.K.), we witness a great human drama, but to understand it, we need to penetrate the mystery of its painting. The soul of the painting is in its colours, its forms, the vibrations of its surface, and only after we understand them will we understand the essence of the drama"[2].

Romanovich feels deeply the individual nature and originality of the figurative means Ge chooses or rather, invents for every one of his works, never repeating himself[3]. "The mystery of moonlight with its charm and its magic surrounds you," he writes about the painting *Conscience, Judas* (1891, State Tretyakov Gallery). "The shimmering moonlight, streaming, live, creating a path of stones; the star mist of the night sky, sparkling and alive … You are amazed by the wealth of play of this colour, the only one of its kind."[4] In the painting *The Judgement of the Sanhedrin* (1892, State Tretyakov Gallery) the main colour is red: "No one has ever seen anything like this red colour, perhaps resembling most of all thick wine, which looks like that when there is a dim light behind the glass, such as a candle or red dying embers in the fireplace … Ge's pictures as the works of a true painter, first and foremost, influence one with their colour."[5] "The blue (the word itself does not express much) in the *Conscience*, the black and green in the *Garden of Gethsemane*, molten gold and honey in the *Sanhedrin*, and, finally, the brilliant contrasts in the *Portrait of Petrunkevich* are all still unappreciated even now, although it constitutes the power of Ge's art, the likes of which we cannot find."[6]

Indeed, if we examine Ge's *Passion Cycle* in terms of the colour palette, we see that every painting of the cycle was assigned a basic colour of its own – a blinding lemon-yellow in *What Is Truth?*, a wine-red haze in the *Judgement of the Sanhedrin*, emerald-blue in the *Conscience* and the grey dust storm in the *Crucifixion* (1894). For Ge, every colour was associated with a particular sound (even before Kandinsky's colour theory, Ge came up with that of his own). He told his students: "**I find an awful lot in common between colour and music**. [Emphasis added.]

Edvard Munch
The Scream. 1893
National Gallery, Oslo

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[1] Romanovich himself told his students, "Through colour to light – this is our task".

[2] Ibid., p. 129.

[3] Nikolai Ge hated hackwork; he said about hack painters, "He paints as if he were knitting a stocking."

[4] Ibid., p. 132.

[5] Ibid., pp. 133–4.

[6] Ibid., p. 145.

Otto Dix
Wounded Soldier.
1916
Etching

Nikolai Ge
Christ Crucified.
Study. 1892
State Russian
Museum, Saint
Petersburg

However, Wundt[1] had already noticed it. When I look at the blue, I feel some kind of quiet melancholy music while yellow and red colours set me in an absolutely different mood."[2]

Ge's intuitive perception of colour was corroborated by the study of colour and the laws of optics. With his university education in mathematics, he could study the latest literature on the physics of colour, which was unknown and inaccessible to contemporary artists. Nikolai Ulyanov, recalling his impression of Ge's last major painting, *The Crucifixion*, 1894, emphasised the novelty of its colour palette: "Before the picture was removed from the stretcher we had a long discussion, despite the author's presence, about the formal side of the painting, our opinion of which was almost unanimous. Indeed, it is something new, perhaps it is even the "last word", which was once so enthusiastically pointed out by my friends. **Actually, which of the Russian artists has spectral analysis, local colours and an additional colour palette? [**Emphasis added.] Ge's contemporaries, most of whom went in for black painting with its established tradition

[1] Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), German psychologist, physiologist, and philosopher.

[2] L.M Kovalsky, *Iz vospominanii o Nikolae Nikolaeviche Ge* (From Memories of Nikolai Nikolaevich Ge),
      Publication by L.A. Amelina // Cit. *Collection*, Nikolai Ge, pp. 348–9.

did not nor could know much of what was revealed to Ge's inquisitive mind, who in his old age sat down to study a new ABC of art. Yes, here is the ABC itself or something like that – Ge is showing us a book on physics. ...

We leaf through the book, Ge is watching us, snatches it out of our hands, finds some interesting pages himself and passionately explains the drawings and coloured tables.

"You can't create a picture, if you don't know this ..."[1]

In his diary, Nikolai Murashko put down the advice Ge gave to the students of his school: "In painting, try not to mix more than two colours – only then will you have **pure tones**. [Emphasis added.] When you add a third one, it all looks like dirt."[2]

In addition to Romanovich and Chernyshev, Ge's creativity lessons were undoubtedly very important for Vasily Chekrygin, the most talented of the "Makovets" group. Similarities with the charcoal graphics of Ge's *Passion Cycle* can be seen in Cherkrygin's charcoal sheets on "the resurrection" of humanity – illustrations to Nikolai Fyodorov's utopia (*Common Cause*). Vasily Chekrygin's stylistic genetics was connected to Ge and Russian Expressionism, V.I. Rakitin stated in his article to the catalogue of the

[1] Nikolai Ulyanov, *Lyudi epokhi sumere*k (People of the Twilight Period), Moscow, 2004, p. 146. Ge probably showed Ulyanov and his fellow students from the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture the work by Michel Eugene Chevreul (1786–1889), *Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colours* (1860).

[2] *Besedy i vstrechi s Ge...* // Cit. *Collection,* Nikolai Ge, p. 354.

**Nikolai Ge
Crucifixion.** 1894
Whereabouts
unknown
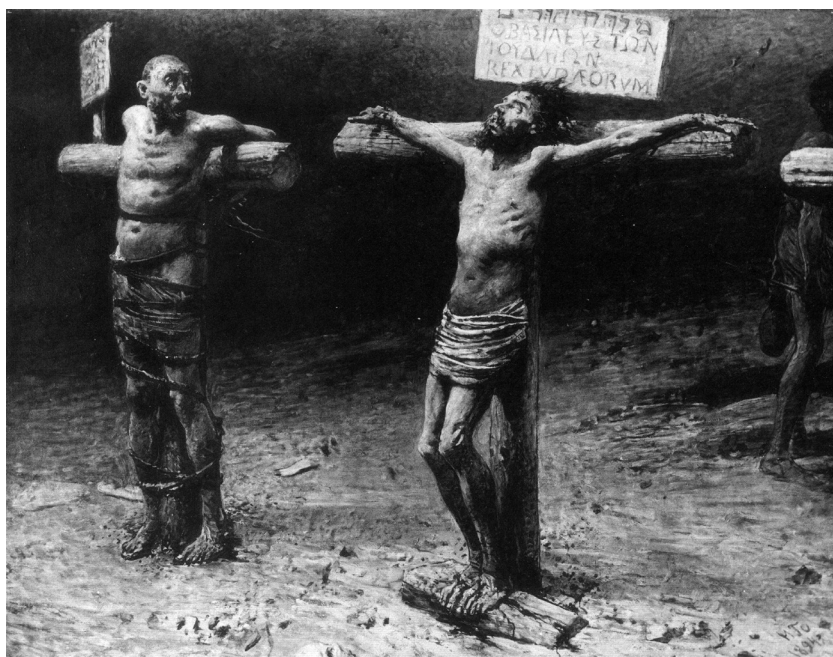
artist's exhibition in Cologne in 1992[1]. Rakitin includes individual works by Vrubel, Marc Chagall, Natalia Goncharova, and Pavel Filonov in the tradition started by Ge.

The theme "Ge and Expressionism" emerged in our art studies about twenty years ago. "The later Ge, without knowing it, was a kind of Expressionist on Russian soil – before Expressionism emerged as a trend in Western Europe."[2] "*The Crucifixion*, *The Calvary*, *Christ and the Thief*, as well as numerous preparatory drawings for them make it possible to foresee the Expressionist future of European art. Here Ge has more in common with West European quests of the 20th century (for example, those of Emil Nolde), than with the Russian ones."[3] This theme was developed during the preparation for Nikolai Ge's exhibition at the Tretyakov Gallery in 2011–2, as well as in the publications of the international conference held at the Tretyakov Gallery at the close of the exhibition on 31 January 2012[4].

In Russia, Expressionism did not become an established stylistic trend, as in German art. Russian culture has a few, but unusually bright phenomena and personalities who did not call themselves Expressionists, but were imbued with the spirit of Expressionism. Ge is undoubtedly the first among them.

It is interesting that, chronologically, *The Calvary* (1893, State Tretyakov Gallery) and *The Crucifixion* (1893, d'Orsay Museum, Paris), coincide

Alexander Arefiev
Loose copy
of Ge's Crucifixion
(1894, whereabouts unknown)
Mid-1950s
Made from photograph
Private collection

[1] "A great exception, in its own way a really isolated phenomenon in the history of Russian art, Chekrygin's work quite logically fits into the history of Expressionist phenomena in Russian art … the history of Expressionism in Russia, unlike German culture, is not strict lines of development, logically and emotionally defined … but a relay from one name to another, a constant emotional background of artistic life." (Cit. E. Murina, V. Rakinin, *Vasily Nikolaevich Chekrygin*, Moscow, 2005, p.9).

[2] N.N. Dmitrieva, *Kratkaya istoriya iskusstv* (Concise History of Art), Moscow, 1993, p. 250.

[3] D.V. Sarabianov, *Russkaya zhivopis. Probuzhdenie pamyati* (Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory), Moscow, 1998, p. 184.

[4] An exhibition opened in the Tretyakov Gallery dedicated to the 180th birth anniversary of Nikolai Ge. For the interview with exhibition curator T.L. Karpova see // URL: http://www.the-village.ru/village/culture/culture/109667-v-tretyakovskoy-galeree-otkrylas-vystavka-posvyaschennaya-180-le-tiyu-so-dnya-rozhdeniya-n-ge)

with a work that marked a turning point for European art – *The Scream* by Munch[1]. Most likely, Ge did not know about the appearance of Edvard Munch's famous work in 1893, and Otto Dix's *Wounded Soldier* and *Christ*[2] distorted by horror and pain were to appear thirty years after Ge's death and to convey the terrible experience of World War I. But already at the close of the 19th century Ge was aware of the general feeling of alarm hanging in the air. Ten years after Ge had completed his final *Crucifixion* (1894), the world would explode with the drama of World War I. Like many sensitive artists, Nikolai Ge felt the terrible tremors of the impending apocalypse. Although he lived on the farm, he nevertheless stayed abreast of world developments, learning about them from newspapers and letters from his numerous correspondents. Ge's work is full of discoveries and a sense of foreboding. In *The Last Day of Pompeii* by Karl Briullov, a painter Ge revered in his youth, the world perishes under the power of doom and the elements, while in Ge the world perishes because it has failed to learn the main moral law given to humanity in the Gospel. In Ge's later paintings one can feel the ground shake as before an earthquake.

There is another theme that unites Ge's work with that of European Expressionist artists – their rejection of civilization, claiming to be the new "Saviour" of mankind without affecting the basic meaning of its existence and turning a person into a consumer of endless technical and household gadgets. Tolstoy and Ge were at one in their understanding that technical progress alone without moral development would lead the world into a deadlock. Ge's withdrawal to the farm, a kind of downshifting, was not only due to economic reasons, but had a deeper meaning.

The question arises whether Ge's work was known outside Russia. When Christoph Bolman discovered Ge's drawings at a flea market in Geneva in the mid-1970s the name meant nothing to him, although not very far away the Chateau de Gingins near Lausanne housed a Ge museum of its own from 1929 to 1952, with the last *Crucifixion* (1894) and numerous sketches and graphic works taken by Nikolai Ge, Jr to Switzerland in 1900[3]. He did his best to popularise his father's art – held several exhibitions in Geneva and Paris in 1903; at the same time he presented the *Crucifixion* (1892) to the

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[1] The gesture of Christ, who, in despair, took his head in his hands ("Oh my God, why have you forsaken me!") in Ge's *The Calvary* almost fully coincides with the gesture of the hands of Munch's character shouting on the bridge, while Christ writhing on the cross in pain and screaming in *The Crucifixion* at the d'Orsay Museum, and graphic sketches for it, are comparable with the emblematic work of the Norwegian painter in the power of emotion and means of expression. (See *Nikolai Nikolaevich Ge*, Towards the 180th Birth Anniversary... pp. 330–5.)

[2] The incredible expressiveness of broken, twisted paper-scratching strokes and lines in Ge's *Christ Crucified* (1892, State Russian Museum, Inv. P-13269), where the exhausted and humiliated Jesus is looking with his huge eyes full of suffering at the world that "lieth in wickedness" is echoed in Otto Dix's graphic works with a concentrated expression of the destruction of human dignity brought by World War I.

[3] The display was opened to the public in 1936.
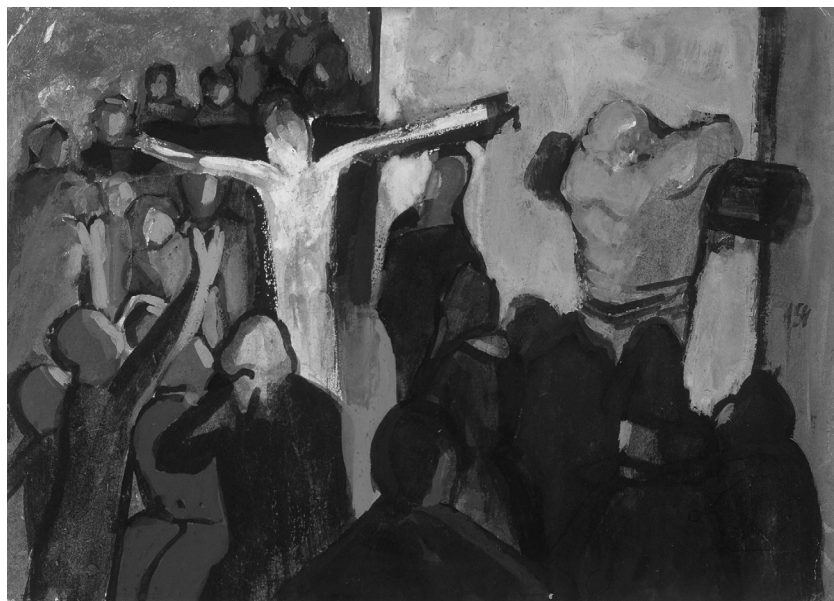
Luxembourg Museum in Paris[1] (today it is in the d'Orsay Museum on permanent display). But Ge's art did not get a wide response in Europe – it remained alien and incomprehensible. Edvard Munch considered Dostoevsky his favourite writer who influenced all his work, but he did not see or recognise Ge.

Ge did not accept art focussed primarily on solving formal problems. This explains his lukewarm attitude to French Impressionism[2]. Ge's attitude to Symbolism was ambiguous and requires special consideration.

The language of Symbolism was for Ge too conventional and theoretical; it could not solve the problem he considered to be most important – to express a live content in a live form. Nikolai Murashko put down Ge's opinion about the art of Symbolism: "As for the Symbolists, they are not satisfied with realism and are looking for spiritual things in art, but the spiritual apart from the real-life and the corporeal does not exist for us. The spiritual is only in the moral, therefore, it [*the art of the Symbolists.* – T.K.] is not on the right track."[3] Symbolism repelled Ge with its notes of lethargy, fatigue, and pessimism; the ambivalence of ethical and aesthetic concepts, the so-called "fin-de-siècle mood" was alien to him. "The search for new roads continues, but it is **hampered by doubts and fatigue – this is**

[1] It was exhibited in the Luxembourg Museum from 1903 to 1922.

[2] N.I. Murashko recalled with what pleasure and sympathy Ge repeated V.M. Maksimov's phrase, which he said at a Wanderers' meeting: "Look here, he said, everything is all right, but we have too much of French stuff here. How beautifully he put it, see: too much of French stuff. "*Besedy i vstrechi s Ge…* // Cit. *Collection,* Nikolai Ge, pp. 369.

[3] *Besedy i vstrechi s Ge…* // Cit. *Collection,* Nikolai Ge, pp. 360–1.

the hallmark of our time. [Emphasis added.] Doubt is useful because it is an element of nature, but fatigue is a bad sign. An artist must have moral balance," he said to Yaremich during an evening walk in the poplar alley on the farm on 31 January 1894[1].

However, the artists and writers of the Symbolist circle were keenly interested in Ge's legacy. Thus, the Moscow Symbolist magazine *Zolotoye runo* (Golden Fleece) published nineteen works by Ge in the fourth issue of 1909 (mainly of his later period connected with the *Passion Cycle*) and two articles about the artist. One of them was authored by his grandson – Nikolai Petrovich Ge[2]. The other was written by Vasily Milioti[3], a member of the "Blue Rose" association and head of the *Zolotoye Runo* art department.

A selection of materials about Ge appeared in the magazine in the last year of its existence. That period was marked by a sharp polemic with the magazine *Vesy* (Scales). *Zolotoye Runo* opposed *Vesy*'s aestheticism and individualism with an understanding of art as meeting the religious and moral demands of society[4].

Ge's grandson Nikolai Petrovich wonders whether his grandfather's works are necessary in the 20ᵗʰ century and answers in the affirmative: "Yes, probably they are necessary, as everything absolutely sincere, so as not to fall into inertia and sleep..."[5] Nikolai P. Ge compares Ge's work to Dostoevsky. He appreciates the artist's desire to "speak about what is most socially important and exciting."

Ge's work was next in demand in the 1950s-1960s, with the alternative, unofficial postwar Russian art. Sergei Popov associated Alexander Arefyev[6], a member of the "Order of Mendicant Painters", with "Ge's vector". In the late 1950s Arefyev made a free copy of Ge's later *Crucifixion*, with an emphasis on the crucified thief. In his works, such as *The Crucifixion* (1954, N. Blagodatov's collection, St Petersburg) and *Prometheus* (1963, D. Shagin's collection, St Petersburg), Arefyev continues his dialogue with the images of Ge's paintings.

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[1] At the Pliski farm and in Kiev. From S.P. Yaremich's Diaries, 1891–6, Publication by S.L. Kapyrina // *Collection*, Nikolai Ge, p. 384.

[2] Nikolai Petrovich Ge (1884–1920), nicknamed Kika at home, writer, art historian and art critic, was the son of Pyotr Nikolaevich Ge, the artist's youngest son. He graduated from the philology department of St Petersburg University, wrote critical reviews of Russian and West European art and published articles in the magazines *Russkaia mysl* (Russian Thought), *Zolotoye runo* (Golden Fleece), *Mir iskusstva* (World of Art), *Novy put* (New Way), and *Literaturnoye nasledstvo* (Literary Heritage). He was friends with Mikhail Vrubel, wrote articles about him and translated them into German, he also helped Yaremich with his book about Vrubel (1911).

[3] V. Milioti, "Zabytye zavety" (Forgotten Precepts) // *Zolotoye runo*, No. 4, 1909.

[4] I.M. Gofman broached this topic in his article "Nikolai Ge in the Evaluation of the *Zolotoye runo* Magazine" // *Collection,* Nikolai Ge, pp. 222–35.

[5] N. Ge [N.P. Ge], "Neskolko slov o Ge" (A Few Words About Ge) // *Zolotoye runo*, No. 4, 1909.

[6] S.V. Popov, *Vozdeistviye iskusstva Nikolaia Ge: skvoz XX vek* (Impact of Nikolai Ge's Art Across the 20ᵗʰ Century // *Collection*, Nikolai Ge, pp. 262–73.

Soviet underground artists put great importance on Ge's independent stand in art, his persistent refusal to comply with the contemporary aesthetic requirements and his way of liberating himself from the aesthetic dogmas of his time[1].

Provocation is another area which brings Ge closer to the alternative art of the 20th century. Naturally, he never aimed at provocation for its own sake. His task was to encourage viewers not to admire, but to act: "I will shake their brains with Christ's suffering. I will make them weep, and not slobber over it."[2] Using emotional shock to make one think, forget about petty everyday interests – that was his aim. Murashko relates Ge's story about his latest experience with exhibiting *The Crucifixion*: "… The Tsar did not like it, but he returned to the picture three times – it means, **it really got to him** [emphasis added], said Ge laughing."[3]

Ge's radical practices paved the way for the practices of actionism and conceptualism in 20th-century art.

Ge had his own system of working with models, who included not only professional sitters, but also volunteers – his students and acquaintances. It was real torture for those posing in difficult postures on the cross for *The Crucifixion*. Ge waited for their suffering to become unbearable and only then did he take up his brush. He himself "ascended" to the cross not so much as to show the sitter his posture, but to try on the role of Christ, "put his fingers into the wound" – feel the physical pain and suffering of Christ. There is a photograph of the naked old Ge on the cross taken in his studio on the farm[4], and a series of photos of Yaremich in the nude posing as Christ and the thief.

Ge wanted active, direct contact with the public. He provided the paintings of the *Passion Cycle* with a lot of verbal comments, which have reached us in the records of the participants of "apartment" shows, members of the Tolstoy family, and different friends and acquaintances of the artist. Ulyanov, Murashko and Tatiana Tolstaya noted that without Ge's passionate speeches – he was an excellent speaker – something seemed to be lost,
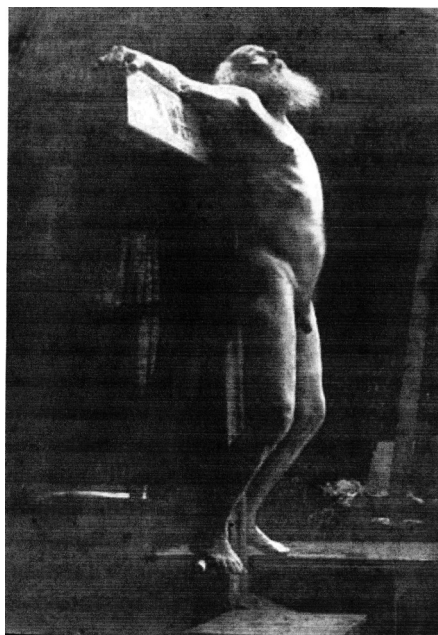
Nikolai Ge posing
as the crucified Jesus
in his studio
on Ivanovsky farm.
1892
Photograph
by L.M. Kovalsky
I.I. Vydrin collection,
Saint Petersburg

[1] "It took him many years of uphill battle to gain this opportunity to be free. To rely only on himself, to find unconditional faith in himself in his art the way he can and wants to." (S.M. Romanovich, *Nikolai Ge* // S.M. Romanovich. Op. cit., p.119).

[2] Grigory Ge. *Vospominaniya o khudozhnike N.N. Ge kak material dlya ego biografii* (Reminiscences about the Painter N.N. Ge as Material for His Biography) // *Artist*, No. 43, 1894, Book 11, p.133.

[3] *Besedy i vstrechi s N.N. Ge…* // Cit. *Collection,* Nikolai Ge, p. 362.

[4] This photo was taken by Ge's pupil L.M. Kovalsky in 1892; it is in I.I. Vydrin's archive in St Petersburg and was first published in the catalogue of Ge's anniversary exhibition in 2011 (p. 366).
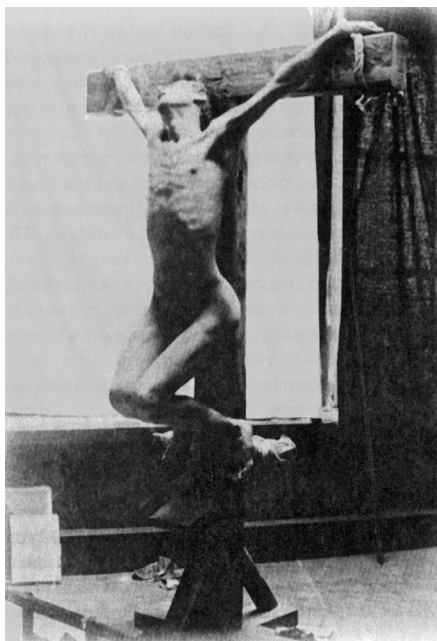
Stepan Yaremich
posing as the
crucified Jesus
in Ge's studio
on Ivanovsky farm.
1892
Private collection,
Saint Petersburg

the impression of the paintings waned. Apparently, those verbal comments were an essential part of the artist's concept. Not everything could be expressed in the picture, a semantic and emotional context was necessary, which was created by Ge's texts, talks and lectures. No wonder he dreamed of a printed edition of the *Passion Cycle* accompanied by his own texts.

Ge's moral maximalism and extremism delighted some people and frightened others. At the time when art began to get actively involved in the sphere of market relations, Ge took a stand of principle as a non-commercial artist and fierce critic of salon art[1]. He paid dearly for his love of freedom and the luxury of always being himself: poverty, lack of recognition, heavy censorship of his works, which were constantly expelled from exhibitions, and his solitary life on the farm. He could not inspire any of his contemporaries to follow his extremist path. Ge's moral extremism warded off Korovin: "Ge visited me, talked about love and other things … There is no self-interest in me. I'd really like to sing a song of poetry in paints, but I can't – I don't have the bare essentials. And if I try to be original, I won't go up the steps of recognition and will therefore have to go about hungry."[2]

In his article mentioned above Sergei Popov concluded: "… It is clear that it is not a matter of immediate plastic conclusions from Ge's art: these were rather few, and they did not determine the evolution of Russian art. What matters most is that his social stand has a lot in common with many important names and phenomena in 20th-century Russian art. These include frequent differences of opinion, conflicts with the authorities up to the very top (in Ge's case, the Tsar and Chief Procurator of the Synod), bans on the public display of his works, and the practice of apartment exhibitions and public lectures for the initiated audience. But the main thing was the search for truth by means of art, which involved more and more radical means. This makes Ge akin to the mainstream of Russian art, which from the late 1920s to the late 1980s actually turned out to be an alternative art opposing the official. Such a line of succession can be designated as "Ge's vector"[3].

Dmitry Sarabianov ends the chapter on Ge's work in the book *Russkaya zhivopis. Probuzhdeniye pamyati* (Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory) with Repin's words: "Yes, he is an extraordinary man, and his

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[1] Consistently rejecting an approach to art as a commodity, as a "wall decoration", Ge refused to use deep gilded frames that emphasised perspective. He preferred black flat wooden frames without any decorative elements.

[2] *Konstantin Korovin vspominayet* (Konstantin Korovin Recalls), Moscow, 1990, p. 85.

[3] S.V. Popov. Op. cit. // *Collection*, Nikolai Ge, pp. 265–6.

talent and soul are burning in him and throw their rays on others…"[1] The boundaries of this article make it possible to discuss only some aspects of the multi-faceted theme "Ge and the 20th century" – "Ge and His Followers", "Ge and Vrubel", "Ge and Expressionism", "Ge and Symbolism", "Ge and Alternative Art". The multitude of topics, similarities and parallels around Ge's name is striking in its richness and diversity and makes it possible not only to look at Ge's work from the 20th century, but also to find a new way of reading many pages in the history of Russian art of the past century.

[1] Dmitry Sarabianov. "Tvorchestvo N.N. Ge i razvitiye russkoi zhivopisi vtoroi poloviny XIX veka"
   (N.N. Ge's Work and the Development of Russian Painting in the Second Half of the 19th Century).
   Op. cit., p.185.

Vladimir Petrov

"Memory of Genre" and "Memory of the Heart" in Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's Works

The aim of this article is briefly to outline the problems and possibilities of studying the role of general cultural and personal memory and the characteristics of its operation in Petrov-Vodkin's works in the light of the history of the idyll and the idyllic in Europe and Russia. This master is obviously of special interest to analysing the aspects of the history of art reflected in the title of the present collection. It is not only a matter of Petrov-Vodkin being "a central figure at the crossroads of creative trends and a certain core of Russian culture of the first third of the 20th century" (3, 5). The specifics of his creative personality that combined the qualities of a painter, writer, philosopher, theoretician, naturalist and good judge of character reveals numerous aspects and levels full of "a dialogue with the past", with the artist himself thoughtfully reflecting on this "work of memory".

A product of its epoch from the formal stylistic point of view that combined the characteristics of realism, modernism (symbolism) and the avant-garde, his art "remembers", retains and naturally synthesises the features and images of the art of the past across an unprecedentedly wide range, referencing folklore and antiquity, Russian icons and the Italian Renaissance, Oriental culture and 19th- and early 20th-century masters of Russia and Europe. His references and "quotations" are not eclectic, but evidence an in-depth command of the original sources and the harmonious blending of their qualities into his integral system attuned to modernity and open to the future.

From the point of view of world outlook and, so to speak, cultural and psychological plane, this diversity was, of course, a manifestation of that "universal feeling" and heeding of the voices of the ages which Andrei Bely described as follows: "We are now, as it were, experiencing the whole of the past: ...They say that at the crucial moments of man's life the whole of it

flashes by before his heart's eye: now the entire life of mankind is flashing by before us... we are reliving all the centuries at a go"[1].

At the same time, intense diachronic links and manifestations of the "memory of the ages" were closely connected with Petrov-Vodkin's endless work of personal daily memory. With childhood memory always of paramount importance to man, few artists of that period related the imagery of their works (and spatial compositions) so frequently and graphically to their childhood memories, the "topoi" of their native parts and families as Petrov-Vodkin did (with the exception of perhaps only Chagall). Petrov-Vodkin's autobiographical books are unique in the pithiness of his thoughts on history and culture and the amount of mundane details. His ideas of the role of memory of the past, including that of classical art in 20th-century culture, are also found in many of his letters and articles (e.g., the 1937 article "We and Pushkin") and in his educational practice, "The Science of Seeing". His legacy also includes examples of "immaterial memory shown" in reality (see, for instance, the picture *After Battle*, 1923).

All these characteristics were analysed, in one way or another, or at least mentioned in the vast literature about Petrov-Vodkin. Nevertheless, its growing amount in the past few years seems somewhat to have blurred the focus of perception of the master's legacy. Written from different positions as far as world outlook and methodology are concerned, these studies, as a rule, prioritize those aspects of Petrov-Vodkin's legacy that are close to their authors (Petrov-Vodkin as a "cosmist", carrier of the Orthodox tradition or, on the contrary, a master with close ties to West European masters of the past and his contemporaries). At the same time the vibrant feeling of his integrity, the emotional, moral and poetic "core" of his quests and discoveries and his untiring referencing the past in the name of the future are often lost. One has the impression, to quote Petrov-Vodkin speaking about the crisis he experienced in Paris in 1907, that "Something valuable has been forgotten, something that has to be found or to recall what has been forgotten..." (2, 667). A study of Petrov-Vodkin in the light of the category of the idyll and the idyllic, perhaps, could help bring together and enliven the different aspects of Petrov-Vodkin's legacy and clarify the laws of its integrity and the specific operation of memory.

Of course, the way we see it (just as modern experts in literature do[2]), these categories are absolutely devoid of any shade of lightweight sentimental

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[1] Bely, A. "Emblematika smysla. Predposylki k teorii simvolizma" (Emblematics of Meaning. Approaches to the Theory of Symbolism) // Andrei Bely, *Simvolizm kak miroponimaniye* (Symbolism as World Outlook), Moscow: Respublika, 1994, p. 26. For a general review of this phenomenon see Lapshin I., *O vselenskom chuvstve* (On Universal Feeling), Saint Petersburg, 1911.

[2] For lack of opportunity to give a detailed bibliography on the relevant problem let me single out writings of M. Bakhtin and V. Tyupa, as well as collections of the past few years with numerous articles of modern scholars, including those dealing with the role and nature of idylls in works of 20th-century Russian artists (K. Somov, W. Kandinsky, A. Plastov, etc.): *Myth-Pastoral-Utopia*, Moscow, 1998; *Pastoral v sisteme kultury: metamorfozy zhanra v dialoge so vremenem*

**Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
Family Portrait**
(Self-Portrait
with Wife
and Daughter). 1933
Private collection,
Saint Petersburg

"sweetness" and are not associated with primarily one phase or form of the history of culture. Speaking of the idyll we mean the genre (type, meta-genre, modus artisticus) which diversely manifested itself in different kinds and styles of literature and art (frequently in combination with other genres) and expressed the people's ever-lasting need of benevolent, serene and "happy" union with one another and ever-generating nature, of attuning themselves to the rhythms of cyclic time and the sense of natural involvement in the "entire" cycle of life and the "music of spheres". The literature theoretician V. Khalizev writes that "we should speak not only about the idyll as a genre, but also about the idea of happy and natural existence underlying the idyll being common to the entire humanity and universal. ...The idyllic in literature is not only a comparatively narrow field of showing life as carefree, contemplative and happy, but also a boundlessly broad sphere of active, efficient and at times sacrificial aspirations of people to attain idyllic values, without which life inevitably slides towards chaos"[1].

The concepts of the "idyll" and "pastoral" (a sub-genre of the idyll) were also used occasionally in writings about Petrov-Vodkin and his milieu[2]. For instance, D. V. Sarabianov briefly yet substantively pointed to

(Pastoral in the System of Culture: Genre Metamorphosis in Dialogue with Time), Moscow, 1999; *Pastoral v teatre i teatralnost v pastorali* (Pastoral on Stage and Histrionics in Pastoral), Moscow, 2001; *Pastorali nad bezdnoi: Sbor* (Pastorals over the Abyss: Gathering), Moscow, 2004; *Pastoral kak tekst kultury: teoriya, topika, sintez iskusstv* (Pastoral as a Text of Culture: Theory, Topics and Synthesis of Arts), Moscow, 2005; *Sovremenny chelovek: dvizheniye k pastorali?* (Modern Man: Moving towards Pastoral?), Moscow, 2011; *XVIII vek: literatura v epokhu idillii i bur* (18th Century: Literature in the Epoch of Idylls and Storms), Moscow, 2012; Pastoral: metamorfoza ideala i realnosti (Pastoral: Metamorphosis of the Ideal and Reality), Moscow, 2014.

Let it be noted that, although the word "pastoral" figures in the titles of most of these collections, most of the authors justly consider the pastoral as a sub-genre of the idyll. For details of these methodological differences and extensive bibliography see the dissertation for a doctor's degree: Balashova, E. A. *Funktsionirovaniye russkoi stikhotvornoi idilliki v XX–XXI vv.: voprosy tipologii* (Functioning of the Russian Poetical Idyll in the 20th-21st Centuries: Problems of Typology), Kaluga, 2015.

[1] Khalizev, V. E. *Teoriya literatury* (Theory of Literature), Moscow, 1999, p. 72.

[2] We mean by Petrov-Vodkin's milieu above all the "World of Art" and the "Blue Rose" members. On the whole the idylls of that period and related elegies were not forgotten by art students: the notions of "pastoral", "paradise garden" and "The Garden of Eden" were often analysed in writings about Art Moderne that was brimming with nostalgic dreams and "heavenly visions". Of special interest are books and articles by O. S. Davydova, although her approach to this problem somewhat deprives art of a focus on real nature.

P. Kuznetsov's kinship with the traditions of the world idyll and also detected its features in the "Oriental" works of Petrov-Vodkin. In a recent monograph N. Adaskina states (unfortunately, without dwelling on this theme) that his artistic mentality is "archetypal" and "the family is always shown idyllically" in his pictures (3, 73). The Modern Explanatory Dictionary speaks of a "simple pastoral motif" transformed in *The Bathing of a Red Horse* into a "poetical allegory of the destiny of Russia"[1]. Even more frequent are descriptions of important features of Petrov-Vodkin's legacy essentially in line with the idyllic genre, but refraining from using this concept (see, for instance, *The History of Russian Art* by M. Allenov or G. Pospelov's writings about "the circle of life" in 19th-century Russian painting). But first, the importance of the idyllic element in **all** of Petrov-Vodkin's works (for all their multidimensionality) seems to be underestimated (just as in 20th-century domestic art as a whole[2]). Second, the specifics of Petrov-Vodkin's legacy presupposes a clearer understanding of the essence and history of the idylls in big time as we speak of the artist whose hallmark was his striving after self-identification vis-à-vis the entire history of art and in this respect his works form "parallels" with the diverse "layers" of history of this meta-genre, as it were, "recollecting" them and moving freely along the "generic tree" of the idyll.

The nature of problems of interest to us can be easily demonstrated taking Petrov-Vodkin's *Midday* (1917), one of the most representative pictures from the point of view of genre, style, imagery, meaning and philosophy, as an example. Painted during the revolutionary period and soon after the death of the artist's father, it was a tribute to his memory. Petrov-Vodkin depicted the expanses of his native Volga Region as if seen by a bird that has left its nest and the round golden fruit maturing on the apple-tree branches reaching out to the sun. He brought together episodes from the life of a peasant family from different times in the same space. There is the joy of love and motherhood, labour and leisure, home building and the inevitable turning to dust – the eternal round of human (folk) life on Earth.

The artist is not satisfied with painting a small corner of his native Khvalynsk environs: the point of view he chooses invites us to see and feel that it is a part of the huge world with one vista opening after another on the planet rotating in space round the sun.

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[1] See: http://enc-dic.com/modern/Petrov-vodkin-kuzma-sergeevich-24-oktjabrja-
5-nojabrja-1878–34469.html

[2] For instance, Pospelov, G. wrote in one of his recent articles about the specifics of painters such as A. Shevchenko, A. Deineka and P. Kuznetsov: "One of the crucial objectives of art studies is to qualify this trend as the new revival of the idyllic landscape and genre in Russian art" // Pospelov, G.G. *O kartinakh i risunkakh: Izbrannye statyi ob iskusstve XIX–XX vekov* (Of Pictures and Drawings: Selected Articles on Art of the 19th – 20th Centuries), Moscow, 2013, p. 370.

Art students have said many a right thing about the artist's love of his homeland expressed in the picture, its "spherical" perspective, his feeling of "involvement and interconnectedness in the harmonious whole of all phenomena and forms of nature, including man"[1], about the specifics of its perspective structure, the parallels between the picture composition and hagiographical icons and Petrov-Vodkin's heartfelt representation of the mundane in the people's daily life, their "works and days" (3, 90).

These "works and days", which indirectly reference the title of Hesiod's poem, a fundamental piece of the world idyll, and the many other characteristics of the picture all indicate kinship with precisely the idyllic. What is more, in a sense *The Midday* may serve as an ideal illustration of M. Bakhtin's characteristic of the "idyllic chronotope"[2]. It shows the characters (and the artist) as closely linked with their native land and nature, and the different types of the idyll (love, childhood, family, labour and pastoral), and the continuity of the generations as part of the eternal revival of nature, cycle and spheros[3] of life.

The very title of the picture (and the state of nature it conveys) is a typical idyll topic since ancient times. In the formal stylistic and semantic planes of the picture it is easy to detect not only "hagiographical", but also other prototypes of different periods and "layers" of the history of the idyll, such as folklore, antiquity (both in the motifs and in spatial composition akin to the perceptive perspective of idyllic scenes in Ancient Roman painting,)[4] sentimental romanticist and realistically mundane (remember the importance Russian idyllic culture of the 19th century attached to representations of peasant children and mothers, haymaking and harvesting).

At the same time Petrov-Vodkin's specific colour system intensifying the energy of "white light", the re-interpreted Cezannism of forms and globalism relay to us thoughts of precisely the 20th-century artist, a contemporary and compatriot of V. Vernadsky and A. Chizhevsky, A. Platonov and M. Prishvin, V. Khlebnikov and M. Heidegger, K. Malevich and M. Matiushin.

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[1] Adaskina, N.K. "Pedagogicheskaya Sistema K. S. Petrova-Vodkina" (Educational System of K. S. Petrov-Vodkin) // *Ocherki po russkomu i sovetskomu iskusstvu* (Essays on Russian and Soviet Art), Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1974, p. 283.

[2] "Formy vremeni i khronotopa v romane. Ocherki po istoricheskoi poetike" (Time and Chronotope Forms in the Novel. Essays on Poetics of History) // Bakhtin, M. M. *Voprosy literatury i estetiki. Issledovaniya raznykh let* (Problems of Literature and Aesthetics. Studies of Different Years), Moscow, 1975, pp. 373–84.

[3] For a concise and multidimensional account of antiquity sources and the history of ideas of "round" cosmos (spheros) in later periods see Shevchenko, V. *Proshchalnaya perspektiva* (Farewell Perspective), Moscow: Kanon+, 2013.

[4] See Gombrich, E. H. *The Story of Art*, Moscow, 1998, pp. 113–4 and *The Pastoral landscape*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1992.

Much of the above, of course, applies not only to the *Midday*, but the entire world of mature Petrov-Vodkin: this picture has motifs and solutions that can be found in many of his works – "genre scenes", landscapes and still lifes – "in closeup". We could see here the ploughing Mikula Selianinovich from the 1918 revolutionary panel or a young rider on a scarlet horse, a unit of soldiers going up a hill to die "for the sake of life on Earth" and the features of the Mother of God in the image of a seated peasant mother having a respite.

Just one work brings to mind thoughts about the specific memory of genre characteristic of Petrov-Vodkin's art and laws that impart the memory of the deeply rooted traditions of the idyll of different epochs and lands in its household and mundane, earthly and cosmic, concretely realistic and sacred dimensions to the imagery of this picture addressing contemporaries and open to the future. If we do not confine our review to his mature works but trace the whole of the road he travelled, we will see that his evolution, quests and experienced influences demonstrate the "memory" of Russian and European idylls unfolded in time from forms found in the immediately preceding paintings of the second half of the 19th century and up to their sources. I would like to try and briefly survey the specific "operation of memory" at different stages of his development and its coordination with the artist's personal experience and "memory of the heart".

Before that, however, as it is a matter of a broad spectrum of historical "layers" and types of idylls, it is necessary to offer a most general outline of our notions of their big-time evolution[1].

Deeply rooted in human mentality (they say that it shows manifestations of the memory of the "primordial wholeness", "the restoration of the ancient complex and continuous folklore time" (M. Bakhtin), the Jungian archetypes of the Mother and eternal going back to the sources, etc.) the idylls in the broadest sense of the word have always been of paramount importance to human life (as, incidentally, attested by the "profane" viewers' predilection for precisely idyllic images and preponderance of idylls in naïve art).

However, as a separate literary genre the idyll branched off and formed in late antiquity as "compensation" for man's growing alienation from nature in the conditions of urban civilisation growth, as a means of the emotional re-unification of people with nature and an expression of the need for harmony and life without social contradictions.

The name of the genre is associated with the collection of writings of the poet Theocritus of Alexandria (ca. 300 – ca. 260 BC): the Greek *eidyllion* is interpreted as a "little picture", a "little image". Focussing mostly on the simple way of life of shepherds amidst nature, those "little pictures", like *Eclogues* and *Georgics* of the Roman poet Virgil, became the most important and better-known specimens for the centuries-long traditions of this genre. But the real history of the idylls of antiquity, of course, had started earlier and goes back to primordial folklore, mysteries of the rebirth of nature, legends of the Golden Age and happy Arcadia, and the works of Hesiod and Homer[2].

The circle of the main characters of the literary idylls formed gradually in antiquity, both mythical (rural and forest gods, Daphnis, nymphs and household gods) and real – simple-hearted and good-natured shepherds, children and their caring mothers and primogenitors, lovers, farmers, fishermen, birders, etc. – all those who by their occupation and role in procreation were close to the beginnings of the eternal renovation of the life cycle

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[1] Of course, many important theoretical and historical aspects and phenomena are reduced here, because in this case it is important to give the most general outline of the problems. For details of the nature of the genre and its individual modifications in Russian painting of the second half of the 19th century see Petrov, V. *Vasily Perov. Tvorchesky put khudozhnika* (Vasily Perov. The Artist's Career), Moscow, 1997; introductory article to the catalogue of A. K. Savrasov's exhibition at the State Tretyakov Gallery (Moscow, 2005, reprinted 2011) and the article "Ivan Sokolov... stranny i slavny" (Ivan Sokolov... Strange and Glorious) // *Antikvarny mir*, Moscow, April 2008, p. 6–39.

[2] For instance, episodes connected with Odyssey's love of the home hearth, the image of Penelope and the description of the land of the Phaeacians in *Odyssey* served as models for many idyllicists of the later periods, and the same is true of a reflection of the antiquity ideas of "spherical" cosmos and the representation of scenes of peaceful life in the description of the shield of Achilles in the *Iliad*.

and retained the "simplicity", "naivety" and integrity of their characters and way of life "within" nature.

Although the notion of "the idyll" as a genre appeared in literature, as a meta-genre idylls had been present even earlier in plastic arts that originally inspired the poets of idylls: the first programmatic idyll of Theocritus already had an *ecphrasis* for a tuning-form – a description of a bowl with the representations of a fisherman, lovers and a little boy with grapes and foxes – and therefore tried to emulate classical Greek vase painting models (suffice it to recall *A Pelike with a Swallow*).

The main motifs, symbols and pervasive formal principles of the idylls also coalesced in antiquity. They were harmonious compositional and rhythmical linearly connected (most frequently three-part or two-part) structures that naturally connected the characters one with another and with the whole of the depicted space, circular and spherical constructs, parallels between human life and the changing seasons of the year, and the symbols of the sun, the evergreen tree of life, home (the hearth), water sources, animals and birds, flowers, fruit and so on.

With the advent of the Christian age the idylls, far from waning attained a new cosmic and spiritual transcendental dimension and proved paramount in shaping Christian symbols (shepherd, lamb, etc.) and the ideas of paradise (Garden of Eden, joys of paradise), finding expression in the representations of the gardens of love, books of hours, etc. in medieval art.

As an independent genre the idylls flourished again in the Renaissance period, merging the idyllic traditions of antiquity and the Middle Ages on the basis of humanistic thought and in new spatial coordinates and attributing an idyllic nature to many representations of saints (Franciscans especially idyllic), the Holy Family and above all Madonna and Child (idylls attained special heights in Venice in the works of G. Bellini and Giorgione[1]). After going through a crisis and being broadly cultivated in the period of mannerism and baroque, idylls survived for a while in strictly classicist and "gallant" antiquitising forms and started gradually to be brought up to date. As urban civilisation expanded and the bourgeois man increasingly distanced himself from nature, burgher idylls with socially concrete characters came into being alongside playful rococo pastorals and images expressing the sentimentalists' nostalgia for "the paradise lost", "the Age of Astraea" and "the natural man". Assertion of "familial" harmony and sanctity of "the private man's" hearth moved to the foreground in the sense of involvement in the cycle of life as was characteristic of Biedermeier and its subsequent modifications (including the Salon and international kitsch, both antiquitising the "historical" and "modern" household with its typically narrowing horizon, shallow and fake sentiments, and "sublimation of feelings to the counterfeit" (N. Dmitrieva). Nevertheless, in the 19th century, too, the high, "co-natural" idylls transformed and played

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[1] Yailenko, E. *Venetsianskaya antichnost* (Venetian Antiquity), Moscow, 2010.

an important role in the West European art of Corot, Millet, the artists
of the Jules Breton and Bastien-Lepage circle, E. Manet[1] and the Impres-
sionists (O. Renoir and B. Morisot), and then the symbolists (Böcklin, Puvis
de Chavannes), Postimpressionists (Gauguin, the Nabis) and artists of the
first third of the 20th century, including Matisse, the "neoclassicist" Picas-
so and others[2].

In pre-Petrine Rus (and in Russian folk culture up to the 20th centu-
ry) the idylls lived on in both archaic, syncretic folklore forms (primar-
ily in spring sun rituals and symbols) and icon painting as an important
aspect of the worship of the Mother of God, the Trinity cult and "Rus-
sian sanctity" with its "heartfelt warmth", "sympathy for every creature",
etc. It was not until the late 18th century that West European forms of the
idylls smoothly gained a foothold in Russia, growing in importance in the
time of N. Karamzin and A. Pushkin. In painting, this tradition manifested
itself in antiquitising "Italian" and "Russian" variants[3] and reached its peak
in the first half of the 19th century in the works of F. Tolstoy, A. Venetsian-
ov and his coterie, and in some works of A. Ivanov (*Apollo, Hyacinthus and
Cypress*, and studies with boys). As the "ideal" shifted to "real" dominant,
the life of idyllic traditions in Russian culture (as in the West) "bifurcat-
ed". In Salon and Academy painting idylls were in the nature of comfortable
pleasure, imitation and "perversion".

The best of the realists with their aspirations towards "daily unity with
the universe" (F. Dostoevsky) found the ground for idylls in the poetic as-
pects of peasant labour, rural estate (and to a lesser extent petty bour-
geois) family life and the Ukrainian idyll. The images of peasant children
were quite characteristic of this "layer" of idylls in literature and painting[4].
Although Russian realism of the 1860s and 1870s was dominated by the
drama meta-genre and the idylls, being in a passive state, were relegated
to the periphery and little attracted the positivistically-minded "Wander-
ers", thoughts about "the fate of the idyll" and idylls themselves in the pro-
saically controversial contemporary world remained an important feature

[1] See Chernysheva, M. *Manet*, Moscow, 2002.

[2] See: Philippe Boby de la Chapelle. *Paradis retrouves. Un itineraire artistique*. Paris, 2005; *Kingdom
of the Soul. Symbolist Art in Germany 1870–1920*. Edited by Ingrid Ehrhardt and Simon Reynolds.
Munich • London • New York, 2000.

[3] See Allenov, M. M. *Tema "zolotogo veka" u A. Ivanova* (The Theme of the "Golden Age" in A. Iva-
nov) // Vipper Research Conference, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, 1982; Alle-
nov, M. M. Obraz prostranstva v zhivopisi "a la Natura": K voprosu o prirode venetsianovskogo
zhanrizma (The Image of Space in a la Nature Painting: On the Nature of Venetsianov's Genre) //
Sovetskoye iskusstvoznaniye 83, Moscow, 1984; Yailenko, E., Mif Italii v russkom iskusstve pervoi
poloviny XIX veka (The Myth of Italy in Russian Art of the First Half of the 19th Century), Moscow,
2012, and others.

[4] F. Zelinsky, a leading expert on antiquity, opined in his article about Theocritus in the Brock-
haus-Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary that "in *Peasant Children* and related poems Nekrasov... came
closest to the Greek poet than any bucolic of the time of Catherine the Great").

of painting, especially that of Moscow (V. Perov, I. Pryanishnikov, A. Savrasov and others)[1].

By the end of the century, in the conditions of "twilight", the crisis of traditional ties and the accelerated onslaught of urbanist machine civilisation, idyllic impulses became especially relevant, now in the form of a languishing and comforting "mood" that took artists and their imagination to villages and small towns still imbued with poetic charm on the river banks and ever more frequently to old estates and parks feeding dreams of "all-encompassing unity", the wish to fill (and perhaps even vanquish and spiritualise) the cold and prosaic reality with images born of fantasy and loaded with "the music of an integral man" (M. Vrubel). The generation of Serov-Levitan-Korovin was more inclined towards the idyllic landscapes and genre scenes of the poetically realistic and impressionistic type (remember the special affection Serov and Nesterov had for *Rural Love* by Bastien-Lepage), meanwhile the idylls of the subsequent "formations", starting with the "retrospective dreams" of the "World of Art" artists, tended to "recall" the ever more distant and deep-lying "layers" of the history of culture and simultaneously turned "for support" to the latest scientific trends. Precisely Petrov-Vodkin became one of the most significant explorers and trailblazers in this direction. In his works frustration caused by the gap between the memory of "childhood paradise" and the thorny uncertainty of the huge changing world awakened and fused together the memory of many of the stages and types of world idyll history mentioned above, transforming it into belief in the forthcoming victory of "organic culture" on earth – the aim "perhaps unattainable, yet inevitable", to quote M. Prishvin.

Primary, "preverbal" childhood impressions of people, nature and family relations are always of paramount importance in the maturing of artists and their finding their "identity" and kindred traditions. They are especially important in works of men of genius of an idyllic bent, who convey ideas of "unabused", childishly pure and happy life in direct unity of man and nature. This is absolutely true of Petrov-Vodkin. Nature of rare "planetary" beauty in the environs of Khvalynsk, a loving mother, a "simple kind-hearted" family, early "intimacy with Earth" (as Petrov-Vodkin put it) and the

Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin Courtyard at Night. 1901 State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg

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[1] See the aforementioned book about Perov and articles about A. Savrasov and I. Sokolov. The customary ideas of the mundane genre of that period ignore very important distinctions between its idyllic, dramatic and naturalist (ethnographical) types. The tremendous importance of the idyllic dimension in the works of major Russian realist writers, above all Leo Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov, and its intensity even in public thought have been left out here. For instance, in *What Is to Be Done?* N. Chernyshevsky described the desired state of society as "an idyll for all and everybody".

people's life and work, and acquaintance with folklore and the art of icon painting were all described more than once in writings about Petrov-Vodkin and, more importantly, determined much in his works.

However, his "road to himself" was not easy. His impressions of social life in the province and in St Petersburg and studies at the F. Burov classes of painting and drawing in Samara (1893–5) and at the Stieglitz School (1895–7) were not conducive to the development, "self-evolution" of his talent. His memories of native Khvalynsk, the Volga, his cozy home, love of his mother who was his main correspondent and a "supreme being" of sorts, the sacred focus of his childhood memory[1], compensated for his dissatisfaction with the philistine environment and the forms of art promoted by his teachers in those years.

It was only in Moscow, in the School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1897–1905) that he found support to embark on a road to big art[2] and felt at home in the spiritually creative atmosphere formed way back by V. Perov, A. Savrasov and V. Polenov, the fact pointed out by Perov's disciples N. Kasatkin and K. Gorsky (the latter said that Petrov-Vodkin was endowed with a "sacred fire". 1, 44). Characteristically, M. Nesterov, who

**Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
Family at the Table**
(Shoemaker's Family).
1902
Research Museum
of the Russian
Academy of Arts,
Saint Petersburg

[1] "The image and soul" of Mother soared over all the "filth" of "fake hypocrites" around in the city, "the princes of this world" and "the stormy world of people" (1, 39–40).

[2] "Disappointed with the Stieglitz School… Don't see any charming beauty… I seem to hear the quiet splash of water of the mirror-like smooth surface of the Volga … I have no backbone. I am finally transferring into a new atmosphere (…) to Moscow … my school, Russian school is starting" (1, 322); "Moscow and its character is dearer to me" (1, 139).
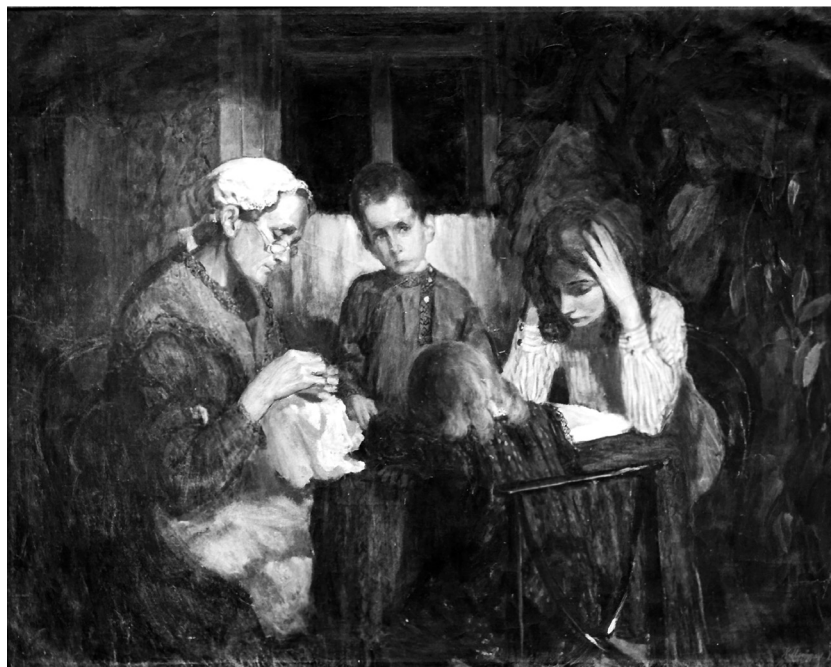
rejected the painterly system of mature Petrov-Vodkin, would later recognise "Aksakov-type" "incomparable simplicity, genuine tone", "warmth and artlessness" typical of the Moscow idyll in his books (1, 281).

Like his comrade and fellow-countryman P. Kuznetsov, Petrov-Vodkin turned out to be especially sensitive to the "pleasing" imagery of Serov's painting (who became his chief teacher), Moscow idyllic landscape painting and "mood" elegy. His early works painted during his trips back home are in tune with Levitan and have Chekhovian traits (*Two in a Boat*, *Courtyard* (1897), *By the Estate* (1899) and especially *Courtyard at Night* (1901), most likely showing the artist's mother with geese).

His multifarious creative interests during those years bespeak his gravitation towards other types of the idyll: alongside dramatically idyllic themes of the Perov type, he tried his hand at Salon and Academy idylls in the spirit of Siemiradzki and Bakalowicz[1] as well as Böcklin. He recalled

Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
The Artist's Family.
1903
Art Museum
of K.S. Petrov-Vodkin,
Khvalynsk

[1] This range of interests is also evident from his earlier works and from his letter to Mother dated 1900, in which he describes his sketches: "A small peasant hut, an old father, his son with his wife have just supped, the hut is semi-dark and sad... they have sunk into reverie to the tunes of foul weather, every one of them frozen in one's own posture... now I'm drawing the opposite – the bright sun, a boat has come up to a marble stairway and two women are getting out of it – this one is from Egyptian life" (1, 51). Petrov-Vodkin is known to have gone through a brief period of infatuation with Siemiradzki in his youth, but soon came to the conclusion that it was "empty decorative treacle". That the young Petrov-Vodkin caught Perov's inpulses of the Moscow school is borne out by the fact that in 1900 he worked on a sketch of *The Drowned Woman* that has not survived (1, 55).

his early infatuation with Böcklin's "satyrs and naiads" in connection with his 1900 trip to Germany, where he was disappointed to see Böcklin's "sloppy" paintings in the original, the artist he until then had found close in his "humanness" (1, 311).

A bicycle journey to Germany across Belorussia and Poland, studies at the Azbe school and impressions of German museums and exhibitions and the Germans' way of life and culture marked a highly important stage in expanding his "memory storeroom". He later recalled his musings before canvases of Stuck and Lenbach, at an exhibition of French art in Munich, etc., apparently naming far from everything that became engraved in his memory and later showed in his works. Munich and Berlin exhibitions of the early 1900s "brimmed" with works of symbolist artists weaned on the ideas of Nietzsche and the antiquitising "paradise idyll" of poet Stefan George's circle, which would be echoed (for instance, pictures by L. von Hofmann and A. Volkmann) in some of his later works.

But in the very beginning of the 20th century Petrov-Vodkin felt greater kinship with a peculiar combination of the mundane idyll in the Biedermeier traditions and sacred evangelism in the spirit of F. von Uhde, one of the leaders of the Munich Secession, whose *Christ of the Poor* visited poor people in modern surroundings and blessed the life of honest toilers.

The influence of von Uhde's religious painting is seen already in the description of paintings that Petrov-Vodkin together with his friends did in 1902 in the Saratov Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God and that were destroyed at the request of the clergy for "modernising" religious painting". To some extent it may have determined the solution of the two versions of the painting *Family*: *Family at the Table* (*Shoemaker's Family*, 1902, Research Museum of the Russian Academy of Arts) and *The Artist's Family* (1903, Petrov-Vodkin Picture Gallery of Khvalynsk). They clearly outline the spiritual situation with which the artist started his career: the idyllic domestic scene also conveys the feeling of the sacred family circle and the memory of the vast and mysterious world in which the children are to live and work. With the images of the mother and the boy, his alter ego, Petrov-Vodkin obviously alludes to the representation of Madonna and Child (in the version *Family at the Table – The Holy Family*)[1]. In the same year of 1903 the sacred dimension of the image of motherhood was introduced in pure form in the *Mother of God and Child* majolica on the façade of the church of the Vreden Orthopaedic Institute in St Petersburg. (Moscow painting had already known a similar combination

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[1] His letters to Mother also evidence his desire "to emulate Jesus Christ" that was typical of Petrov-Vodkin at that time and of his feeling his special mission: "I am proud that you have passed the noble behest to me, too, since childhood… This is what Jesus Christ, who has given all his aspirations and his life for others, is all about… and now somewhere in silence a great man is working to bring clarity and peace to earth, there should be one thing – faith in that man will after all come to this, and the Kingdom of God, the kingdom of great truth will come to earth". GRM. F. 105. Ed. khr. 1. L. 31–32.

by Perov[1].) Such representation of the sacred plane through the mundane was even more characteristic of symbolist literature, in which simple family scenes were frequently perceived as a window onto the world of "supreme beings" (see, for instance D. Merezhkovsky's poem *The Family Idyll*).

The Mother of God and Child executed in the pronouncedly Modern style was a manifestation of the symbolist "clearing away the obstacles for time and space", which is felt in his *Self-Portrait* of 1903 and his literary writings of that period – the plays *The Sacrificial* and *The Ringing Island* marked by the influence of F. Nietzsche, H. Ibsen, G. Hauptmann and V. Soloviev. During that time Petrov-Vodkin lived through a sort of Treplev period (remember Chekhov's character of *Seagull* with his "world soul") of passionate experience of new, cosmic parameters of spiritual self-identification. The subjects and style of his 1904 studies (*Prometheus*, *Demon*, *Fantasy* and *Hermit*) bespeak his intense thoughts about the existing energies of being and culture, the earthly and the celestial, "the beastly" and the "angelic", and the "glowing" (fiery) constituent of man and his works. In painting, this found expression in the specific Vrubelian tenor of some of his works, in general cultural and philosophical planes in his esoteric interests and Goetheanism. Ever since the time of K. Rabus[2] Moscow artists had worshipped Goethe, first as a poet, naturalist and theorist of colour. For Petrov-Vodkin he was primarily the author of the 1st and 2nd parts of *Faustus* who looked into the praphenomena and created symbols of cosmic essences. Petrov-Vodkin recalled how, together with his architect friend – "a peasant son still full of landscape insight" – read Goethe in 1904, "bathing in cosmic romantics... Microcosms and macrocosms... brought life into motion... Ages of earthly deposits, shifts and catastrophes rose before us, rhythmicised by the genius of the artist. Periods of world events became stamped out in front of us. Rows of atmospheres coiled around the earth, receding into the depth of other systems and nebulas" (2, 506).

Goethe, beyond doubt, largely influenced Petrov-Vodkin's desire to embody the cosmic essence of harmony and beauty, "ideal consonance and

Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
Orpheus. 1904
Private collection

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[1] I mean here the matching pictures *Sleeping Children* and *The Mother of God in the Everyday Sea. An Artist's Dream*, which Perov painted in 1868.

[2] See the introductory article to the A. Savrasov exhibition catalogue for K. Rabus teaching the theory of colour "according to Goethe" and Levitan (who also studied works of the German poet philosopher) formulating his ideal of a landscape painter by quoting Baratynsky's *To Goethe's Death*: "He lived the life of nature". Vrubel, too, was passionately enthusiastic about Goethe and delighted with the epic poem *Hermann and Dorothea* and the novel *Elective Affinities*.
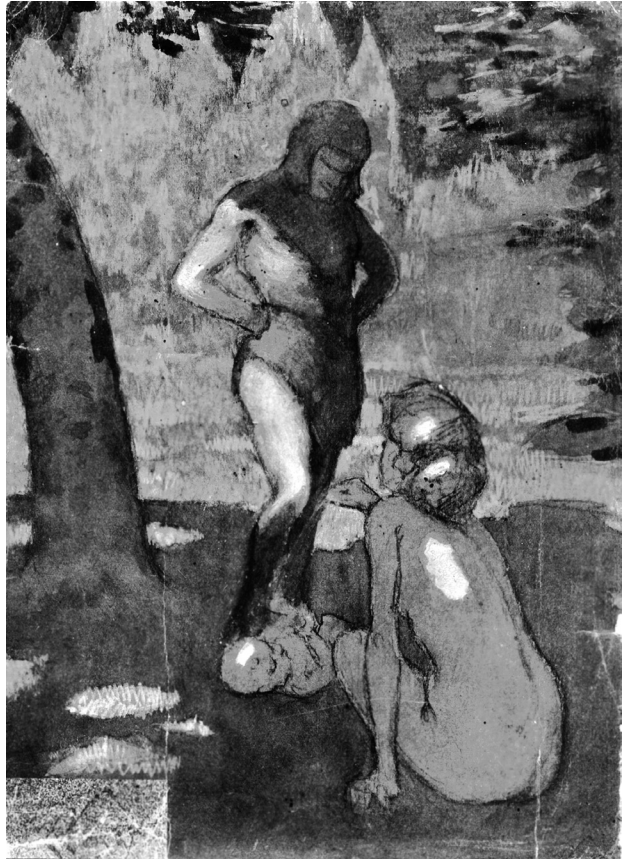
Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
Adam and Eve. 1904
Private collection

chords" and "the music of the spheres". During his "Vrubelian" phase, this found expression in the picture *Orpheus* (1904). At about the same time Petrov-Vodkin might have conceived *Chaos* (1906), in which an infant of the harmony of reason and orderly universe is being born out of "blind nothing": the head of the embryo surrounded by snakes of chaos is a sphere as a symbol of consummate cosmos.

The brief period of dramatic Vrubelism soon gave way to (or merged with) the idyllic dominant of works, which evidence influence of Borisov-Musatov[1] (*Blooming Garden*, *In the Garden*, *Adam and Eve*, all 1904). However, Petrov-Vodkin found works of his older colleague "incomplete": "they lacked …a probe into the symbol of things" (2, 513). Now if there was more of the poetically illuminated "mood" in Musatov's watercolour *Daphnis and Chloe* (after the ancient idyll), Petrov-Vodkin's sketch for *Adam and Eve* obviously marked his probing deep into reflections on the praphenomenon

[1] Petrov-Vodkin himself recollected the influence produced on him by Borisov-Musatov's works and family life, the coziness of his household where "flower garlands… the wife and the sister as if descended from his canvases were a link between his household and his pictures. …soft femininity felt in everything…" (2, 513).

of humaneness as the sinless state of people befitting God's wonderful creation. This reaching out to the fundamentals and different historical forms and ways of correlating man with the harmony of cosmos became the main vector of Petrov-Vodkin's quests in the second half of the 1900s and the maturing of his "poetic philosophy of colours" (1, 77). From the formal point of view, the artist obviously shifted to neoclassicist (antiquitising) symbolism.

His trip to Italy in 1905–6 was obviously prompted by his desire to go "to the heart of the matter" in the history of art. Even his itinerary is proof of his "bold" aspirations: Istanbul (Byzantine and Islamic art), Athens (Ancient Greece), Italy (Eternal Rome, Venice, Florence, Naples, Pompeii, etc.)[1]. He did not work much with his brush and primarily focussed on studying nature and artworks, consciously amassing his **memory stocks**, "a huge groundwork now already for his own experiences in Paris" (1, 79), attaching paramount importance to the "planetary" aspect of the history of pictorial art as a succession of different forms of "**merging with nature through painting**" (1, 318).

It has been pointed out more than once that it is impossible to understand Petrov-Vodkin's subsequent works without his Italian impressions.

Kuzma **Petrov-Vodkin Goatherd.** 1932 Headpiece to the chapter "Living Nature" of his story Euclid's Space State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg

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[1] During that trip Petrov-Vodkin was still under Goethe's tremendous influence as is attested by his itinerary and the "geopolitical" drive (like Goethe, Petrov-Vodkin went up to the neck of Vesuvius) and by a fascinating piece of drama, *A Tale of Life*, written by him in Italy in late 1905 in imitation of *Faustus*. Curiously, Petrov-Vodkin planned (but failed) to visit Sicily, where Theocritus had been born and "where… nightingales are and where there is always eternal spring" (1, 83).

However, they usually speak of the influence of masters of the Italian Renaissance. Yet, even more important is the fact that the artistic cosmos of antiquity and the cultural prototypes of Ancient Greek art were, according to him, unsurpassed in perfection, "the immediacy of creativity" (1, 73), "measure of tact" (hereinafter for antiquity see chapters 16–17 of *Prostranstvo Evklida* (Euclid's Space)) and the revelation of the beauty of the human body "apparatus"; for Petrov-Vodkin they became the benchmark and measure of understanding the history of art. In future, the artist felt Hellenistic culture ("Greek energy") "clear, sunny and nakedly simple for all and everybody" as "our common homeland". He also associated the highest accomplishments of early Russian art with the "inherited Hellenistic world outlook", which "will bypass the dry canons to transform into Rublev and Dionysius of our Renaissance". It is characteristic that among the few drawings for the "Italian" part of his book the artist included a pastoral picture of an ancient goatherd, obviously referencing the associative row headed by Hesiod, formerly goatherd and peasant and the author of *Works and Days*, on the pages where he correlated antique beauty that he thought most genuine and modernity.

Of course, Petrov-Vodkin also pondered on the essence of antiquity giving way to "the new sky" and "new culture out of the other world" "with talismans of fishes, the cross and the lamb". Yet, in his reasoning on the Hagia Sophia dome and Byzantine mosaics, "the two voices of Graeco-Roman culture and Christianity" in "Eternal Rome" and the favourite masters of the Renaissance there lives memory of the fact that the artists of antiquity discovered "all the sources of expression... the laws of constructing and unfolding forms which the masters of the Renaissance operated with" and that the best masters of the Renaissance, according to Petrov-Vodkin,

Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin
Elegy. 1906
Whereabouts
unknown
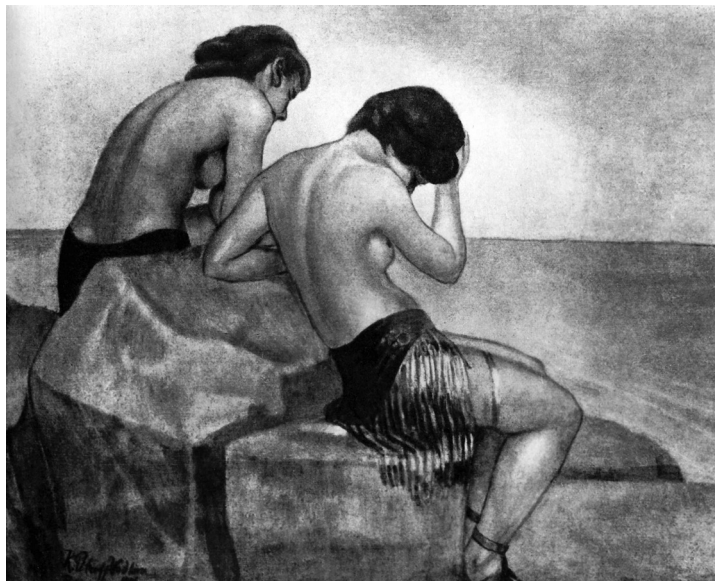
knew how to combine "the Greek measure of tact" and "the medieval focus on the thing". He found masters dealing in the idyll especially close to him: the memory of Fra Angelico and Raphael, Giorgione and G. Bellini (whose Madonna from the Brera gallery he regarded as short of the "most intimate" piece of world painting) lived in his works and texts to his last days. And among the images of his infinitely appreciated Leonardo da Vinci he preferred the most idyllic *Virgin and Child with Saint Anne* that he saw already in the Louvres. In the subsequent development of European art Petrov-Vodkin saw signs of increasing "rift between man and planetary life", the overcoming of which became one of the main goals of his own quests.

Formal studies and impact of European art (first and foremost that of Puvis de Chavannes and Les Nabis) seen from the point of view of stylistic characteristics are usually brought to the fore from among Petrov-Vodkin's works of the first Paris period (1906–7). This attraction had, of course, far deeper-going reasons matching the artist's desire to comprehend impressions accumulated in Italy and to translate into life his thoughts about the essence of art, the relationship of original classical sources and the unity of the microcosm of an artwork with the harmony of macrocosm that he was seeking. Puvis de Chavannes, an avowed idyllicist and singer of antiquity, just as the "poet of spring" Maurice Denis who was close to Maeterlinck, a favourite of Petrov-Vodkin's at that time, attracted him not only by the outer but also by the inner form of their art and the ways of realising the "dream of the Golden Age" and attaining the feeling of "celestial bliss" and the state "of heaven and earth united in harmony"[1]. At the same time he obviously tried to avoid the immaterial "otherworldliness " ("the beautiful nudity", as he would put it later on) of their works and, inspired by the plasticity of antique art, to arrive at the unity of spirituality and symbolic meaning and to convey the main laws of the "rising up" and interaction of bodies in world space, in "round" living cosmos. His quest is discernible in studies from nature (with their living memory of antique statues seen in Italy, in *Seated Hermes* in particular) and especially in works of 1906, such as *Elegy* (has not survived) and *At the Fountain* (State Tretyakov Gallery), in which by all appearances Petrov-Vodkin sought to understand and embody the invariant foundations of different genres in pure form[2].

By portraying in his *Elegy* melancholy women on the seashore, he tried to express, alongside full volume and bodily concreteness, the poignant feeling, inseparable from this genre, of how small and transient humans are in the face of the ocean of space and time. Even though (as distinct from the expressive study referencing antique prototypes and partially Böcklin) this picture "smacks of the studio", it formulates some

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[1] Petrov-Vodkin, K. S. Zvenyashchii ostrov (The Ringing Island) // RGALI. F. 2010. Op. 1. Ed. khr. 118. L. 7.

[2] Petrov-Vodkin continued thinking about the specifics of genres and their impact on the author himself and the viewers; see, for instance, his works of 1908 *Theatre. Drama* and *Theatre. Farce*.

**Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
At the Fountain.**
Study. 1906
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

Flora (Spring).
1st century B.C.
Fragment of fresco
from Castellammare
di Stabia
National
Archaeological
Museum, Naples

important general principles and "brings together outward attributes of Petrov-Vodkin's future pictures"[1]. The unfinished work *At the Fountain* in all likelihood meant to convey the fundamentals of the idyll as an epitome of the light feeling of people being party to the eternal source of life and the cycle of being. Anyhow, the picture is constructed of motifs and symbols associated with the idyll (circle, bowl, the reflection of the sky in water, maidens dancing with "their arms gracefully entwined in a round" (Homer's description of the shield of Achilles) and contains a direct reference that imparts the antique "measure of tact" to the image: one of the maidens is a "double" of Flora, one of the most poetical images of antique paintings from the Museum of Naples. A text from the artist's notebook of that period corresponds to these works: "Poetry is the rhythm of world movement. Joy – happiness in peace – in friendship with world laws (love) (idyll – *VP*) ... melancholy – awareness of being subordinate to irreversible will *... (essence of elegism – VP)* (1, 292).

For all their "theoretical" interest these works are in the nature of a laboratory study devoid of vibrant energy, which gives an insight into the growing pains experienced by the artist in Paris in 1907, when he felt that "something valuable had been forgotten, it was necessary to find or recall the forgotten" and "to shake off the superfluous that has accumulated in this city of immense rumble and folly" (1, 93).

A trip to Africa (April – June 1907) helped overcome the crisis. Many cultural figures inside and outside Russia at that

[1] Sarabianov, D. V. *Russkaya zhivopis kontsa 1900-kh – nachala 1910-kh godov. Ocherki* (Russian Paintings of the Late 1900s – Early 1910s. Essays), Moscow, 1971, p. 36.
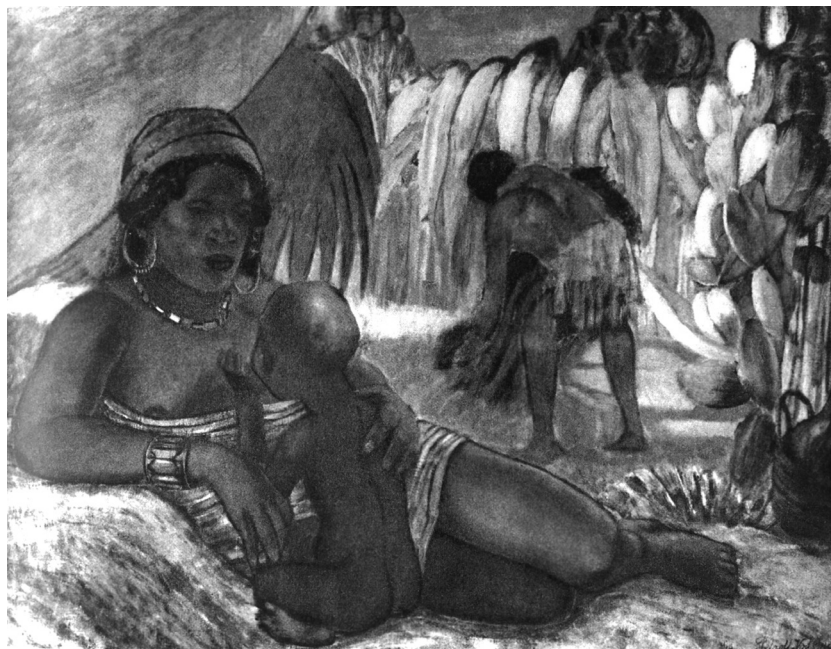
time felt the need to give an energy boost to the sense of life and its foundations through contact with primordial nature and the way of life and beliefs of "primitive" peoples. It was especially natural of Petrov-Vodkin with his genetic "kinship with Earth" and thoughts of the fundamentals of human existence.

Works and letters of that period show that he found in Africa support for his "search of heaven" and resound with the joy of finding the sought impressions and experiences (he felt he was "in real paradise": "it is some fairytale, any minute now Adam and Eve would leap out from behind a palm-tree"[1] (1,103). He also confessed that those experiences were also the awakening memory of "childhood paradise": "I recognized myself again as I was in childhood... granted Mother's caresses" (2, 669).

In his African works, Petrov-Vodkin went back stylistically in a way: his pictures of the desert at night evince memory of Levitan's meditative merger with twilight space and there are elements of the "mundane" idyll in his scenes from the life of the aborigines (*The Kiss* and *Negress*). As distinct

Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin
A Nomad Family (African Family).
1907
Chuvash State Art Museum, Cheboksary

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[1] From then on the word "paradise" often recurred in the artist's letters. "My paradise", he says about his favourite tropical garden in Biskra. "Our love will be our leisure and will give us heaven on earth", he writes to his wife (1, 105–6). Cf. "In the village outside Paris there is downright paradise: blossom, greenery, nightingales trilling, but still, it is hard to find a spring or moonlit nights such as we have on the Volga" (1, 116); "In Urrugne there is a small paradise amidst roses, mountains and the sea" (1, 116), and so on. In the *Aoiya* story written for children (Saint Petersburg, 1914, started in the early 1910s) the character admiring the beauty of the mysterious island says: "how good ... the garden of paradise must have been like that..." (p. 48).
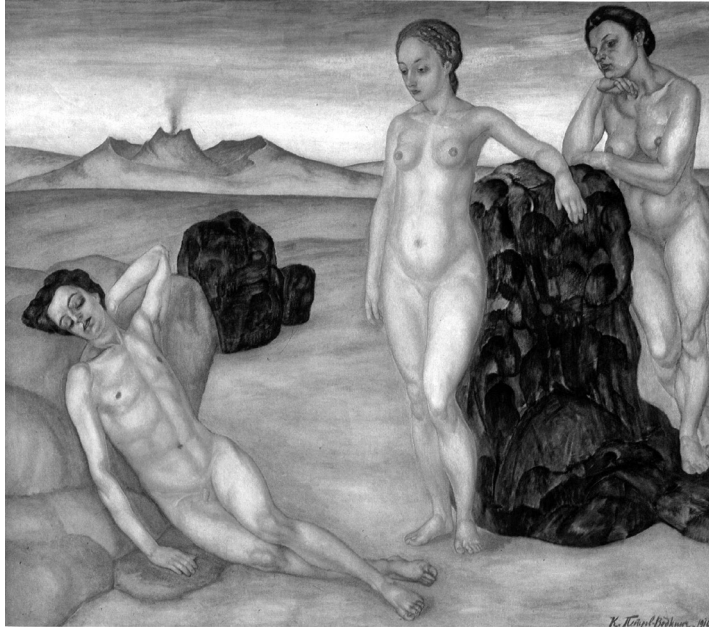
Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin The Dream. 1910 State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg

from Gauguin's idylls, Petrov-Vodkin focusses not on the "mysterious beliefs and the nirvana of life amidst the spirits of nature" of the aboriginal Garden of Eden, but on the manifestations of eternal and simple constituents of the life of the local tribes amidst nature, such as work, love, childbirth and raising of children, in which he saw a "common, ever-lasting and timeless substance independent of any variables and always alive"[1]. The main picture of the series – the idyll *A Nomad Family* (which the artist called *African Madonna*) – is a modified design of *The Family* of 1903–4 drawing, but based on impressions of antiques: the figure of the Mother looks sculpted and monumental in the spirit of ancient representations of reclining goddesses.

"The Recollection of the forgotten" in Africa boosted the artist's creative potential, cleansing and invigorating his sense of the universal kindred (family) sources of human history, including the history of antiquity: in his idyllic *Greek Panel* (1910) produced two years later he freely interpreted the motif known from ancient vase paintings in a lively lucid portrait of an antique family "trinity" and fitted into the Golden Age tradition of European art (bringing to mind above all Flaxman).

Other works of the late 1900s – early 1910s were likewise executed in idyllic and elegiac modes, starting from *The Shore* (1908), which had been conceived well before the African journey and which echoed both the antique prototypes and works of Puvis de Chavannes, in particular his *Jeunes filles au bord de la mer* (Young Girls by the Seaside, 1879) and *Pastoral Poetry* (1891).

[1] Sarabianov, D. V. Op. cit., p. 49.
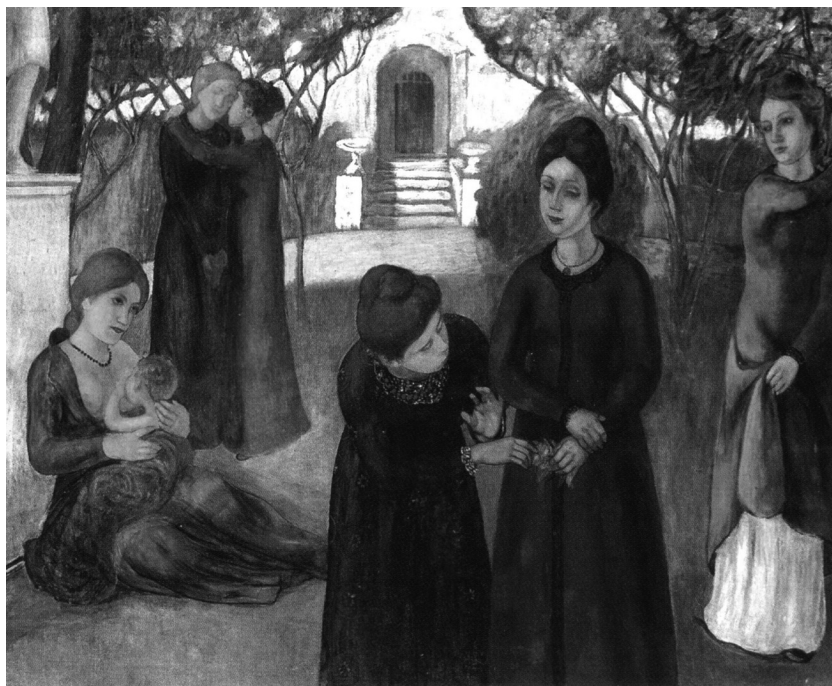
"Memories" of the world idyllic traditions also play an important role in *Dream* (1910), which Petrov-Vodkin painted after his return to Russia. He is known to have encoded it as a symbolical representation of "the human genius... poetic mind... whose awakening is guarded... by beauty and... monstrosity... that perpetually accompany creativity"[1]. The affinity of the structure of this picture with Raphael's idyllic *Vision of a Knight* was pointed out more than once. The row of parallels to the image of a "poetic mind" can be extended significantly with representations of sleeping characters by idyll painters of different ages, such as Giorgione, Correggio, Millet, our Venetsianov and the selfsame Puvis de Chavannes, who conveyed a similar collision of choice in *Le rêve* (The Dream, Musee d'Orsay) showing Fortune, Glory and Love coming to the sleeping poet in dream.

Petrov-Vodkin repeatedly painted the state of sleep (repose), a motif naturally associated with the idylls: sleeping peacefully ("the sleep of an infant"), man temporarily leaves the "autonomous regime" and with the rhythm of his breath and heartbeat merges with nature, "going back" to it. Other works, too, demonstrate the link with that tradition. For example, in one of his illustrations to *Aoiya* the picture of a sleeping girl nearly literally coincides with *The Sleeping Shepherd Boy* by the idyllic genre artist A. Lashin (1862, Penza Museum of Art), which in turn had classicist prototypes.

Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
Language of Colours.
1910
State Museum
of Arts of the Republic
of Kazakhstan,
Almaty

[1] Cit. Selizarova, E. N. *Proizvedeniya Petrova-Vodkina v Gosudarstvennom Russkom muzee* (Works
     of Petrov-Vodkin at the State Russian Museum), Moscow, 1966, p. 2.

The range of "memories" of the antique, Renaissance and Poussin idylls is also represented by *Witches* (1908, has not survived), *The Expulsion* (1911), *Bacchante* and *Youth* (both 1912). In his *Language of Colours* (1910) Petrov-Vodkin again echoes the idylls of Borisov-Musatov and Denis.

From the 1910s, his re-unification with Russian cosmopsychologos (G. Gachev) and Early Russian art traditions began to play an important part in his works. On the face of it the impulse came from Petrov-Vodkin's work in Ovruch, where he did frescoes *Abel's Offering* and *Cain Killing His Brother Abel* and a representation of a rainbow with the Eye of Omniscience on the dome above in St Basil's Golden-Domed Church. However, it was no chance commission and the clients' desire to have frescoes done "in 12th-century style" matched his aspirations; what was more, the artist himself chose the subjects and their solutions.

Bypassing the entire range and depth of the problems connected with Petrov-Vodkin's recourse to icon painting traditions, let me point out that this part of his works, too, was directly linked with his childhood memories: he said that while he worked on the frescoes, memories of the first impressions of Old Believers' icons[1] and his own childhood experiments in this field woke up graphically and vividly.

The theme of heaven (paradise garden), as we saw, persisted in his texts and works. Now he addressed the biblical story, which had for ages served as a basis for pondering on the destiny of man's "sinless" essence after he

Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin Boys (Boys at Play). 1911 State Russian Museum, Saint Petersburg

[1] Characteristically, he starts enumerating Novgorod school icons that he had remembered from childhood for their "colour glow" with the "idyllic" icon *In Thee Rejoiceth All Creation*, and he found Rublev and Dionysius "close and familiar already from childhood" (1, 130).
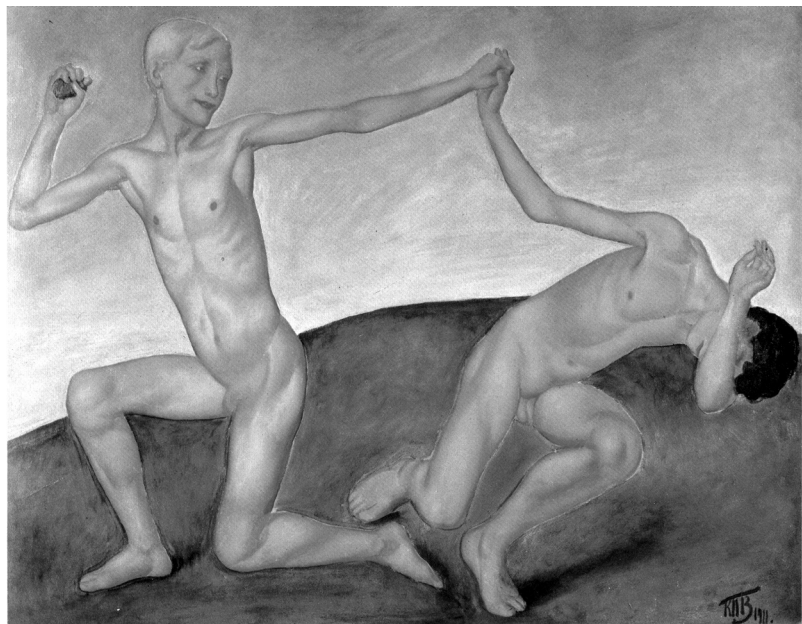
had embarked on the road of knowing good and evil. Now if the meek shepherd Abel repeatedly appeared in literature as a sort of ideal pastoral character (see, for example, *The Death of Abel* by the well-known 18th-century idyll painter and poet S. Gessner), the image of Cain more than once served for other latter-day authors as a prototype of people endowed with "pride" and "a doubting spirit".

Obviously, it was precisely this dialectic coexistence in human history of people "naively" loyal to the supreme heavenly light and endowed with "features of divine wisdom granted by God to pure and simple souls"[1] and of the willful ones endowed with a gift of creativity but falling away from God ("proud dissention from heaven") that Petrov-Vodkin was concerned about in this story. Such interpretation also clarifies the artist's statement that he dedicated his *Boys at Play* (of the same year 1910 and obviously linked with the subject and solution of the Ovruch frescoes) to the memory of Serov and Vrubel (with whom, especially with Vrubel, he indeed had a friendship-animosity relationship).

This dialectical aspect in no way contradicts the nature of the picture as a sort of cosmic idyll of childhood (space is given here as planetary "ground") in line with representations of angels playing in Heaven (the *Dance* panel of Matisse, its closest parallel, is likewise a version of the fragment of the "paradise" picture, Le *Bonheur de Vivre* (Joy of Life, 1905–6, Barnes Foundation, USA) by the French master inspired by Greek vase painting) and "mundane" idyllic pictures of playing children in genre painting (see, for example, V. Perov's *Children at the Skating Rink*). According to V. Kostin, the idea of doing this picture occurred to Petrov-Vodkin when he watched children playing on the beach. There is no doubt that, working on it, Petrov-Vodkin also recalled "studies with boys" by his favourite A. Ivanov.

Thus, 1910 saw the principles of art of mature Petrov-Vodkin crystallise distinctly, combining "the native and the universal", mundane idylls frequently connected with personal childhood and family experiences and "planetary" symbolist solutions with harmoniously welded layers (iconographical, spatial, light/colour and melody) storing the memory of artistic revelations of antiquity and the Renaissance, folk art, the experience of realistic painting and "sunny mysticism" (E. Trubetskoi) of early Russian icons, images of the Theotokos, frescoes of Dionysius and, of course, Andrei Rublev's *Trinity*.

Scholars have more than once written about the influence of spherical space, inner music and the images of Rublev's icon on the mature works of Petrov-Vodkin and the manifestation of that influence both in his direct address to that subject and in many of his pictures, from *The Bathing*

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[1] See Poiret, Pierre. *Prosveshchennyi pastukh, ili dukhovnyi razgovor odnogo blagochestivogo svyashchennika s pastukhom, v kotorom otkryvayutsya divnyie tainy bozhestvennoi i tainstvennoi premudrosti, yavlyayemoi ot Boga chistym i prostym dusham* (Enlightened shepherd, or spiritual talk of a devout priest with a shepherd that reveals wondrous mysteries of divine and mysterious wisdom granted by God to pure and simple souls), Russian translation, Saint Petersburg, 1806.

of a Red Horse (1912) to *After the Battle*. This link is especially visible in some preparatory works, a sketch for the painting *Young Girls on the Volga* in particular. It in no way contradicts the thesis of the idyllic dominant in Petrov-Vodkin's works and prompts an even deeper probe into the nature of this meta-genre. After all, from a certain point of view it was Rublev's *Trinity* that in the history of world art produced perhaps the most consummate image of the benevolent feeling of all-encompassing world unity that one way or another forms the essence of idyllic aspirations[1] (even in "profane", narrow and modified versions). The compositional, semantic and musical fundamentals and principles of trinitarity in a circle[2] conveyed by Rublev in his work of genius can be observed in a multitude of idyllic artworks, from Hellenistic vase painting to works by Millet and the neoclassicist Picasso.

   In Russia, for all the twists and turns of its cultural development, this tradition, the same as specific experience and interpretation of light as divine energy that creates the world and is one and only in its physical, spiritual, emotional and ethical incarnations[3], was of special significance as the basis for the enforcement of "pan-humanity" and "daily unity with the universe" (Dostoevsky) that was characteristic of figures of secular Russian culture. It was only natural that scholars (M. Alpatov, D. Sarabianov, M. Allenov and others) more than once stated that major Russian painters associated with the idyllic tradition, such as V. Borovikovsky, A. Venetsianov, A. Ivanov, A. Savrasov and I. Levitan, had things traced back to Rublev in their works, and that this, of course, also applied to 20th-century artists, including Petrov-Vodkin, P. Kuznetsov and other masters gifted with "monumental lyricism" (V. Favorsky), who consciously referenced Rublev's prototype.

   Petrov-Vodkin was just as sensitive to the traditions of Russian painting of the Theotokos icons, above all of the Eleousa type, which apparently best expressed the idea of sacredness of "motherhood in general" (as he put it). At the same time his works somehow "remembered" not only the ancient "Motherhood of Earth"[4], early Russian icons of the Theotokos and frescoes of Dionysius, but also, on the one hand, the images of the great Italian idyll painters – Fra Angelico, Giorgione and "the most hearty Bellini" – and, on the other, 19th-century Russian idylls, not only those of Venetsianov and his school, but also of masters of Russian "ideal realism" whose works

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[1] In the Bible the Trinity comes to the pious Abraham and Sarah, in whom scholars see a parallel with Philemon and Baucis, the textbook characters of the bucolic tradition.

[2] For writings about the Trinity and trinitary structures in everyday life, knowledge and history of culture that are especially informative for our subject (including illustrations) see Borzova, E.P., *Triadologiya*, Saint Petersburg, 2013.

[3] Dmitry Sarabianov repeatedly wrote about that, in particular, in his book *Russkaya zhivopis. Probuzhdeniye pamyati* (Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory), Moscow, 1998, and in the article "Ogon i svet u Surikova" (Fire and Light in Surikov) // *Iskusstvoznaniye* 2/98, Moscow, 1998.

[4] In *Aoiya* Earth is repeatedly described as "the great mother of all things living".

focussed on the idyllic element, albeit buried deep in prosaic reality. In this sense, even though the "passive" paintings of the "Wanderers" were alien to Petrov-Vodkin, his works linked him to them through inner social ethics and poetical imagery as strongly as any other master of his generation. This refers to the similar "manifestation" of "Madonna" features and "hallowed humaneness" in ordinary women and children with the help of tacit quotations from classical painting and iconography (see my book about Perov) and the thrust of the "softener of evil hearts" (does Perov's *Troika* not have the same meaning?) and to the specific depiction of idyllic scenes from peasant life (for all their different colour scheme, some of Petrov-Vodkin's works literally "echo" Perov's sketches).

The solution of the pastoral motif of *The Bathing of a Red Horse* "remembers" the solar ridges of the housetops of people "living by the sun" (from S. Yesenin's *Kliuchi Marii* (Maria's Keys)), riders on the Parthenon frieze and the host of heaven from icons, V. Serov's luciferous *Bathing of a Horse* and the joy of merging with nature which Petrov-Vodkin experienced on the Volga shores in his youth and which 19th-century idylls wonderfully expressed, in particular Turgenev's *Bezhin lug* (Bezhin Meadow) and V. Makovsky's genre scenes showing peasant children and their favourite pastime, grazing horses at night[1]. Precisely this merger of the real mundane (idyllic) and sacred "layers" coordinated by the existing state of society and culture makes a picture express hope for one's awakening and acting in the stormy modernity of the "light essence" of being which the artist asserts, "dreaming about the purification of mankind and passionately cherishing the idea of its regeneration… through the restoration of primordial human qualities"[2].

An understanding of the high idyllic nature of the emotional charge, visual thinking and "memory stock" of Petrov-Vodkin's art helps understand the link between his works and the quests and discoveries made by avant-garde masters with whom he had much in common. His letters of the late 1890s – early 1900s show that, like the future "leftists", he thought intensely about the consequences of the spread of machines, electricity, the discovery of radioactivity, "disappearance of matter" and so on. Goetheanism nourished the artist's interest in the cosmic nature of earthly form, the laws of gravitation, the essence of entropy and the laws of the perception

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[1] Curiously, Ivan Bunin, too, cited similar moments of his childhood as the happiest in his life. For the idyllic feelings in the course of work on the *Bathing of a Red Horse* see the artist's letter from Grekov's estate, where he worked on the picture in the summer of 1912: "We have landed, I could say, in paradise – it's so good here! The river, forest and good people… I love to go boating… amidst the trees, amidst water lilies – such rest and the quiet of solitude. …I like very much the way this family treats peasants and mutual love and in general the moving and hearty simplicity of life,– …The garden is well-kept because watering is excellent… a flower garden …It's paradise – water and forest and the steppe with kurgans … there are many lakes wonderfully deep … there is plenty of fish …painting a picture" (…) (1, …).

[2] Sarabianov, D. V. Op. cit., p. 36.

of space and time. Early on, he pondered on the importance of Cezanne's painting and the energy-related essence of colour and had first-hand knowledge of early Futurist ideas even before Marinetti "invented" the term. Small wonder that in the late 1900s he found nothing new in his talks with N. Kulbin, who played an important part in popularising scientific discoveries among artists, asserting the energy paradigm in art and understanding the abstract origin of art as part of the cosmic process, in which the same laws of radiant power structuring operate at all levels "from the kingdom of minerals and plants to planetary motion and manifestations of human spirit".

As mentioned above, already in his Paris works Petrov-Vodkin sought to overcome the "wonderful nudity" and immateriality of symbolism by expressing the feeling of the universal foundations of the formation of bodies in world space. His works and texts (at times closely echoing Malevich's theories) also contain thoughts of "weightlessness", the overcoming of terrestrial attraction as a sign of the forthcoming epoch: in many still lifes he produced a complicated effect of signs of recognisable "Euclidean space" combining with curvilinear structures and of the coordination of shapes with one another and with space, which results in the feeling of objects soaring in cosmos.

The avant-gardists carried away by new universal feelings succumbed to the temptation of "breaking up the universe" and the euphoria of venturing into the infinity of cosmos and "Victory over the Sun", all perceived as a particular case of the manifestation of universal "energy action". In Petrov-Vodkin similar sentiments were balanced out with an acute feeling of the cycle (spheros) of life, poetical disposition and specific life and spiritual experience that intensified his feeling of the "solar essence" of terrestrial phenomena, including man and his creativity. Let us say that Malevich tended to reduce humanness and art to the burning-hot operation of the "skull" and the "organisation of elements" beyond terrestrial attraction (in fact, outside the solar-terrestrial relations), which led to the rejection of the "laws laid down by Adam and Eve" and of "Apollo". Petrov-Vodkin, conversely, remained true to the "Apollonic" energy of "good and light", "the chief life activator of the planet", "the Sun our father" (as the artist put it), correlation with which also determines the human "measure of tact" and the semantic basis of living "warm" human tongue and art (as Prishvin put it, "All things beautiful are from the Sun, and all things good are from the friend"; among the avant-gardists V. Khlebnikov understood that and conveyed it in his art better than anybody else)· Wishing as much as any "leftist" to see the regeneration of the world and art and verifying his aspirations with exact science of the tectonics of the universe, Petrov-Vodkin was after not negating but synthesising traditions and going out into Lobachevsky-Riemann space without forgetting the fundamentals and immutable truths of Euclidean Space. That is why his works are naturally characterised by "memory" of the many phenomena of classical art rather than its "rejection".
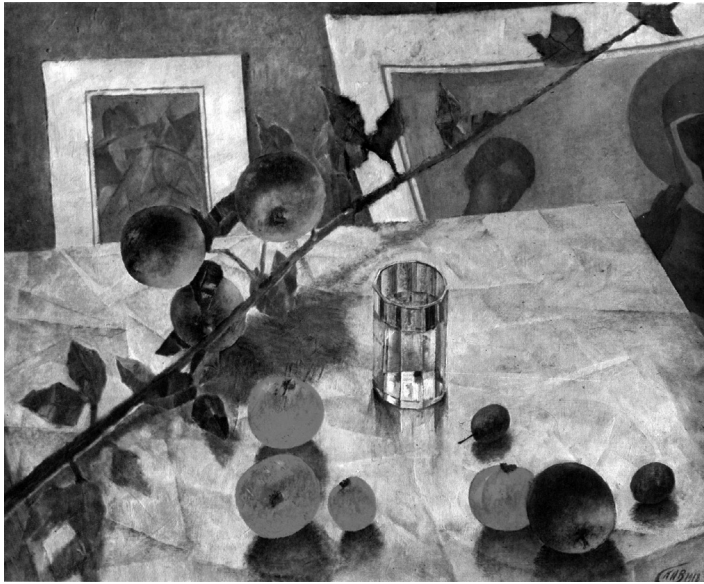
In fact, Petrov-Vodkin's spherical perspective and "Science of Seeing" actualising the sense of the roundness of the Earth and its movement along the axis and circumference of the Sun centre turn out to be a modification, planetary dynamic expansion and assertion in the new conditions of the sense of the solar life cycle and of the unity of micro- and macrocosm, which is an inalienable feature of the lofty world idyll. His ability (and desire to teach his students) to "hear the planet" by welcoming and seeing off the Sun essentially coincides with the experience of the "music of the spheres"[1] by the ancient Greeks (Orphists and Pythagoreans), Sun worshipping by Russian sentimentalists (remember Karamzin and I. Dmitriev ritually waiting for sunrise on the Volga shore) and the striving of Savrasov and Levitan to pass on the feeling of the unity of light and heat, spring in nature and man's inner world through their paintings and disciples. That is why Petrov-Vodkin's still lifes, in no way inferior to works of the avant-gardists in conveying energy interaction among the prototypes, at times possess qualities that bring to mind the best specimens of "idyllic still lifes" of the distant past, for instance, the ancient "charming still lifes of the types of two lemons with a glass of water" (E. Gombrich) from Herculaneum, which the artist must have seen in the museum of Naples. E. Serednyakova, a sensitive student of Petrov-Vodkin's still lifes, sees in them a combination of "trompe-l'oeil elements with the sacred world of icons" and also

Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
Pink Still Life.
Branch of an Apple
Tree. 1918
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

[1] The writer Gennady Gor "was always impressed" in Petrov-Vodkin's works "by harmony that one is tempted to call by a less common word taken from physics – orderliness. …with the help of colour and drawing the artist brought order not only to the world he depicted, but also to the soul of the viewer, who would suddenly begin to understand his unity with the very music of being". // Gor, G., *Volshebnaya doroga* (Magic Road). Novel, Novellas, Stories. Leningrad, 1978, p.???.

recalls the art of the early Renaissance[1], whereas E. Medkova interprets the *Pink Still Life* as "likening of the artist's studio to paradise" (like Serednyakova, somewhat immaterialising its interpretation in mystical spirit)[2]. Just as indisputable is the memory living in Petrov-Vodkin's works of turning the objective world into a "treasure" (to quote the artist) and the ability to encapsulate the feeling of domesticity and "heaven in a flower cup" characteristic of F. Tolstoy's watercolours and the still life elements in works of A. Venetsianov, G. Soroka and the best masters of the European Biedermeier. The artist's legacy keeps the memory of this tradition in the form of a still life with flowers, fruit and a scroll of music in Biedermeier style painted on the piano front plate in 1919, to which he later added a portrait of his daughter (kept at the Petrov-Vodkin Art Gallery of Khvalynsk).

The foundations of Petrov-Vodkin's world outlook and work survived and continued to evolve, changing to conform to the new tendencies and circumstances of the existence of painting and culture in general under the Soviet regime. True, in the period of the First World War, the two 1917 revolutions and the Civil War his works were occasionally tinged with disturbing expressiveness, acquiring a nearly apocalyptical nature. Yet, in the most tense and complicated moments they continued to uphold the "human face" and the fundamentals of being that were "**simple and close to human sentiments**"[3].

Many cultural figures shared that idyllic imagery in their notions of the meaning and ultimate goals of the dramatic developments in the country. The idea of "heaven on earth", which is hardly perceivable nowadays, and striving "towards the dawn" and towards "the bright future" indeed sustained the energy of creativity and life-building of that part of the intelligentsia which embraced the revolution, including members of the associations "Skify" (Scythians) and "Volnaya filosofskaya akademiya" (Volfila, Free Philosophical Academy), to which Petrov-Vodkin also belonged. Jesus Christ "crowned with a wreath of roses white" leading revolutionary sailors in Alexander Blok's poem is also idyllic. Yesenin (who was primarily idyllic) pictures the future of art as some "universal garden, in which people

Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin Painting on the piano front plate. 1919 – early 1920s
Art Museum of K.S. Petrov-Vodkin, Khvalynsk

[1] Serednyakova, E.G. "Natyurmortnaya kontseptsiya K. S. Petrova-Vodkina v kontekste russkoi khudozhestvennoi kultury" *(*K. S. Petrov-Vodkin's Still Life Concept in the Context of Russian Artistic Culture) // *Vvedeniye v khram* (Presentation in the Temple), Moscow, 1997, pp. 626–34.

[2] Medkova, Elena, "Rozovyi natyurmort" (Pink Still Life) // online magazine *Iskusstvo*, No. 13, 2006. http://art.1september.ru/article.php? ID=200601308

[3] From the declaration of the "Four Arts" society, which Petrov-Vodkin helped to organise and to which he belonged.

would relax blissfully and wisely walking around… under the shady branches… of a huge tree and which is called socialism or paradise" (S. Yesenin, *Kliuchi Marii*). Boris Eichenbaum saw paradoxical "idyllic philosophy of a permanent riot" in Ivanov-Razumnik's[1] convictions after the October 1917 Revolution.

This is especially true of Petrov-Vodkin with his hard won and, in its own way, theoretically substantiated faith in the future assertion of coveted "organic culture" that re-unites man with the rhythms of the Universe and the basic laws of nature. "In the chaos of construction one string sounds hope for anyone not immersed in personal affairs…: A wonderful life lies in store! …An earnest of hope is that the 'people' felt they were humankind, and now that this feeling is here …it will not disappear,"[2] he wrote in 1917, when he produced the aforementioned planetary idyll *Midday*. One way or another, he had retained that hope till the end of his life, even though he understood the entire difficulty of the development of the country and art and had a premonition of an even harder ordeal.

The specific revolutionary idyll and belief in the mass (family- and labour-related) groundwork of the revolution predetermined the design and execution of his covers and illustrations for the *Skify* (Scythians) collections and the *Plamya* (Flame) magazine, the nature of his decorations for the 1918 celebration of the revolution anniversary (*Mikula Selyaninovich*, *Fire-bird* and *Flowers*), the modifications of the red horse images in his works of the 1920s, and his trying his hand at agitprop porcelain[3].

The idyllic dominant also manifested itself in many other works of Petrov-Vodkin of the late 1910s through the 1930s, albeit with a different degree of poignancy in conveying the planetary "rolling of the world ship", the measure of activity and dynamism, dramatisation, concrete characterisation and the complexity of spatial compositions.

One can speak of an idyllic "dimension" even in respect of *The Death of the Commissar* (1927): the dramatic event (the plastic solution of which is usually compared with the Renaissance representations of *Pieta*) takes place on the perennially round Earth, amidst the fields and hills, villages and rivers of rural Russia, rather than in the abstract space or some linear "historical road" or "world scene". The trinitary idyllic basis of the representation of the "sacred bonds of comradeship" in *After the Battle* (1923) has already been mentioned earlier.

[1] "Sudba Bloka" (Blok's Destiny) // Eichenbaum, B.M. *O literature* (On Literature), Moscow, 1987, p. 357.

[2] Petrov-Vodkin, K. "Na rubezhakh iskusstva" (At the Cutting-edge of Art) // *Delo naroda*, 28 April 1917.

[3] His design of the agitprop plate *Wedding* also "incorporated" different bucolic "layers": worker and peasant "Adam and Eve" looking like Russian fairytale characters were painted on an Imperial Factory blank surrounded by fruit, wheat ears and flowers (as Italian majolica wedding dishes have it). The design on the rim of the plate "remembers" the eternal "dance of life" – the round dance of maidens on the shield of Achilles in Homer and in Petrov-Vodkin's *At the Fountain*.

Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
In the Nursery
(Morning
in the Nursery). 1925
Private collection

The bulk of paintings and drawing of the 1920s-1930s, as before, focussed on the experience and assertion of the "sacredness" of motherhood and childhood and the familial origin of life that Petrov-Vodkin deemed of cardinal importance. In the early 1920s the sacred, "Madonnish" aspect predominated in those images. They include representations of the Theotokos as such and the picture *1918 in Petrograd* (1920), which combines worry over the destiny of "sacred humaneness" in the years of trial with faith in the supreme meaning of the developments. Although later works assumed a concretely mundane tenor, the "Madonnish" plane was still there (*In the Nursery* (1925), *Motherhood* (1925), *First Steps* (1925), *Mothers* (1926), *Alarm* (1926) and others).

Many works of this line were prompted by personal experiences: the long-awaited birth and raising of a child, which had a creative "theoretical" meaning for the artist: according to a 1926 text, *The Story of a Birth*[1], while being a doting father, he scrupulously analysed the process of his daughter's development, verifying, as it were, the tenets of his "science of seeing", ideas of the role of preverbal experience and the optimum "organisation of memory". At the same time he did everything for his heiress to have the qualities of a "new man" incorporating love for the native town and "kinship" with nature, which was graphically manifested in "family" portraits and drawings, many of them downright pastoral.

Work on mundane, family subjects in the cultural context of that period amounted to taking a public stance: at the time of unheard-of turmoil

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[1] Included in the text of memoirs of the artist's daughter: Petrova-Vodkina, K., "Prikosnoveniye k dushe" (Reaching out to the Soul) // *Zvezda*, No. 9, 2007.

in daily life, calls to renounce the traditional family forms and aversion to any type of the petty bourgeois idyll, the artist, who hated petty bourgeois narrow-mindedness and aspired towards a "universal" future, upheld the lasting importance of warmth and accord in family microcosm ("a small collective") as the groundwork of society, depicting scenes from worker and peasant family life that were close to his heart. Without forsaking the planetary characteristics of dynamic space found by him, to some extent he reverted to his original traditions of 19th-century idyllic genre and family scene and landscape painting. Many of Petrov-Vodkin's still lifes are also, as it were, enlarged fragments of an idyllic family household.

The idyllic substance of Petrov-Vodkin's works graphically manifested itself in his book designs for children, starting with illustrations for *Aoiya* (that was scheduled to be reprinted in the early 1920s). At the same time, he designed several books, in which his memory of idyllic traditions revealed new aspects. Thus, in his design of the spring tale *Snegurochka* (Snow-Maiden) we see a peasant round dance (the artist produced a similar drawing for the *Plamya* (Flame) magazine in 1918), jumping over a bonfire, etc., his general style reminiscent of idyllic rural silhouettes of Fyodor Tolstoy and Elisabeth Boehm. His design of S. Fedorchenko's *Priskazki* (Storyteller's Introductions) is an amalgam of idyllic scenes in the spirit of 19th-century rural poetry[1] (with peasant grannies and their grandchildren), lively gentle animal painting and ornaments with short of "Blue Rose" style "angelic" motifs, fiery hearts[2] and the Sun tenderly looking upon the world.

The cozy still lifes *Fruit and Berries* for children, executed in the mid-1920s and unpublished until 1937, are also very interesting with their "quiet life" of toys and fruit, the artist's trademark qualities, and at the same time carefully adapted to the small world of a child (it was in this series that Petrov-Vodkin came especially close to the Biedermeier spirit).

Memory of the favourite masters of the Renaissance, just as the idyllic aspect, is present even in Petrov-Vodkin's stage designs. While bravely facing the drama of history in his designs for the productions of *Satan's Diary*, *Boris Godunov*, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Army Commanders – 2* (1929, staged by V. Meyerhold), he all of a sudden recalled the world idyllic traditions in his sets for *The Marriage of Figaro* (1935), in which a huge reproduction of the mother and child from *The Tempest* of Giorgione occupied most of the backdrop.

The artist said at the end of his life: "I… have chosen favourites, whom I have revered and respected to this day, who have been teaching me throughout my life and… with whom I have exchanged thoughts in a quiet whisper growing stronger from that" (2, 329). I think that the memory of *The Feast of the Gods* by G. Bellini's is alive even in his later picture *House-warming Party* (1937).

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[1] When working on those illustrations he, of course, remembered his childhood love of rural poetry
of Koltsov, Nekrasov and Surikov, whom he tried to emulate in his early literary experiments.

[2] To this day a similar relief ornament decorates the window and door frames of some of the
19th-century houses in Khvalynsk, the artist's hometown.

Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
House-warming
(Workers' Petrograd).
1937
State Russian
Museum, Saint
Petersburg

A specific feeling of sharing space with the creators of distant epochs found expression in the *Triple Portrait* of 1935, in which Alexander Pushkin appears next to the author and Andrei Bely[1].

Petrov-Vodkin reflected the key features of his world outlook, creativity and memory "gold reserves" profoundly and from numerous angles in *Moya povest* (My Story), his two-part autobiography (*Khlynovsk* and *Euclidean Space*; he intended to write the third part, *Moyi uyuty* (My Lares and Penates)). Although art historians (above all A. Rusakov and S. Daniel) have said many a cogent word about Petrov-Vodkin's books, their idyllic substance seen so graphically and multifariously has so far elicited no attention[2].

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[1] Andrei Platonov, who was in many respects close to Petrov-Vodkin, expressed this type of attitude to classics in the most concise way in the title of his 1937 article "Pushkin Is Our Comrade". Of interest are notes of Petrov-Vodkin, who then headed the Pushkin commission of the Leningrad branch of the Artists' Union: *On Pushkin* and *Pushkin and Us*, in which he wrote about "the great heart, perspicacious mind" and "most profound sunny optimism" (1, 131) of the poet who "has come to save us when we banalise our work and to help us when we climb to its heights. We can't do without him here" (1, 326).

[2] The two-part *My Story* is closest in genre to the traditions of a "growing-up novel". Some qualities of both the texts and Petrov-Vodkin's personality can be described with what M. Bakhtin said about the typical "bucolic" character of the classic growing-up novel: "The bucolic world, which is going to ruin, is taken not as a naked fact... of the past with all of its historical limitations, but with certain philosophical sublimation... profound humaneness of the bucolic man himself and humane relations between people are moved to the fore, followed by the integrity of idyllic life and its organic link with nature... This doomed little world is contrasted with a huge but abstract world in which people are disconnected, egotistically isolated and selfishly pragmatic, in which labour is differentiated and mechanised, and in which products are separated from labour as such. This huge

This is especially true of *Khvalynsk* (initially given the patently idyllic title *In the Nest*), the text of which, for all the realistic characterisation and depiction of the dark sides of provincial Russian life, is literally brimming with idyllic topoi, loci and corresponding vocabulary. For instance, the artist's narrative of his near and dear is a string of heartfelt descriptions of motherly love, delight at the child discovering the world for the first time, people labouring and having rest, festivals, haymaking, change of seasons, etc. All these descriptions are not of ethnographical or phenological nature, but reference world and Russian idyllic traditions and record the "specks" and layers of life impressions and experiences, which, according to the author, predetermined the best and most valuable aspects of his personality and creative career. Many drawings to *Khlynovsk* contain idyllic motifs – a morning on the river, a mother bent over the cradle, a young girl rider "wrapped in sun" and so on.

The idyllic in Petrov-Vodkin's books is not confined to the description of personal experience or the artist's "memory of the heart". A number of consistent notions associated with the idyllic and crucial to Petrov-Vodkin's "dynamic model" of the world clearly transpire in the polydimensional descriptions of journeys across Russia and foreign lands, historical retrospectives and individual characterisation.

One of them is the notion of "homeliness", which, according to the artist, fixes the idea of some integral, reliable, warm and physically and spiritually harmonious space and contact with living nature, a "simple livelihood balance" that man needs and the absence of which makes the sound perception of the large world and attunement to the rhythms of the universe impossible. Drawing parallels (like Virgil in *The Georgics* or Maeterlinck in *The Life of the Bee*) between the world of the humans and the life of birds and bees, Petrov-Vodkin scrutinises and ponders on the historical types of "homeliness" developed by people, specifying their peculiarities among different nations – the Russians, Germans, Jews and French. Needless to say, his striving after warm family comfort and idyllic "sympathy with nature" (the same as, incidentally, passion for travelling and extreme situations – "being poised at the edge of the abyss") and his descriptions of how his mother's and his own household is organised, his attitude to his wife and the upbringing of his daughter both before and after the revolution are usually pervaded with idyllic and downright pastoral, "heavenly" motifs that are also often encountered in "family" portraits.

"Heart" is another crucial notion in Petrov-Vodkin's "philosophy of feelings". This word recurs in different contexts in his letters and books

world has to be re-assembled on a new basis, made one's own and humanized. It is necessary to find a new attitude to nature, not only to the small nature of one's native corner, but to the big nature of the big world, to all the phenomena of the solar system, to the mineral riches of the earth, to the diversity of the geographical countries and continents. The restricted bucolic collective should be replaced with a new one ...capable of encompassing the entire humankind". Bakhtin, M.M. Op. cit., p. 382.

recording the qualities of his near and dear and the works of art his own "heart had left a mark on" (Emerson).

Thus, speaking about childhood memory and "the reserves of images, the reserves of … homeland seeds" received during "that brief period", he stresses that they taught "the infant heart to beat in unison with the people who find the life of bees hard, yet who know how to spark it up with undying love for earth and man" (2, 141). This image of human heartbeat also has a cosmic meaning in his texts. Speaking about his mother, he recalls her "treating the landscape, plants and especially animals poignantly and imparting human feelings to them; cosmos was for her a single whole with an enormous pulsating human heart inside, and here she had some especially right approach that erased divides between lives" (2, 82). In the course of his adventures on a mysterious island, the protagonist of *Aoiya* (a reflection of the author's spiritual experience) unexpectedly goes down to the very "heart of the earth" (to which, as it transpires, Dante had gone down before him) and suddenly discovers that "his own heart was beating in unison with that of the earth"[1]. In 1910, Petrov-Vodkin defined the very meaning of his painterly quests as "love talk" with nature and "reckoning heart formulas while trying to find accord between our worlds and our bearings in the universe". He also spoke there of the radiant Integral lasting beauty of the universe – "from the shining stars above me… to the tender heart of man" (2, 669).

The author of the *Theotokos Softener of Evil Hearts,* who valued most a "simple and hearty" atmosphere in everyday life, understood heartiness as synonymous with genuine poetry that pervaded his favourite works ("the heartiest Bellini").

Focus on this notion may look strange in an article about the artist whose works are usually singled out for formal rationality. Furthermore, today more attention is paid to the "loss of heart core" and the focus is on altogether different categories and aspects of 20th-century art history. Meanwhile, much of Petrov-Vodkin's legacy and the entire art process of the past century literally cry for the need to revive in the relevant memory of art studies and bring back into circulation the characteristic and fate of this "light/heat" level of spiritual life and work, which is of paramount importance from the anthropological, historical and cultural point of view. Otherwise many aspects of the dialectics of the development of art and its meaning-making cannot be understood (just as without a study of the objective laws of harmony and rhythm of solar-terrestrial space and the relationship between them and man's inner world and emotional and ethical qualities).

Closely linked with the idylls throughout their history, this notion is, for instance, extremely important to understanding the difference between the Petersburg and Moscow schools of painting and, in the Soviet period,

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[1] Petrov-Vodkin. *Aoiya*, Saint Petersburg, 1914, p. 88. Interestingly, this motif is also found in Renaissance literature.

to discerning the specifics of "monumental lyricism" of the best masters of the 1920–30s, in particular, the leading members of the "Four Arts" association (one of whose leaders was Petrov-Vodkin), who thought that "the growth of art and the development of its culture is at a period when its specific elements tend to manifest themselves to the utmost extent in what is simple and close to human feelings" (from their declaration) and that "a search for new painterly forms should arouse emotions and find the road to the human heart"[1]. In literature "heart authenticity" was, among other things, the main principle of world perception in works of Prishvin and especially of Andrei Platonov, whose use of this notion was especially close to that of Petrov-Vodkin and for whom the most dangerous evil of contemporary world was "heartlessness" because "without the heart" and "without being gentrified… with animals and plants" mankind "will perish, become depleted and fall into the evil of despair like the lonely one into loneliness"[2].

Saying (or rather reminding people of) this, we perfectly remember that in the 20th century idylls took sundry narrow, fake and modified (kitsch, glamour and other) forms, the most grim and suffocating of which was cultivated by the Nazi officialdom. However, awareness of that makes it all the more imperative not to forget about the true light-bearing sources and phenomena of this meta-genre since, to quote the Norwegian scholar Ole Martin Høystad: "As Westerners, we have no alternative to the heart as the central symbol in our view of humanity"[3].

As for the subject matter of this article, I am convinced that it is necessary to continue systemic research in this direction that can help us understand

[1] Bebutova, E., Kuznetsov, P., Obshchestvo "4 iskusstva" ("4 Arts" Society) // *Tvorchestvo*, No. 11, 1966.

In this case it is worth recalling the cover of the *Makovets* issue No. 3, 1923, executed by Vladimir Favorsky. "It is a compact symbolical formula, a 'hieroglyphic' of mankind's evolution from the depths of the ocean to the sun. The stages of life development are outlined concisely – a blue fish, yellow dandelion, green tree and, in the upper register, a red horse and flying dove. The colours of the four elements have been taken, the basic colours of Early Rus' masters. The symbols are repeated twice in opposite directions – on both sides of the rectangular frame enclosing the outlines of a toga-attired man and inside his body, as if uniting and encompassing all phases and stages of development, all the elements of earth and heaven. Man is the pinnacle of the centuries-long History of the evolution of life. Man is the portent of the future consummate sunlike world. He is the son of the Earth and at the same time the son of the Sun. And the heart in his chest is the sign of the Sun. That is why the movement of life and the road of ascent to eternal perfection go on and on. The poetical metaphor has a profound underlying idea and worldview paradigm. The author correlates man with a lasting flower and infinite Universe." Zverkov, E., Kushnerovskaya, G., Slovo o Chernysheve (A Word about Chernyshev) // *Narodnyi khudozhnik RSFSR Nikolai Mikhailovich Chernyshev 1885–1973*. Exhibition Catalogue, Moscow, 1990, p. 23.

[2] Platonov A. *Iz zapisnoi knizhki 1935 goda* (From a 1935 notebook). http://a-зlatonov.narod.ru/knizhki/notes12.htm

[3] Hoystad O. M. *A History of the Heart*, London: Reaktion Books, 2007, p. 232.

not only Petrov-Vodkin's legacy, but also some as yet unfathomed important aspects and regularities of the "operation of memory" in domestic art of the 20th century.

Abbreviations

1. Petrov-Vodkin, K.S., *Pisma. Statyi. Vystupleniya. Dokumenty* (Correspondence. Articles. Speeches. Papers), Moscow: Sovetsky khudozhnik, 1991.

2. Petrov-Vodkin, Kuzma. *Prostranstvo Evklida* (Euclidean Space), Saint Petersburg: Azbuka-klassika, 2000.

3. Adaskina, K.S., *Petrov-Vodkin: zhizn i tvorchestvo* (Petrov-Vodkin: Life and Work), Moscow: BuksMArt, 2014.

Ekaterina Vyazova

Memory of Gesture: Iconography of Melancholy in European and Russian Culture of Modern Times

To begin with, I am going to discuss only one iconographical motif connected with melancholy, namely, the posture of arms crossed over the breast. The fanciful metamorphoses of this motif can only be roughly outlined in a brief essay, hence the iconographical study is bound to be sketchy.

Furthermore, it is important to make the reservation that the logic of research unfolded from the early 20th to the 16th century and not the other way round. The original purpose was to describe images of "cultural memory" brought to life in the 19th and early 20th centuries and trace the sources of iconographical schemes and the metamorphoses of their meanings. This movement back to the birth of the iconographical motif predetermined the composition of the narrative.

The graphic *Portrait of the Poet Bryusov* (1906), one of the last works of Mikhail Vrubel, is a vivid example of a gesture associated with certain mythology that took shape at the turn of the 20th century but, obviously, suggested a long-standing iconographical tradition. Vrubel rather than Bryusov most likely chose the posture for the portrait, as is attested by the notes taken by both the artist and the sitter. In a letter to his wife Vrubel described the portrait, commissioned by N.P. Ryabushinsky: "...a knee-length portrait, standing with the arms folded and shining eyes looking up towards the bright light"[1]. Bryusov, who left fascinating notes about the sitting sessions, recalled that he had to stand for hours on end in "a rather uncomfortable posture with folded arms". Later on Bryusov remarked: "After that portrait I don't need any other. And I often say half-jokingly

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[1] *Vrubel. Perepiska. Vospominaniya o khudozhnike* (Vrubel. Correspondence. Recollections about the Artist), Moscow-Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1963, pp. 86–7.
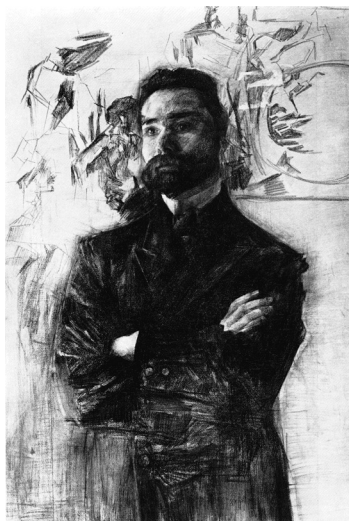
Mikhail Vrubel
Portrait of Poet
Valery Yakovlevich
Bryusov. 1906
State Tretyakov
Gallery, Moscow

that I'm trying to continue looking like my portrait made by Vrubel"[1].

Vrubel indeed made a good guess with that gesture: "Bryusov's buttoned-up frockcoat and his crossed arms à la Napoleon have already become traditional in the memoirs of contemporaries," wrote G. Chulkov[2]. "He took no part in debates. He stood with his arms crossed, his face raised up," was how M. Voloshin described his first impression of Bryusov in 1903, at a Religious-Philosophical Society session[3]. Sensitive to the mystical correspondence between art and life, Bryusov subsequently may have consciously stylised his appearance to match Vrubel's portrait; anyhow, memoirists remembered Bryusov precisely that way, "looking like his portrait" and invariably with folded arms. Remarkably, that gesture was not perceived as occasional or ordinary – it was always attributed a symbolical meaning. In essays on symbolism it became a sort of emblem of the epoch. "Perhaps, he alone knew how sadly the dream of mysteries would be dispelled and in his textbook posture – with arms crossed – observed it from afar," Nina Petrovskaya wrote[4]. Andrei Bely "read" "an expression of being agonisingly crucified by himself" into Bryusov's crossed arms. "From the first meeting I saw him in this gesture of superfluous self-crucifixion – his arms folded over his breast, his face distorted with anguish; yet versifying even in this state of woe, and that was how Vrubel saw him; that was how we glorified him[5]."

This salient gesture, found by Vrubel and stressed by everybody writing about Bryusov not only as a recognisable characteristic of his look, but also as some sign of a certain character and temperament makeup, leads to the "identification" of some stable plastic subject in the very posture.

European and Russian romanticism proves to be the closest pictorial tradition within which the repetitiveness of this posture is so pronounced that it is possible to speak about it becoming an iconographical motif. Paintings and graphic works of the first thirty years of the 19th century are peopled with characters posing with folded arms. This is how O.A. Kiprensky, P.F. Sokolov and A.P. Bryullov portray their sitters. European parallels are found in T. Lawrence and E. Delacroix. One recurrent feature stands out in the seeming diversity of these romantic characters: the posture with crossed arms over the breast encountered almost exclusively in male portraits is reserved above all for poets and military men. We see this gesture in Kiprensky's portraits of the late 1810s – 1820s, namely, *Portrait of S.P. Buturlin*

[1] *Vrubel. Perepiska. Vospominaniya o khudozhnike*, p. 269.

[2] Chulkov, G. *Gody stranstvii* (Wander-years), Moscow, 1930, p. 93.

[3] Voloshin, M. *Liki tvorchestva* (Faces of Creativity), Leningrad, 1989, p. 407.

[4] Petrovskaya, N. Vospominanya (Memoirs). Published by E. Garetto. "Zhizn i smert Niny Petrovskoi"
    (Life and Death of Nina Petrovskaya // *Minuvsheie*. History almanac, No. 8, 1989, p. 29.

[5] Bely, A. *Nachalo veka* (The Beginning of the Century), Moscow, 1990, p. 171.
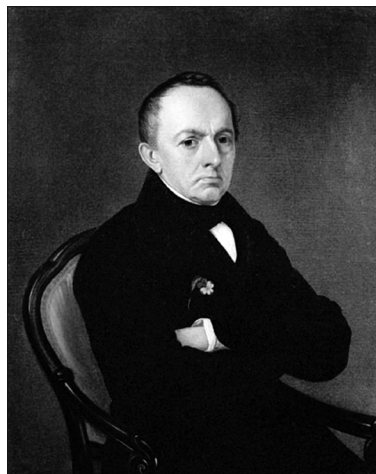
(1824), *Portrait of I.A. Annenkov* (1819), *Portrait of Prince George of Oldenburg* (1811) and *Portrait of Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich* (1819). It becomes a constant plastic motif of P.F. Sokolov's watercolours, including *Portrait of P.A. Nashchokin* (1826–7), *Portrait of an Unknown Military Man* (late 1820s – early 1830s), *Portrait of P.G. Demidov* (?) (1831), *Portrait of Baron A.I. Barclay de Tolly* (?) (ca. 1837) and *Portrait of a Young Man with Folded Arms* (1830s). The same posture is in the last lifetime portrait of K. Batyushkov and the portrait of V.A. Zhukovsky, a copperplate print by A. Frolov after a drawing by P. Sokolov.

The posture with crossed arms becomes a sort of personal iconography for great poets and great military leaders. Such was the stable iconography of portraits of Alexander Pushkin, George Byron and Napoleon of the 1820s-1830s. Pushkin's textbook image is associated with his famous portrait painted by Kiprensky on A.A. Delvig's commission in 1827. Pushkin's friends preferred precisely Kiprensky's portrait when commissioning prints from the original painting or watercolour copies from the well-known portrait produced by Sokolov as a variation of Kiprensky's picture[1]. The latter composition served as the basis for countless representations done both in Pushkin's lifetime and after his death. For instance, the *Portrait and Biographical Gallery of Literature, Sciences and Fine Arts in Russia*, published in 1841, included a lithographed portrait of Pushkin from the aforementioned watercolour by Sokolov[2].

The posture with crossed arms is also stably associated with the iconography of Napoleon. The "myth of Napoleon" became especially popular in Russia in the 1820s – 1840s. The iconography crystallised from the mid-1810s and promoted the spread of the myth. Onegin had in his study

> "…the iron figure on the table,
> the hat, the scowling brow, the chest
> where folded arms are tightly pressed"[3].

[1] See Sidorov, A.B. "Portrety A.S. Pushkina raboty P.F. Sokolova. Problema datirovki" (Portraits of A.S. Pushkin by P.F. Sokolov. Problem of Dating) // P.F. Sokolov. Russkii kamernyi portret. Gosudarstvennyi muzei A.S. Pushkina (P.F. Sokolov. Intimate Russian Portraits. State A.S. Pushkin Museum), Moscow: Pinakotheke, 2003.

[2] Ibid.

[3] For the attribution of this description as a statuette of Napoleon see Lotman, J.M. Roman A.S. Pushkina "Evgenii Onegin". Kommentarii (A.S. Pushkin's Novel *Eugene Onegin*. Commentaries) // Lotman, J.M. *Pushkin. Biografiya pisatelya. Statyi i zametki. 1960–1990. "Evgenii Onegin"*. Kommentarii (Pushkin. Life Story of a Writer. Articles and Notes. 1960–1990. *Eugene Onegin*. Commentaries), St Petersburg, 2005, p. 687.

**Napoleon Bonaparte,
First Consul.**
First quarter
of the 19th century
Lithograph
by Zephirin Belliard
after Jean-Baptiste
Isabey's painting

For contemporaries the above description was so obvious that there was no need to mention Napoleon's name.

The personality of Napoleon in different interpretations, from a "son of happiness" to a "messenger of Providence"[1] became a fad along with the Byronic hero sharing with the latter common features, such as individualism, identifying oneself with the select, contempt for the world and control of it, loneliness, dramatic fate, etc. In his notes on the translation of *The Corsair* Pushkin wrote that the secret of the extraordinary popularity of Byron's poem in England was the magnetism of the main character, who was largely "modelled" on Napoleon[2]. Meanwhile, the distinction between the Byronic hero and Byron himself becomes vague: "...Most probably here, too, the poet portrays a character that appears in all his creations and that he eventually assumed himself in Childe Harold"[3]. Gradually, the comparison of Byron with Napoleon, in part owing to Byron himself ("One way or another, the poet had never clarified his intent, his connection with Napoleon pleased his vanity"[4]) became commonplace in the culture of Romanticism. Small wonder that Onegin had in his study "Lord Byron's portrait on the wall" next to "the iron figure" of Napoleon. The metaphorical comparison of the poet and the military leader popular in Romanticism also echoes this double image of Byron-Napoleon. In his *Little House at Kolomna* Pushkin made tongue-in-cheek use of this metaphor migrating from one romanticist work to another.

> The poet feels himself the Sword of Fate,
> Like Bonaparte, or Tamburlaine the Great.

A parallel to such literary metaphors in pictorial art is precisely the common iconography of "crossed arms". It attests to the semantic kinship of the images of the poet and the military leader in the romantic mind. The "powerful", "grim" and "mysteriously enchanting" characters of the great poet and the great military leader come close together in part to being identified one with the other and generously share their features with all poets and military leaders in general as representatives of some common and, beyond doubt, upper caste. Its "ancestral emblem" turns out to be "crossed arms".

[1] See Larionova, E. "Pushkin i napoleonovskii mif" (Pushkin and the Myth of Napoleon) // *Pinakotheke*, Nos. 13–14, Moscow, 2002.

[2] "The Corsair owes its incredible success to the character of the main protagonist, who mysteriously reminds us of a man whose fateful will then ruled over one part of Europe threatening the other." Pushkin, A.S. *O tragedii Olina Korser* (On Olin's Drama *Corsair*) // Pushkin, A.S. *Sochineniya* (Works), Moscow, 1949, p. 721.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

However, the common iconography of different images, albeit with certain parallels in literature, does not explain this semantic kinship and is merely indirect evidence of a common source. In other words, it points to the existence of some stable iconographic tradition that acquired new meanings with time and that initially had a potential for such different images drawing closer together. The common iconography of the poet and the military man in romanticist art is intriguing as such indirect evidence. The invariant basis of various representations obviously references some single subject in the memory of European culture of modern times. Within that tradition the posture with crossed arms, which was often used in 19th-century art as a plastic quotation, "goes back" to its meaning.

Aiming not so much at a detective suspense in our story as at affirming its integrity, I will begin by saying that the source of this motif is the iconography of melancholy in 16th-century English art. After stating the paradoxical coincidence of the iconographic motifs of the 19th – early 20th centuries with those of the 16th century, let us trace, if only briefly, the connections which could have brought them together within the European "cultural memory" tradition.

Fashionable Elizabethan Era "Malady" in England

The first description of the posture with folded arms and the context of its appearance have to do with the concepts of melancholy, which took shape in European art in the late 15th and 16th centuries. The fullest corpus of diverse interpretations formed in the English philosophy and literature of the Elizabethan era and the early Stuart period. England is also the birthplace of the ramified iconography of melancholy. Starting from the 1580s there arose a sort of intellectual fad for melancholy in England. Medical, philosophical and historical treatises are written about it, and the melancholic becomes the main character in drama and poetry, his recognisable image engraved in numerous portraits of the turn of the 16th century and encoded in numerous emblemata. Contemporaries write about melancholy as the epidemic of the century[1].

The different interpretations of melancholy at that time, just as the etymology of the word (traditionally traced to Hippocrates) go back to the antiquity theory of four temperaments correlated with four "body fluids" (called "humours"). Melancholy is derived from the Greek *melaina chole*, meaning black bile. It was thought that the melancholic temperament was caused by the excess of black bile in the body, just as the phlegmatic one was explained by the excess of phlegm, the sanguine by the excess of blood

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[1] This definition given by contemporaries lent this name also to 20th-century studies of melancholy in the Elizabethan era. See, for example, Lawrence Babb. *The Elizabethan Malady. A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642,* East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951.

and the choleric by that of yellow bile[1]. In different modifications these ideas were current in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period and were rejected by European medicos only about 1700[2].

The two main concepts of interpreting the melancholic temperament are likewise rooted in antiquity. One stems from the medical tradition going back to Galen, the Greek physician of the Roman Empire. In this tradition, melancholy denotes not so much a certain temperament as illness, although its degrees are often vague and pronounced characteristics of the melancholic temperament imply "ailment" or border on it. English treatises and translated writings of the 16th century complying with the Galenist tradition consider melancholy as grave psychopathology, to use modern terminology. Studies of different forms of melancholy as a psychic disorder – from apathy to insanity – are always accompanied with a list of typical traits of appearance and not very appealing particulars of melancholic behaviour. One of the more typical descriptions of this kind belongs to Levinus Lemnius, according to whom a melancholic is "tall, skinny, lean, often dark, pale or with unhealthy complexion... As for his nature and mindset, he is withdrawn, sullen, unsociable and greedy... His gait is slow, he walks with his head down, his brows knitted and expression surly... Melancholics are taciturn, prefer solitude and are endlessly eaten up by anxiety, worry and fears[3]."

The other concept goes back to the Aristotelian interpretation of the melancholic temperament as related to creative endowment, a poetic and philosophical gift and divine inspiration.

In the Middle Ages, melancholy was interpreted mostly in the Galenic tradition. In the Renaissance period, the concepts of the Neoplatonists of Florence, primarily Marsilio Ficino's treatises *De Vita Libri Tres* (Three Books on Life), were highly instrumental in "exonerating" melancholy. Ficino

[1] The etymology of two other names for melancholy – hypochondria and spleen – that began to be used somewhat later and were popular in the 18th and 19th centuries also goes back to ancient and medieval medical concepts. According to them, melancholy humours nourish the "cold and dry parts of the body", that is, the bones and spleen. The spleen has to absorb excess black bile, and if this does not happen, "melaina chole" spills all over the body causing melancholia or spleen. Other physiological causes of melancholia are diseases of the so-called "hypochondriac" organs, hence the stable term hypochondria. The appearance of the expressions "soul-sapping passions" and "soul-sapping knowledge" is most likely connected with the Renaissance interpretation of ancient concepts of melancholia. It was commonly believed that melancholia could be caused by not only physiological but also by "psychological" reasons, such as passion and "much knowledge". Passion and knowledge literally "dry up" the body, and dryness is the main symptom of "melaina chole" and leads to melancholy.

[2] Melancholy in European culture was the theme of a large exhibition "Melancholy: Genius and Madness in the West", Grand Palais, Paris, 13 October 2005–16 January 2006; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, 17 February – 7 May 2006.

[3] Levinus Lemnius, *The Touchstone of Complexions*, translated by Thomas Newton. London, 1576, fol.146

combined the interpretation of melancholy as a temperament conducive to creativity with Plato's theory of *furor divinus* (divine frenzy), producing the concept of *furor melancholicus* (melancholic frenzy) characteristic of a creative genius. Ficino was also associated with a group of Saturnists, who reinterpreted the astrological tradition of understanding melancholy, which was extremely popular in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. According to astrological treatises, the melancholics, born under the sign of Saturn, were subject to its influence, equally beneficial and baneful. In the Renaissance tradition, Saturn was a "cold and dry" (the main qualities of *melaina chole*) and barren planet, a planet of night and death. Meanwhile, the same qualities constitute the other side of extraordinary talents with which the "nurslings" of Saturn are endowed: not only abilities for contemplation and reflection, but also a special intuition giving them insights into the hidden dark mysteries of being[1]." The association of melancholy with the influence of Saturn was so stable that the words "Saturnist" and "melancholic" became synonymous. The sign of Saturn is present in all Renaissance emblemata and compositions on the theme of melancholy[2].

Ficino's concepts, in particular, his hermetic theories of melancholy, are also linked with the widespread notions of the nocturnal, Saturnist, visionary and creative temperament of a melancholy genius, which led to the perception of melancholy as a sort of "symptom" of talent. This identification was to emerge as one of the more persistent connotations of the melancholic temperament in European culture.

Melancholic Travellers and Malcontent

The Renaissance fashion for melancholy formed in England primarily under the impact of the ideas of Marsilio Ficino and the Florentine Saturnists. It spread fast across England owing to Italian trips of the noblemen, who upon return sought to inculcate the taste for what they had seen and assimilated. Initially, melancholy was associated precisely with Italian trips and there appeared a "melancholic traveller" character, made especially attractive by stable aristocratic connotations.

By the early 1580, the "melancholic traveller" had become a social type that went down in English culture under the name of "malcontent".

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[1] The obvious link is the tradition in which Saturn is an allegory of Death and Time. For other opposites within the ambivalent image of Saturn and the nature of melancholics governed by it (e.g., poverty-richness) see Klibansky, R., Panofsky, E. and Saxl, F. *Saturn and Melancholy*. London, 1964.

[2] The astrological connotations of the melancholy concept in 15th- and 16th-century European culture are so substantive that we can speak of the stable traditions of interpreting famous melancholy-themed works as personal horoscopes. For instance, the tradition of interpreting Durer's *Melancholia I* as Emperor Maximilian's horoscope goes back to Aby Warburg. See, for example, Barlow, T.D. *The Medieval World Picture & Albert Durer's Melancholia*. Cambridge. Printed for presentation to members of THE ROXBURGHE CLUB, 1950.
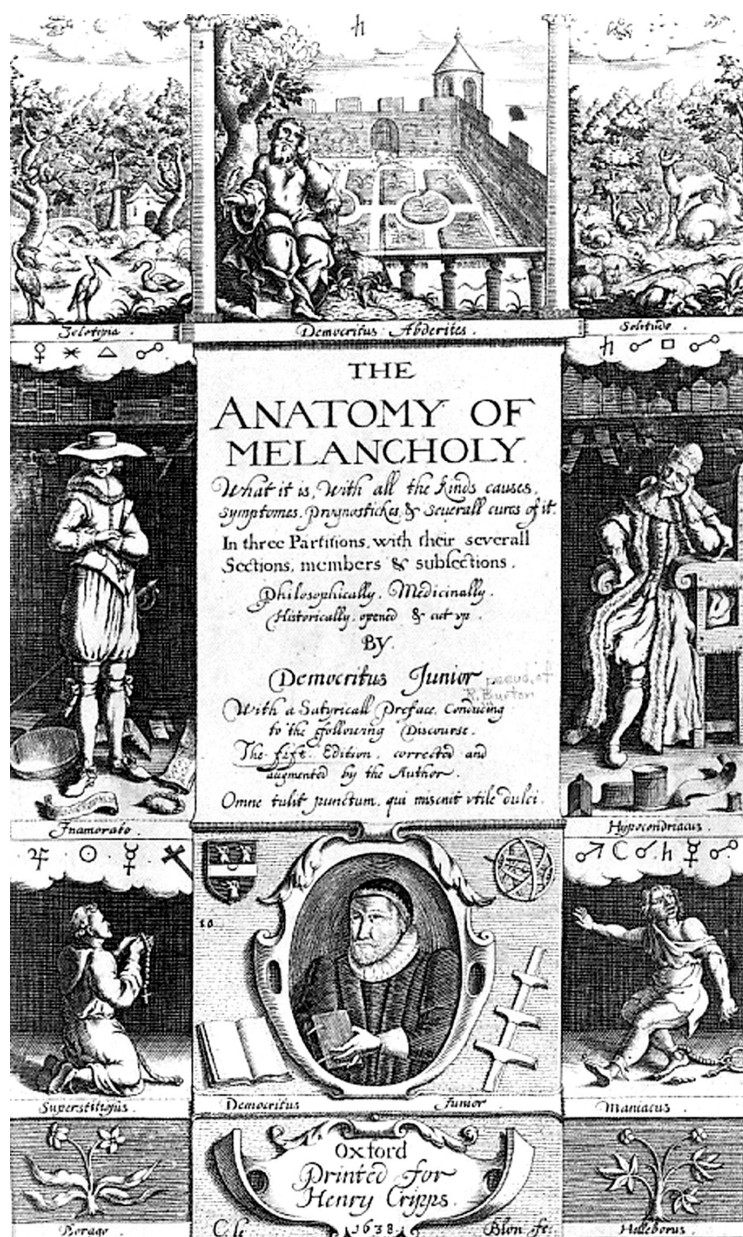
Frontispiece
of Robert Burton's
treatise
The Anatomy
of Melancholy. 1638

Imported from Italy, the intellectual fashion for the melancholy of the "malcontents" back home often had to bear the brunt of mockery as contemporaries failed to show adequate attention to the "humanistic project" of the upper-class travellers. Many of the "malcontents" had ties with the political opposition, due to which the notion of melancholy gradually acquired new meanings, adding social connotations to the traditional range, namely, eccentricity, freethinking and rebelliousness. In the late

16th century, the word "malcontent" was persistently associated with travels to Europe, everyday eccentricity, intellectual independence and political freethinking. However, in literature of the Elizabethan era the "malcontent" character went through a transformation and semantic "expansion" of sorts, retaining but a tenuous link with the aristocratic melancholic traveller. The spread of the stable iconography of the melancholic and its multifarious semantic variations was explained precisely by the versatile repertory of the "malcontent" in English literature and theatre of the late 16th – first half of the 17th century.

   In his book about melancholy in Elizabethan literature, Lawrence Babb singles out five types of the "malcontent": the primary type, which comprises the melancholy travellers and their imitators; the melancholy villain, the melancholy scholar, the melancholy cynic (appearing principally in drama) and the melancholy lover (Marsilio Ficino was the first to describe love melancholy)[1].

Unknown artist Portrait of Christopher Marlowe (?) 1585 Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

   The primary "malcontent" type described by Babb is in fact a generalisation of the most common and vague characterisation of the melancholic, which had struck root by the late 16th century. It is a person marked by intellectual superiority or else convinced of having it; his relations with the world always lack harmony, his gifts more often than not go unrecognised, he is ridiculed and persecuted, and his natural melancholy is aggravated by rejection and disillusionment. His attitude of existential loneliness finds all sorts of mundane embodiments ranging from political rebellion to commonplace eccentricity and breach of social etiquette. An outcast *per se*, he goes beyond the limits of the average mind potential, as well as any rules considered a commonly accepted social norm. On the one side, such a character fills the abstract formula of the rejection of the world with live human content, thus giving it a human dimension when the life of an individual becomes a dramatic and full-blooded reliving of a mental construct; on the other, human passions are elevated to philosophical generalisation. This ambivalent interpretation is based on the dualism of antiquity ideas (illness – creative talent) reinterpreted in a new dramatic vein.

The Anatomy of Melancholy

In his famous treatise *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1624)[2], Robert Burton listed the iconographic melancholy types as a parallel of sorts of the five "malcontent" types of Elizabethan literature. That book summed up all the

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[1] Lawrence Babb. *The Elizabethan Malady. A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642*. East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951, p. 76.

[2] The first edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* was printed in 1621.

existing concepts of melancholy at that time in an ambitious effort to classify the 16th-century theories in the Cartesian spirit of the 17th century[1]. The emblemata table on the frontispiece of the second edition of the book shows the five features and consequences of melancholy: *zelotypia* (jealousy), *solitudo* (solitariness), *superstitiosus* (superstition), *hypocondriacus* (hypochondria) and *maniacus* (madness), and two melancholy types of the scholar and the *Inamorato* (enamoured). The latter two are in fact the main iconographic motifs of melancholy.

The scholar sits under a tree with an open book on his knees, one arm propping up his bent head. The poetic commentary names him as Democritus:

> Old Democritus under a tree,
> Sits on a stone with book on knee;
> About him hang there many features,
> Of Cats, Dogs and such like creatures,
> Of which he makes anatomy,
> The seat of black choler to see.
> Over his head appears the sky,
> And Saturn Lord of melancholy.

The choice of name is not accidental: Burton describes Democritus as a famous melancholy thinker of antiquity and publishes his *Anatomy* under the penname of Democritus Junior. The title page of the third edition has the picture of the melancholy scholar (Democritus Senior) and the portrait of the author (Democritus Junior) placed symmetrically along the vertical: Burton thus acts as a successor to the great philosopher and simultaneously an heir to the melancholy tradition[2]. The landscapes on the left

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[1] *The Anatomy* is a compendium including medical and philosophical treatises, a historical chronicle and other works written in different styles from pedantically scientific to colloquial and spiced with historical anecdotes and witty commentaries. The multiple genres correspond to diverse sources, including the Bible, theological and historical writings, works by Greek and Latin authors, cosmography, travelogues, political treatises and satirical pamphlets, medical and scientific treatises, speeches, epistles, plays and English poetry and drama – Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spencer, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Ben (Benjamin) Johnson, etc. This enormous motley collection consists of several parts: the first gives a definition, causes, symptoms and characteristics of melancholy, the second focusses on treatment, and the third deals with the symptoms and ways of curing two types of melancholy – love and religious.

[2] Burton was known to be a melancholic; the epitaph on his tombstone at the Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, reads: *Paucis notus, paucioribus ignotus, hic jacet Democritus Junior, cui vitam dedit et mortem Melancholia* (Known to few, unknown to even less, here lies Democritus Junior to whom Melancholia granted life and death), died 7 January 1639". See A.G. Inger's commentaries to the translation of The Anatomy of Melancholy (two chapters) // RuBrica. Russian-British Chair. Issue 2, winter-spring 1997, p. 204. The Melancholia in the epitaph obviously means both Burton's melancholy temperament and the title of the famous treatise which had immortalised his name.

and right of Democritus –components of the emblems of jealousy and lone-
liness – comprise all the traditional melancholy attributes, including the
sign of Saturn, the bat and the sleeping dog. The iconography of the recluse
scholar, a solitary genius, the most famous and enigmatic version of whom
is Durer's *Melencolia* (1514), was to become one of the stable motifs of Euro-
pean painting of the 16th–17th centuries.

The enamoured person in Burton's table is a no less common iconograph-
ical melancholy type. He is standing with folded arms, his hat pulled down
over his eyes. His lute and books are at his feet (as symptoms of his van-
ity, according to Burton's comment), apparently indicating that the lover
and the poet have a common iconography. The numerous portraits of poets
done at the turn of the 17th century make use of the same folded arms motif,
for instance, the 1585 portrait traditionally thought to be that of Christo-
pher Marlowe, the possible co-author of Shakespeare's early plays. Marlowe
is portrayed with folded arms, the Latin inscription in the upper right-hand
corner "Quod me nutrit me destuit" (what feeds me destroys me) can be
taken for the textbook motto of the melancholic. This maxim is encoun-
tered in Marlowe's and Shakespeare's plays. Isaac Oliver depicted an *Un-
known Melancholy Young Man* in the same posture in his 1590 miniature,
which some scholars tend to regard as the portrait of Philip Sidney, philos-
opher, poet and diplomat at the court of Queen Elizabeth. The composition
of this portrait is close to the melancholy philosopher emblem in Burton's
Anatomy: Sidney is sitting under a tree with a labyrinth in the background,
a frequent attribute of melancholy, possibly, symbolising the bizarre road to
truth (Nicholas of Cusa wrote about melancholy as a road to truth). Oliver's
miniature differs from Burton's emblem only in the folded arms posture, as
a reference to the theme of poetry and/or love.

Melancholics of Elizabethan Drama

The type of a melancholic with folded arms and a hat pulled down on his
eyes was one of the most popular in English literature of the period. That
was how Babb's classification most frequently described the primary mel-
ancholy type. His recognisable image in the well-known engraving of 1615
entitled the *Sullen Melancholic* is matched by the typical description of a
stage embodiment of the melancholic: "Black silks and charcoal black
feather on the hat pulled down so that the face be buried in the shadow,
lowered head and folded arms these are the outward 'signs' of those pos-
sessed by grimly coloured melancholy"[1]. Melancholy travellers "walke mel-
ancholy with their arms folded" and engage in contemplation, for instance,
in T. Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller: or, the Life of Jack Wilton* (1594). The
image of a melancholy knight becomes popular. In 1615, Samuel Rowlands

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[1] See Chernova, A. …*Vse kraski mira, krome zhyoltoi* (All Colours of the World Save for Yellow),
     Moscow, 1987, p. 118.

Isaac Oliver

Poet Philip Sydney (?)
as melancholy
philosopher.

Circa 1590–5

Royal collections,
Great Britain

writes a poem *The Melancholy Knight*, in whose monologue the iconography of the melancholic receives distinctly religious connotations: the cross turns out to be the prototype of the crossed arms. The Melancholic Knight soliloquizes: "My braines with melancholy humers swell, I crosse mine armes at crosses that arise[1]." What is also used to good effect here is the "migrating" motif of blindness, the unseeing eyes of the melancholic simultaneously hidden from the world and refusing to look at it – the hat concealing the face is a variant of this motif. Burton suggests a "scientific" psychological explanation: "the melancholic likes darkness, cannot stand light, cannot stay in brightly lit places; his hat is pulled down to the eyes, he will never agree to see or to be seen of his own free will". In *The Melancholic Knight* Rowlands interprets the same motif allegorically: the melancholic's conscious blindness, on the one hand, mocks and challenges "blind Fortune" and, on the other, endowed with the gift of foresight and prophesy, the melancholic turns out to be a sort of travesty embodiment of Fortune. "And scoffe blinde *Fortune,* with hat ore mine eyes: / I bid the world take notice I abhorre it, / Having great *melancholy* reason for it.[2]" The title page of the poem shows the melancholic knight deep in thought, with folded arms and a hat concealing his face.

The motifs of eyes closed or "hidden" from the world– a melancholy trance of sorts – may also be connected with the ideas of hermetic philosophy, which formed the "core" of the Renaissance Neoplatonic movement and which reflected, among other things, the concept of knowledge as creative imagination. In this sense of special interest in Giordano Bruno's concept of "the art of memory", embodied, according to F. Yates, in "the change from forming corporeal similitudes of the intelligible world to the effort to grasp the intelligible world through tremendous imaginative exercises"[3] Bruno published *Seals*, one of his major writings on memory, during his stay in England in 1583, when the English philosophy and iconography

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[1] Cit. Lawrence Babb. *The Elizabethan Malady. A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642*. East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951, p. 77.

[2] The melancholie knight. By S.R. *quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A11133.0001.001?view=toc*

[3] Yates, F., *The Art of Memory*, London and New York: Routledge, 1966, p. 367.

of melancholy, directly linked with the Neoplatonist ideas of the nature of knowledge and of creative genius, was in the making. Bruno's treatises provoked heated debates in Oxford and Cambridge. Yates believes that it was in Bruno's writings that the Elizabethan reader first came into contact with the new ideas: "If so he would have come upon an exposition of the Renaissance theory of poetry and painting such as had not before been published in England, and he would have found it in the context of the images of occult memory"[1]. Philip Sidney was enthusiastic about Bruno's ideas, and it is only natural that his portrait relied on the traditional iconography of melancholy.

Distinguishing four grades of knowing, namely sense, imagination, reason and intellect, and regarding them as really a single whole, Bruno nevertheless speaks of the primacy of the imagination in the cognitive process. For him "the function of the imagination of ordering the images in memory is an absolutely vital one in the cognitive process. Vital and living images will reflect the vitality and life of the world... unify the contents of memory and set up magical correspondencies between outer and inner worlds"[2] through an intricately developed system of images. Cognition of the world through the workings of imagination is above all the lot of poets and artists, whom Bruno identifies with philosophers. In a section of the *Seals* treatise entitled "Zeuxis the Painter", Bruno compares painting with poetry and philosophy within the framework of the art of memory concept: Zeuxis is the painter who depicts the inner images of memory; the mental power of the poet and the philosopher consists in contemplation and description of inner images. "For there is no philosopher who does not mould and paint; whence that saying is not to be feared 'to understand is to speculate with images', and the understanding 'either is the fantasy or does not exist without it'.[3]" In the treatise "Phidius the Sculptor" Phidias stands for the sculptor of the memory, moulding "memory statues within". "So also (Bruno would seem to say) does Phidias the sculptor of the fantasy release the forms from the inform chaos of memory. Here, Yates observes, Bruno, as though [...] were introducing us to the core of the creative act, the inner act which precedes the outer expression" [4].

In the treatise "Statues" Bruno writes that with the help of artificial memory and imagination the human mind puts itself in contact with "divine and demonic intelligences" (p.292). "...we rise from the first to the last, collect the external species in the internal sense, order intellectual operations into a whole by art..."[5] The power of imagination and the art of imagery help us "hold within, the universe in all its ever changing forms, through images passing the one into the other in intricate associative

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[1] Yates, F., *The Art of Memory*, London and New York: Routledge, p. 254.

[2] Ibid., p. 257.

[3] Ibid., p. 253.

[4] Ibid., p. 254.

[5] Ibid., p. 290.

orders, reflecting the ever changing movements of the heavens.[1]" Like
many other ideas of Bruno's, the concept of moving associative connec-
tion acquired in particular owing to the ecstatic force of imagination, was
formulated in polemics with Aristotle's rationalistic philosophy of nature:
"All things of nature and in nature, like soldiers in an army, follow leaders
assigned to them ... This Anaxagoras knew very well but Father Aristotle
could not attain to it ... with his impossible and fictitious logical segrega-
tions of the truth of things,[2]" Bruno wrote.

"A dilemma was presented to the Elizabethans in this debate," Yates
sums up his reasoning about Elizabethan England coming into contact
with Bruno's ideas. "Either the inner images are to be totally removed [...]
or they are to be magically developed into the sole instruments for the
grasp of reality. Either the corporeal similitudes of mediaeval piety are to
be smashed or they are to be transposed into vast figures formed by Zeux-
is and Phidias, the Renaissance artists of the fantasy. May not the urgen-
cy and the agony of this conflict have helped to precipitate the emergence
of Shakespeare? [3]"

The equation of philosopher-poet-artist in the hermetic philosophy
of Bruno and the high status assigned to the "artists of the fantasy" in the
system of cognising the world through the art of memory and the power
of imagination may have influenced the concepts of the melancholy philos-
opher and the melancholy poet and the popular idea of melancholy mysti-
cal propensities.

"Secret knowledge" open to melancholy scholars in the images of philos-
opher poets is often understood precisely as secret vision, contemplation
of internal images (Bruno's hobbyhorse). The motif of a hidden "unseeing"
melancholy gaze turned inwards instead of outwards is accompanied by the
theme of extra sharp vision, literally in-sight. Literature, too, constantly
put to good use the theme of perspicacity and visionary sharpness of the
"thinking" vision of the melancholy poet and philosopher. One of Shake-
speare's constant themes, it found its fullest enigmatic expression in the
character of Hamlet.

The intent gaze typical of the melancholics – the desire to keep all the
images and links of the universe before the mental gaze – gets a dra-
matic reinterpretation in Hamlet's manner of "looking at things". Ham-
let tends to "examine the world from the 'end', from the nothingness
of grave dust which lies in store for everything seemingly great"[4]. The
scene of Hamlet talking to Yorick's skull, in which that tendency man-
ifests itself, is obviously in line with the medieval and Renaissance tra-
dition, in which "talking" skulls and skeletons became a common sym-
bol of "memento mori" as distinct from the original meaning of "Carpe

[1] Yates, F., *The Art of Memory*, London and New York: Routledge, p. 260.

[2] Ibid., p. 252.

[3] Ibid., p. 286.

[4] See Allenov, M.M. *Mikhail Vrubel*, Moscow, 1996, p. 78.

diem" (Seize the moment; enjoy while you can)[1]. In painting, Vanitas portraits popular in the late 16th century are the closest iconographical parallel to Hamlet's talk with Yorick's skull. In a portrait Sir Robert Peake Sr. painted in 1590, ten years before the appearance of *Hamlet*, Sir Edward Grimstone clad in the black clothes of a melancholic is shown with a skull in his hand. The "symbolical objects" in such portraits – a skull, a gravedigger's spade and sandglass – serve, as it were, as an invitation to melancholy. It is to take such a melancholy glance laying bare the essence of things and relieving them from the magical cover of illusions that Hamlet invites Horatio after the famous talk with the gravediggers. "Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so," Horatio answers. However, the scene with Yorick's skull is not merely a medieval "memento mori" in a Renaissance makeup. The old dualism of "memento mori" – "carpe diem" comes alive and manifests itself with a new force in the ambivalent idea of melancholy, which transforms the system of late Renaissance knowledge into a personal dramatically existential experience. At the same time, the tragically intense vision of the world makes action meaningless and depletes will, turning the melancholy philosopher into a doubting man who is existentially incapable of an active deed. Reflexion and inactivity become a recurring characteristic of the melancholy philosophers in Elizabethan drama.

The theme of mystical propensities and "thinking" vision also finds a peculiar reflection in other literary and stage images of the melancholics. The melancholy cynic is one of the more curious types of the malcontent. His character is a sort of "simplification" of the philosophical interpretation of intense gaze, its reduction to a projection on the mundane plane. The melancholy cynic can be an eccentric, schemer or political rebel, but his chief predestination is to be a critic of society, modern mores or human nature in general, in other words, to hold up a mirror before society, giving it a chance to look at itself from aside. The mirror is known to be another traditional attribute of Vanitas, and the role of the cynic, albeit in a different variation, is again to invite to melancholy that inevitably accompanies "an intense gaze at things". Hamlet, who incorporated all the possible gradations of melancholy, alternately plays the different roles of the melancholy philosopher, lover and, of course, cynic. "...I set you up a glass / Where you may see the inmost part of you", Hamlet says to Gertrude.

The melancholy cynic is in many ways akin to the philosopher, although his diatribes have primarily didactical goals. The cynic is endowed with wit, which is in line with the "social" sharpness of his vision, and his speeches against vices become scathing satirical pamphlets. Wit is another hypostatis of the melancholy gift of imagination and visionariness: the cynic reaches out to the truth hidden from society by "bringing close distant things

[1] For the changing meanings of skulls and skeletons in connection with the overall concept of life and fate see Panofsky, E. *Meaning and the Visual Arts*, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City, 1955, p. 309.

and combining the mutually exclusive"[1]. The melancholy cynic is the most colourful type in the European gallery of wits, the mordant possessors of a "sophisticated mind". One of the most charming melancholy cynics of Elizabethan literature is Jaques of *As You Like It*. "I love to cope him in these sullen fits, For then he is full of matter", Duke Senior says about Jacques.

The melancholy villain is a special "malcontent" type. The continuity of the "negative" tradition of perceiving melancholy is especially pronounced in this image. The depths of melancholy are fraught with something more than madness. According to demonologists, this state of soul poses a dangerous temptation. "Melancholy is a 'place' in the soul, through which the devil can easily get inside"[2]. In his treatise *De sacra philosophia* (On Sacred Philosophy, 1587) Francisco Valles connects the onset of melancholy directly with a "diabolical" temptation: "The devil induces the disease of melancholy increasing the amount of melancholic humour in us and, stirring up what is already in us, transfers black vapours to the brain and sensation centres"[3]. Small wonder that Hamlet fears getting under the sway of the Prince of Darkness:

> "Out of my weakness and my melancholy, /
> As he is very potent with such spirits..."

The medieval tradition connecting melancholy with demonomania was quite stable and could be traced not only through the Renaissance, but also the Enlightenment: the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and D'Alembert defined demonomania as a "spiritual ailment, a variety of melancholy". As a literary interpretation of this deeply rooted tradition, the melancholy villains form a whole gallery of stage "psychopathic monsters", according to Babb. Their images are firmly associated with "black passions", a Machiavellian mindset and Satanism, but also keen intellect, extraordinary abilities and a strong will. They are the only melancholics full of resolve and capable of action. These include Aaron the Moor from *Titus Andronicus*, Lady Macbeth and Don John from *Much Ado about Nothing*.

Love melancholy was among the commonest types of melancholy in Elizabethan England and the melancholy lover a popular literary protagonist. His image and mode of behaviour is a peculiar combination of the traditions of chivalrous knightly love, the Renaissance concept of melancholy and common scientific ideas of love passion as illness. The folded arms iconography, borrowed initially from the "malcontent", emerged as such a recognisable emblem of love melancholy that, as we have seen, Burton chose

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[1] For wit as the key concept for the 17th century see Khachaturov, S. "Otklonyayushchiyesya primery: oprokinutyi velikan" (Deviating Examples: Toppled Giant), ArtChronica, Nos. 3–4, 2005, p. 176.

[2] Cit. *Sad demonov – Hortus Daemonum*. *Slovar infernalnoi mifologii srednevekovya i vozrozhdeniya* (Dictionary of Infernal Mythology of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance). Moscow: Intrada, 1998, p. 178.

[3] Ibid.

it to illustrate his treatise. Unlike the colourful melancholy villains, the stage melancholy lover types are monotonous: they are lean, pale and taciturn, shun company, write verses and letters during sleepless nights, pine and cry. Their manners are such a stable stereotype that they are often described in satirical tones in Shakespeare's plays. In *Love's Labour's Lost* the lover is advised "with your hat penthouse-like o'er the shop of your eyes; with your arms crossed on your thin belly-doublet like a rabbit on a spit…" [1]

The role of the melancholy philosopher, cynic or lover presupposed a strict canon of stage impersonation. Among other things, it included the theme of insightfulness, visionary knowledge and "thinking" vision: hence the motif of close, ecstatically intense gaze was its plastic or stage equivalent. The melancholic was to stand apart from other protagonists with folded arms and wide-open eyes; the actors sought to produce the effect of a tense, fixed gaze [2]. In Elizabethan era portraits, many melancholics have the same steadfast gaze. Colour symbolism in their clothes likewise played a special role: the melancholy villains appeared primarily dressed in black, whereas the lovers could combine sundry shades in their attire: white was the symbol of faith and purity, grey and green symbolising grief and lovesickness [3].

It was in the stage canon formed in the Elizabethan theatre that the iconography of the melancholic with crossed arms and steadfast (or, conversely, "hidden") gaze proved especially lasting and practically did not change over centuries. In painting, the iconographic motifs of melancholy were more susceptible to change and, along with the metamorphoses of the melancholy concept itself, transformed in numerous new variations.

In ancient aesthetics, the theory of melancholy reflected ideas about the harmonious world order: four humours of the human body (microcosm) corresponded to the four elements of macrocosm. Excess of "melaina chole" was rationalistically balanced (harmonised) with a gift of creativity. In the 16th century, this harmonious dualism, complicated by the impact of medieval, cabbalist and Renaissance astrology and reinterpreted along the lines of humanist philosophy, was perceived as a tragic and fundamentally unsolvable contradiction. The concept of melancholy, firmly correlated with the theme of a gift of genius and dramatic attainment of truth, came to embody the crisis of late Renaissance consciousness. It found one of the most majestic and dramatic embodiments in Elizabethan literature: Hamlet – the most famous melancholic, whose name became the formula of melancholy

Sullen Melancholic.
1615

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[1] Shakespeare, W., *Love's Labour's Lost*. The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, London: Abbey Library, p. 156.

[2] See Lawrence Babb. *The Elizabethan Malady. A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642*. Michigan State College Press, East Lansing, 1951.

[3] For details see Chernova, A., Op. cit.

in European culture and a designation of a certain form of man's conflict with the world – made his appearance on the world stage.

In England of the 17th century the "malady" of the past century remained in vogue while retaining ambivalent interpretations. However, its status of high philosophical drama obviously gave way to parlour fashion: whoever aspired to intellectual superiority, artistic talent or aristocratic finesse "donned" the melancholy garb. An English poet of the second half of the 17th century in an *Ode to Melancolia* called it the "sweetest state" and exclaimed: "there is nothing more exquisite, refined and sweeter than melancholy". Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* had several reprints up to the late 1670s. Under the influence of Burton's poetical prologue John Milton produced L'*Allegro* (The Happy Man) and *Il Penseroso* (The Melancholy Man). The theme of melancholy also appears in his *Paradise Lost*. The 18th century was less susceptible to the philosophy of melancholy: Burton's *Anatomy* looked anachronistic for 18th-century taste and refined melancholics of the previous centuries were seen as an outdated curiosity. In painting melancholy moved to the sphere of elegiac tradition, often assuming the image of a tragic Muse. That was how Joshua Reynolds pictured it in *Et in Arcadia Ego* (1769), where one of the ladies sentimentalizing over a tombstone inscription poses as melancholy[1].

Melancholy in European Romanticism

The turn of the 19th century saw another upsurge of interest in melancholy. The "grande malade" of the 16th century became a new epidemic for those poets who were the forerunners of English romanticism and primarily for the romanticists themselves. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* reprinted in 1800 for the first time since 1676 was again an in thing. Lake School poets, such as Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey, were enthusiastic about it. Byron admired Burton's treatise; images of melancholy featured in poems of John Keats. He used a quotation from Burton to introduce his poem *Lamia*, there has survived Keats' copy of Burton's treatise with numerous notes left by the poet. In 1819, Keats wrote an *Ode on Melancholy*: "Ay, in the very temple of delight / Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine…" [2]

Romanticists made active use of symbols associated primarily with the visionary aspect of melancholy. The concept of melancholy as a nocturnal, Saturnist temperament received a new lease on life, the theme of the artist's nighttime vision became popular, and T. Gautier, J. de Nerval and V. Hugo mention the "black sun of Melancholy". The theme of contemporary melancholy and spleen, as well as the Saturnist symbols in the art of Charles Baudelaire merit separate research.

[1] See Panofsky, E., *Meaning and the Visual Arts*, 1955, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, p. 295.

[2] Keats, John. Ode on Melancholy – Poetry Foundation *www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173743*

It is noteworthy that the 16th- and 17th-century ideas about the "Saturnist" temperament of the melancholic – the gift of foresight, visionariness, ecstatic power of imagination, powerful intellect, artistic genius and simultaneously rejection, loneliness and retirement – became an ideal mythological "form" for commonplace romanticist notions of free creative personality. Above all, they were the popularised ideas of Friedrich Schelling, which formed the groundwork of international romanticist aesthetics, including the concept of intellectual intuition as the only means of grasping the absolute, art as the highest form of cognising the world, the cult of the genius and religious mysticism. There is profound logic in that the most powerful mythology in history connected with the tragic dualism of an existentially lonely creative mind – the mythology of a melancholy genius – came back to life precisely at the development stage of European philosophical thought, when man's spiritual world was first recognised as "objective existence"[1]. That revolution in consciousness manifested itself, among other things, in the concept of a "romantic genius" opposing the mob. The role of the melancholic in romanticist culture became one of the pithiest and most meaningful metaphors of the recognisable traits of the romantic genius, from exceptional abilities to demonism. Just as the romanticists found a treasure-trove of images and forms in the Middle Ages, in the philosophy of melancholy the romantic genius found genealogy and family emblem in the form of iconography.

A persistent motif of that iconography – the folded arms and an intensely steadfast or inspirationally ecstatic gaze – most likely came to romanticist culture from English art, having survived intact in the English stage canon.

Theatre of History: Hamlet and Napoleon

The new concept of historical painting, which took shape in England in the early 19th century, facilitated the rejuvenation of that canon and its being loaded with new meanings.

From the late 18th century, English painting developed a renewed passion for Shakespearean themes and steadily incorporated them in the repertory of historical painting. In 1771, Joshua Reynolds, president of the Royal Academy of Arts, listing themes worthy of historical painting at an Academy lecture, confined himself to subjects from Roman, Greek and Holy history. In the early 1800s, the concept of historical painting changed fundamentally, in particular, owing to the London publisher John Boydell's grandiose project of the Shakespeare Gallery. In 1786, he undertook the publication of all plays of Shakespeare illustrated by the best contemporary artists. The first stage of the project was the exhibition of 160 paintings on Shakespearean themes – the Shakespeare Gallery – that opened at a Pall Mall gallery in 1789. In 1791, Boydell printed a series of engravings after the exhibited original paintings and nearly ten years later, in 1802, nine volumes of Shakespeare's saw the light of day. In 1803, Boydell published

[1] According to N. Sipovskaya.

a two-volume supplement with all the engravings after the painting compositions of the 1786 exhibition. The best English artists contributed to Boydell's project, including Reynolds, who painted three pictures for the Gallery and remarked that Boydell's undertaking had provided subjects and commissions to artists for another decade.

Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery indeed played a tremendous role in the history of English art: subjects from British history and literature made their way into painting and were readily embraced by culture that experienced a Shakespearean Renaissance in poetry. Gradually Shakespearean themes, on a par with subjects from new British, primarily military history formed a new repertory of historical painting in England, nearly squeezing out biblical and mythological themes. The terms of a competition for a cycle of frescoes called by Queen Victoria in 1843 to decorate the buildings of Parliament were an impressive sign of those changes, indicating that the process of changing the concept of historical painting had been finalised. One of those terms prescribed that artists should choose a subject from British history or from works of Spencer, Shakespeare and Milton.

Literary subjects and events of contemporary British history became established as a new concept of historical painting nurtured by romanticist aesthetics and understood as a chronicle of national history, its "spirit". That blanket concept was based on the romantic philosophy of history, which taught "to look for parallels in the instructive continuity and use the magic wand of analogy", according to Novalis, and also on the concept of "heroic history" in the spirit of Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle's concept of history with its cult of heroes not merely governing the historical process, but shaping history that was understood as a "chaos of being" (although formulated somewhat later), suited as best as any other the heroic epic of making history, which unfolded in English painting of the first half of the 19th century.

The method of metaphorical similes typical of Carlyle's historical thinking was close to English historical painters. The heroes of modern history and Shakespeare's characters existed, as it were, in the same space of "heroic history", easily exchanged sets and shared common iconographical motifs. Napoleon, Nelson and Wellington watching the course of battles or pondering on those to be fought (with a decision-making moment or "turning point" depicted) were portrayed in the pose of, say, Hamlet asking "to be or not to be".

The compositional solutions of themes from works of the great playwrights of the past frequently drew on the theatre canons. Many pictures were directly based on theatre impressions, or reproduced scenes from concrete productions that were recognised by contemporaries. Portraits of famous actors as Shakespearean characters gained currency. For instance, Thomas Lawrence painted John Philip Kemble as Hamlet (1801) and Thomas Sully portrayed George Frederick Cooke as Richard III (1811). Collages of sorts were also made of characters from

Shakespeare's plays that were popular on the English stage in the 1800s: Thomas Stothard, who had contributed to Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, exhibited a group portrait of *Shakespearean Characters* in 1813. One can easily recognise Malvolio, Falstaff, Lear and Cordelia, the Macbeths with the weird sisters, Ophelia and Hamlet in an "ink-coloured cape" with crossed arms.

The "journey" of the iconographical motif of melancholy in European art can be described schematically as follows: the melancholy posture preserved intact in the stage canon migrated from stage productions to painting, first as scenes from the plays of English playwrights of the 16th and 17th centuries; it was then borrowed from the great men of the past by heroes of the present day within the framework of the "heroic history" concept performed on stage as a dramatic spectacle. The metaphorical parallels, which struck root in the new concept of historical painting, enabled Hamlet and Napoleon, Horatio and Nelson to appear on the same historical stage.

In other words, the famous Napoleonic posture with folded arms went back straight to one of the iconographical motifs of melancholy in Elizabethan drama. That motif gradually migrated from historical painting to portraiture, emerging as a stable pictorial iconography of not only the great military leader, but also any military man in romanticist art.

In the portraits of military men that iconography, originating in the English tradition, was widespread in European romanticist culture that tended to rely on commonly replicated and often "cliché" motifs. In Russian art of the 1820s-40s, one can find many portraits going back to that pictorial tradition. A curious example of living ties between English and Russian art is the portrait of Count Mikhail Semenovich Vorontsov painted by Thomas Lawrence in 1821. Lawrence chose the traditional form of official portrait and the iconographical motif of folded arms for Vorontsov, son of the Russian ambassador to London, who was born and educated in England, took part in the Russo-Turkish and Russo-French wars and was commander of the occupation corps in France in 1825–6.

"Napoleonic Posture": "Gens fatales" Iconography. Contemplative Melancholy

Within the iconography of military men and leaders, the "Napoleonic posture" developed its own overtones while the "Napoleonic myth" was taking shape in culture and thus added new meanings to the iconographic "shell". Unable to describe in detail the metamorphoses of this subject in Russian art of the 1820s-1840s, I will only say that the "crossed arms", up to the early 20th century referred to as the "Napoleonic posture", in Russian pictorial tradition became a stable iconography of "gens fatales" involved in the romanticist discourse of chance and fate (described by Juri Lotman in his well-known article "*The Queen of Spades* and the

Philibert-Louis
Debucourt
Portrait of Emperor
Napoleon I. 1807
Etching, coloured
aquatint, tinted
with watercolours

Theme of Cards and Card Games in Russian Literature of the Early 19th Century”)[1].

Having become a household name for an “homme fatal” of romanticism, Napoleon, on the one side, acts on behalf of anonymous forces, fate; on the other, he is in equal measure a “messenger of providence” and a “son of chance”, that is, a man who dares to challenge fate and gamble with it. Hermann from *The Queen of Spades* is the better known character of the “Napoleonic type” in Russian culture of the first half of the 19th century, an “homme fatal” who gambles with fate. Hermann is compared with Napoleon not only directly (“He has the profile of a Napoleon, and the soul of a Mephistopheles,” Tomsky remarks), but because he takes the “Napoleonic posture”. In Lizaveta’s room (that is, when Hermann loses for the first time, overwhelmed by “the irreparable loss of the secret” with the death of the old Countess) “he was sitting near the window, with his arms crossed and a fierce frown upon his forehead. In this attitude he bore a striking resemblance to the portrait of Napoleon.”

This iconography of an “homme fatal”, creator and visionary presupposes different, yet equally dramatic life scenarios, including madness, early demise or exile that romanticise the character’s image, and also “blissful indifference” and “the saving cold of an inactive soul” as the choice of the “lot of providence” in Baratynsky’s poetry[2].

The melancholy posture emerges as a component of the composite characteristic of the mercurial spiritual “fabric” in romanticist portraits, fitting the play of personal emotions into the tradition of existentialist questions and turning it into a certain stage in the history of spirit as the history of contradictions. The harmony of reserve and strong sentiments, which is so palpable in the best of Kiprensky’s melancholy elegiac portraits, can be expressed most aptly by what Pushkin said about Baratynsky, the great melancholic of Russian poetry: “Nobody has more feeling in his thoughts and taste in his feelings than Baratynsky”. In Kiprensky’s portraits, the movement of thought and feeling is verified by this “golden ratio” of romanticist poetics. For all the thick-laid “textbook glamour”, every fresh look at Kiprensky’s portrait

[1] Lotman, J.M., *“Pikovaya dama” i tema kart i kartochnoi igry v russkoi literature nachala XIX veka* (*The Queen of Spades* and the Theme of Cards and Gambling in Russian Literature of the Early 19th Century) // Lotman J.M. Pushkin. Biografia pisatelya. Statyi i zametki. 1960–1990. “Evgenii Onegin”. Kommentarii (Pushkin. The Life Story of a Writer. Articles and Notes. 1960–1990. *Eugene Onegin*. Commentaries. St. Petersburg, 2005.

[2] Individual myths of M. Yu. Lermontov and P. Ya. Chaadaev gave rise to a special variety of melancholy motifs.

of Pushkin reveals anew the perfect balance between uniqueness, the irreproducible "phenomenon" of genius and some vaguely discernible tradition hinting at the "spiritual biography" in the background. The recognisable iconographical motif lends force to this connection – the sharply outlined sculpted silhouette with folded arms. One can picture a hypothetical gallery of the type of the then fashionable family portrait galleries, in which the portrait of Pushkin would figure among the portraits of great poets of the 16th through the 17th century and the early 19th century.

In addition to the new major meanings added by the age of romanticism – demonic grandeur, gambling with Fate and madness for retribution – the iconography of folded arms was partially correlated with a more traditional theme of "contemplative melancholy". Russian romanticists had different names for this new type of melancholy, including "English spleen" or "Russian *handra*"[1] and "universal sorrow".

On the one side, the theme of romantic "contemplative melancholy" is linked with the elegiac tradition of interpreting melancholy in the second half of the 18th century that was seen along the lines of a new experience of the current moment – a keen feeling of the outgoing epoch and "personal" time that is finite for everybody. "Melancholy is neither grief nor joy, but a shade of fun in the sad heart and a shade of dejection in the soul of a happy man", V.A. Zhukovsky wrote, associating melancholy with the feeling of vagaries and fickleness of life and a "presentiment of irreparable and inevitable loss".

On the other side, romantic melancholy was a sign of the exhausted optimism of the enlightenment and a harbinger of the diverse versions of the philosophy of pessimism that started taking shape at that time. Melancholy became "a sign of inner maturity" of a personality not only familiar "with wicked fate", to quote Baratynsky, but also experiencing a sort of "release" from the world of aimless actions and passions. In Baratynsky's poem *Dve Doli* (Two Lots) hope and excitement are the lot of those "who are kept awake by an inexperienced mind" while "hopelessness and peace" of those "who have received the knowledge of being". What I mean here is not only the change of life phases, but the acute feeling of changing historical epochs in relation to different ages of mankind. Romanticist melancholy clearly resonates with the motifs of stoicism, detached contemplation and tragic scepticism, which were shortly to become the fundamental tenets of the philosophy of Schopenhauer.

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[1] The word "handra" apparently appeared as a result of the colloquial contraction of "hypochondria", a purely medical term for melancholy. Another contracted form, "pochondria", transformed into the verb "pokhandrit", from which the noun "handra" later on derived. The latter word, together with its synonym "spleen", entered the literary language in the early 19th century. Pushkin was the first to introduce the expression "English spleen" in literary usage in *Eugene Onegin*.

Melancholy and "Philosophy of Pessimism".
Hamlet as 19th-Century "Pessimist".
Melancholy and Decadence

A new surge of interest in melancholy in European culture of the 1880s
had to do precisely with the spread of Schopenhauer's "philosophy of pes-
simism" and another "Shakespearean Renaissance". A new interpre-
tation of *Hamlet* along the lines of Schopenhauer's philosophy and his
perception as the "chief pessimist" of the 19th century emerged as a pop-
ular theme of the last two decades of the outgoing century. In his essay
The Decay of Lying Oscar Wilde established a direct link between Hamlet's
melancholy and Schopenhauer's pessimism (Schopenhauer has analysed
the pessimism that characterises modern thought, but Hamlet invented it)[1].

   Russian magazines of the 1880s, too, demonstrated interest equally in the
pessimistic "disposition of the epoch" and Shakespearean plays, above all
in the different interpretations of *Hamlet*. *Severny Vestnik* (The Northern
Messenger) published a collection of articles on the reasons behind the
appearance and different concepts of pessimism. The author of the arti-
cle "Despondency and Pessimism of Modern Cultured Society" published
in 1885 wrote: "At present despondency and pessimism show in all man-
ifestations of the human spirit; they are most pronounced in those fields
where the human spirit has a chance to make the most intense and com-
plete statement, namely, in *belles lettres* and philosophy. (...) Half a centu-
ry has passed since the appearance of Schopenhauer's philosophy of pessi-
mism and it was not until the latest decades that this morose philosophy,
in which life envies death, became widespread in society."[2] A common turn
in arguments about pessimism was its relation to mysticism, including
in Russian culture. An essay, "On Mysticism among the Russian People and
in Society, published by *Severny Vestnik* in 1886, dealt with this theme[3].

   The apogee of the "pessimistic sentiments" provoked by the ideas
of Schopenhauer articulated in the romanticist and late romanticist pe-
riod was accompanied by a revived interest in melancholy and the differ-
ent interpretations of the Hamlet temperament as the "character" of the
19th century. The earliest stage interpretations of that sort also appeared
in the period of late romanticism. For instance, in 1889 the *Artist*[4], a "the-
atre, music and art magazine" which carried articles about Shakespeare's
works and their new productions in nearly every issue, published a de-
tailed article on Shakespeare's plays that also dealt with melancholy.
A significant part of an article about P.S. Mochalov "as an interpreter

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[1] Wilde, Oscar, The Decay Of Lying at Online-Literature

[2] Prof. Ivanyukov. *"Unyniye i pessimism sovremennogo kulturnogo obshchestva"* (Despondency and
    Pessimism of Modern Cultured Society) // *Severny Vestnik*, No. 2, 1885, pp. 37–8.

[3] Prugavin, A. "O mistitsizme v russkom narode i obshchestve" (On Mysticism among Russian People
    and in Society) // *Severny Vestnik*, No. 3, 1886, p. 215.

[4] Ivanyukov, Iv. "Son v letnyuyu noch" (A Midsummer Night's Dream) // *Artist*, No. 1, 1889, pp. 56–71.

of Shakespeare's roles" published by *Iskusstvo* (Art, 1883) focussed on the interpretation of the role of Hamlet "in the spirit" of the 19th century. "Hamlet is a man of our time, a child of the 19th century. (...) His striving from the finite to the infinite, from earth to heavens, these inner tensions and moral fatigue can all befall only a man who had already had a brush with modern civilisation"[1].

Such understanding of Hamlet's character was to become its commonest interpretation. In parallel with this desire to "modernise" Hamlet, the opposite trend was quite distinct: to detect extratemporal Hamletian traits in modern pessimism. The essay "Paul Bourget and Pessimism", which analysed the concepts of pessimism in Baudelaire, Renan, Bourget and others, listed the typically Hamletian traits of the modern mindset described as "scepticism without precedent in the history of thought". "The malady of doubting everything, even the doubt itself, entails a whole retinue of all too familiar weaknesses, such as vacillating will, sophist compromises with one's conscience, amateurishness half-detached from real life and always indifferent, and lack of firm energy of character.[2]"

Hamlet's "modernisation" goes hand in hand with the spread of the iconography of melancholy – Russian periodicals are full of references to the Hamletian motif of "crossed arms" being used in the theatre and literature.

The likening of Hamletian temperament to the philosophy of pessimism and the renewed interest in the theme and iconography of melancholy in its Shakespearean and romanticist interpretations paved the way to the development of new myths of melancholy in *fin-de-siècle* European and Russian cultures. In England, which witnessed equally the Shakespearean Renaissance and enthusiasm with national romanticism, the theme of melancholy came back to life in the art of later Pre-Raphaelites[3] and decadent aestheticism. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* was popular among the Rhymers' Club poets and the motifs of melancholy recur in their poetry. In his introduction to the 1932 reprint of Burton's treatise Holbrook Jackson, the author of the famous book about the English Eighteen Nineties, points out a special interest in melancholy among the English decadents touched with a taste for mysticism and occultism[4].

The Russian decadents were no less sensitive to mystic and occult interpretations of melancholy, following in the footsteps of not only the English, but also the poets of the French romanticist tradition, primarily

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[1] "P.S. Mochalov kak istolkovatel shekspirovskikh rolei, i kritiki ego stsenicheskogo iskusstva
      (P.S. Mochalov as an Interpreter of Shakespeare's Characters and Critics of His Stage Art) // *Iskusstvo*, No. 7, 1883, pp. 71–2.

[2] Andreeva, A. "Paul Bourget and Pessimism" // *Severny Vestnik*, No. 2, 1890, p. 30.

[3] See Shaw, W. David. "Edward Burne-Jones and Pre-Raphaelite Melancholy" // *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Vol. 66, No. 2, spring 1997.

[4] See Jackson, Holbrook. Introduction to Robert Burton. *The Anatomy of Melancholy* / Everyman's Library/ London: Dent, New-York: Dutton, 1932.

Baudelaire and de Nerval. Such overtones are obvious, for instance, in the interpretation of melancholy by Voloshin, who centred his essay about Odilon Redon on it. "Only one sun at times rises in this world – le Soleil Noir de la Melancolie", Voloshin writes about the world of images in Redon's paintings. He opens his essay with a decadent style description of Durer's *Melancolia* that hung in Redon's studio[1]. His description of Redon's works is laced with traditional attributes of Vanitas that are closely linked with the theme of melancholy: "The unending sorrow of knowledge is his lyricism. A thin laurel branch is quietly approaching the naked skull of a human puppet. With sad humility, the head bends down before it. This is Glory"[2].

Portrait of Poet Bryusov by Mikhail Vrubel

The iconography of melancholy linked to both Durer's interpretation and the English stage canon struck root in Russian pictorial art of the late 19th century. An exceptionally precise combination of the posture and subject was achieved in the works of Mikhail Vrubel, an artist who was especially consistent in mastering the repertory of European literature. Vrubel used the iconographic motif of "crossed arms" when painting the Demon, the Seraph and, a little later, the *Portrait of Poet Bryusov,* which conformed to the traditional grades of meaning: visionariness, divination, nocturnal temperament and poetic genius. The motif first appeared in the cycle of Vrubel's illustrations to Lermontov's poem *Demon*, namely, in the watercolour *Tamara Dancing* (1890–1). The way Vrubel saw him, this Demon was not a devil, nor an evil spirit, nor the antithesis of the divine. Vrubel claimed that "in general the Demon was misunderstood, confused with the devil or Satan, meanwhile the Greek for devil is simply the 'horned' one and Satan (diabolos) means 'slanderer', whereas Demon means 'soul' and personifies the eternal struggle of the restless human soul, seeking to pacify passions besetting it and to comprehend life, yet unable to find answers to its doubts either on earth or in heaven[3]". In *Tamara Dancing* the Demon is precisely the magnificent image of the "restless" doubting spirit, a demonic melancholic closely related to the most famous melancholics of European culture, from Shakespeare's and Milton's characters to romanticist heroes. The *Seated Demon* (1890)[4] would become a true embodiment of melancholy (albeit, based on a different iconography). Illustrations to Lermontov are a stage version of the theme. We know from N.A. Prakhov's memoirs that "the production of Anton Rubinstein's eponymous opera

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[1] Voloshin, M. "Odilon Redon" // *Vesy*, No. 4, 1904, pp. 1–3.

[2] Voloshin, M. Op. cit., p. 2.

[3] *Vrubel. Perepiska. Vospominaniya o khudozhnike...*, p. 304.

[4] The *Seated Demon* can be interpreted as a variety of Durer's iconography; however, this theme is beyond the scope of the present study.
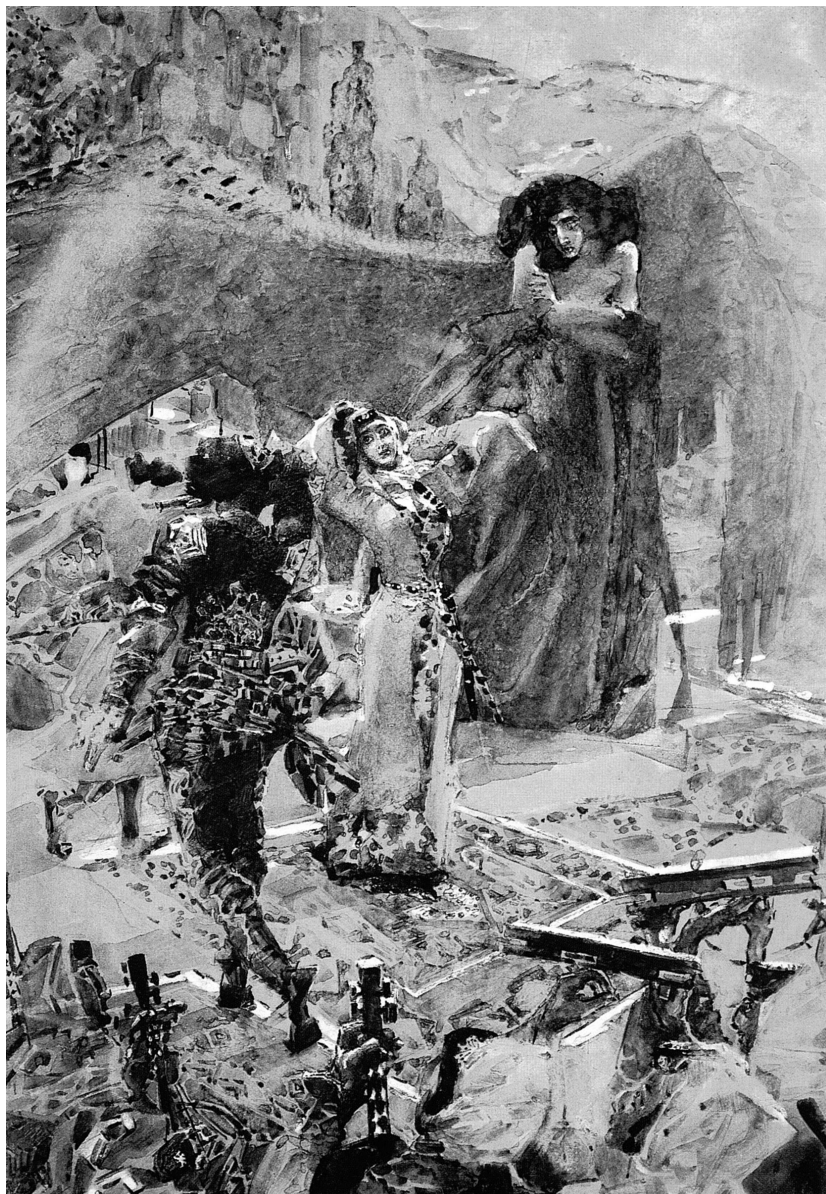
in Kiev"[1] prompted Vrubel to develop the theme of the Demon plastically. The composition of *Tamara Dancing*, and in particular the "crossed arms" motif took shape directly under the impression of the Kiev production and in accordance with the stage genealogy of the iconography of melancholy. "The Demon here is just as theatrically reclining on the rock with crossed

Mikhail Vrubel
Tamara Dancing.
1890–1
Illustration
to Lermontov's poem
Demon
State Tretyakov Gallery,
Moscow

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[1] Prakhov, N.A. *Mikhail Aleksandrovich Vrubel* // Vrubel. Perepiska. Vospominaniya o khudozhnike …, p. 303.

**Mikhail Vrubel
Seraph (Demon).**
1904
State Russian
Museum, Saint
Petersburg

arms and looking at Tamara dancing a *lezghinka* as Tartakov was reclining in that scene," Prakhov recalled[1].

The iconographic motif of melancholy in Vrubel's graphic works of 1904–5, as represented by the images of the standing Demon and six-winged Seraph, is in line with the main themes of Vrubel's works – tragic "intercession" and ultra-vision attaining the nature, to quote M.M. Allenov, of an "abnormal exaltation" and "obsession with visual images"[2]. The same themes make up the repertory of classical motifs used to depict a melancholy genius. They find the most impressive and plastically inventive embodiment in the portrait of Bryusov mentioned at the start of this essay. Vrubel painted this portrait when his illness had gone into remission and when he was producing countless variations of the Seraph, the Prophet and his last work, *The Vision of the Prophet Ezekiel*. The themes of prophetic visions and the inner drama of a creative visionary merged in the portrait of Bryusov to produce the most poignant image of a melancholy poet in Russian art.

Very much like the *Seated Demon* was perceived by contemporaries in the context of Nietzschean ideas, popular interpretations of the philosophy of Schopenhauer provide a fairly exact context for understanding the *Portrait of Bryusov*. What is important here is not so much the theme of tragic scepticism as postulates of the intuitive visionary nature of creativity. The development of these ideas is the main intrigue of Valery Bryusov's manifesto *Klyuchi tain* (Mystery Clues), written in 1904: "And I will point to one solution of the enigma of art that belongs precisely to a philosopher (…). It is the answer given by Schopenhauer. Art is what we call revelation in other fields. (…) We are not locked hopelessly in this 'blue prison', to use Fet's image. It has ways out and clear openings. These openings are the ecstatic moments of super-sensitive intuition which give other insights into the world phenomena going deeper beyond their outer skin and into their core"[3].

Bryusov's portrait may well be interpreted as a variation (albeit intuitive) on the poet-visionary-prophet theme made within the framework of the mythology of melancholy. The crossed arms posture, the ecstatically steadfast gaze going beyond the canvas limits and the poet's figure looking like a sculpted monument are the traditional motifs of the iconography of melancholy, which are, however, interpreted in a new way.

The theme of this portrait is not merely the at first glance obvious likening of the poet's figure to a monument, but the plastic embodiment of the well-known literary subject of a "statue coming alive" or a "hero turning to

[1] Prakhov, N.A. *Mikhail Aleksandrovich Vrubel,* p. 314.

[2] Allenov, M.M. Op. cit., p. 69.

[3] Bryusov, V. *Klyuchi tain* (Mystery Clues), // *Literary Manifestos from Symbolism to Our Day*, Moscow, 2000, p. 58–9.

stone". The contrast between the black "spread-eagle" silhouette (bringing to mind the "iron figure" of Napoleon) and the sharp light-and-shade modelling of the head, leaving half the face in deep shadow and the other half lit up with bright flecks, makes the viewer take Bryusov's stiff posture for the unnatural and agonising state of not just tenseness, but petrification. The impression of inner tension in the outwardly static figure is emphasised by the elaborate drawing of the eyes, which makes the poet's gaze look obviously strange. The left eye with a tiny fleck is set deep on the side of the face shadowed with soft hatching while the pupil of the right eye with a fleck of light is sharply squinted up and sideways. If you mentally "close" the right side of the face, Bryusov's gaze will look deeply concentrated, but if you do the same with the left side, you will get the impression of ecstasy and blinding: the poet is literally blinded by the light, which has suddenly "shone onto him", become reflected in the gleaming fleck on the dilated pupil and lit up the right side of the face. This unbalanced gaze, simultaneously detached and ecstatically tense, plastically imparts the theme of insight to the portrait but as an alarming dissonance linked with the theme of petrification.

Bryusov looks like his own tombstone, his blinding insight gained when the living flesh is turning to stone, that is, gained at the cost of parting with life. In other words, what the poet sees can only be seen on the other side of life, when one departs and is immersed in the blackness of non-being, turning into a stone cast of oneself. This insight comes from the melancholy gaze at the world from its "end" – this way Vrubel imparts the Hamletian theme to the portrait and conveys it through Hamletian iconography.

Ilia Doronchenkov

"Storm Gathering over Russian Art": From the History of Polemics on Impressionism in Russian Criticism of the Early 1890s

I wish to thank the Clark Art Institute Research and Academic Program for the opportunity to continue my study of the topic discussed in present essay. At the turn of the 20th century different European art schools got to know and adapted the new painterly idiom, the birth of which is usually associated with the first generation of the Impressionists of the 1860s-1870s. The process ran into difficulties virtually everywhere. A cause of special drama was the fact that the artistic and social establishment often viewed new poetics not merely as a breach with the classics, but also as a product of foreign influence and assault on the domestic tradition.

The Russian art world of the late 19th century was still too conservative to readily embrace the new painterly idiom, which did not correspond to the customary characteristics of being true to life and in the nature of a narrative. The tastes of the solvent public, which was receptive to art, were largely formed by the Academy and two decades of the consistent policy pursued by the Wanderers, who by the end of the century posed as the true guardians of the national tradition. Even though Russia saw unprecedentedly intense international contacts in art in the 1890s, with about a dozen major foreign exhibitions held in St Petersburg and Moscow, throughout the decade there persisted in the Russian artistic community the latent isolationism that the Petersburg-based World of Art association sought to overcome in its art policy at the turn of the century[1]. However, the problem

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[1] See Janet Kennedy, "Pride and Prejudice: Sergei Diaghilev, the *Ballet Russes*, and the French Public" // Michelle Facos and Sharon L. Hirsh (eds.), *Art, Culture, and National Identity in Fin-de-Siècle Europe*. Cambridge, 2003, pp. 90–118; Ilia Dorontchenkov, Between Isolation and *Drang nach Westen*: Russian Criticism and Modern Western Art around 1900 // Carol Adlam and Juliet Simpson (eds.), *Critical Exchange: Art Criticism, 1700–1900: Emergence, Development, Interchange in Eastern and Western Europe*, University of Exeter; Peter Lang Publishers. 2009, p. 285–308.

of the "French Menace" was already on the agenda well before its first exhibitions, which were declaratively international by nature.

In the 1880s and 1890s young Russian artists steadily mastered *plein air* painting that contemporaries frequently associated with Impressionism. There is an indicative episode in Igor Grabar's memoirs: "When P. M. Tretyakov, who with his wonderful instinct felt the genuine novelty and significance of Serov's Girl Lit by the Sun and purchased it for his gallery in 1889, at a regular lunch given by the Wanderers Vladimir Makovsky asked him traditional dinner: 'Since when have you, Pavel Mikhailovich, been inoculating your gallery with syphilis?'"[1] The well-known genre painter could supposedly have lost self-control out of jealousy towards a potential competitor: Tretyakov's choice could have meant a change in his taste and posed a certain threat in the future to the interests of the older Wanderers. Yet Makovsky's flippant and insulting formula was nevertheless quite to the point. *Plein air* effects in the form of spots of light and shadow on the girl's face might have been taken for an advanced stage of the malaise common in the 19th century. Makovsky's words not only described Serov's style aphoristically, albeit disparagingly. They also pointed to the source: syphilis was known as the "French disease". The Wanderer Makovsky thus spoke of the Paris origin of the new style of painting that sought to convey the transient effects of lighting, banished narrative and liberated the artist from the need to produce a "finished" work and "say everything there was to be said" dictated by Salon art and 19th-century narrative realism. The word "impressionism" was not uttered. Yet the listed qualities of Serov's *plein air* canvas brought him close to that phenomenon.

Local critics turned to the question "What is Impressionism?" in the first half of the 1890s. The degree to which the Russian artistic community was familiar with this phenomenon was predictably low. Suffice it to state that the early works of masters once belonging to the Batignolles Group were not shown in this country until 1896. Claude Monet was represented by *Haystack in the Sun* (1890, Kunsthaus, Zurich) and the *Étretat* landscape, Renoir by "By the Piano" and "The Source", Degas by "Pink Dancers"[2].

True, way back in the 1870s young Russian artists living in Paris knew about the Impressionists, as is attested Ilia Repin's correspondence, who first mentioned Manet as early as 1874[3]. For instance, he wrote to Kramskoy: "...the language spoken by everybody is of little interest, conversely, an original language is always noted sooner, and there's a wonderful example – Manet and all the Impressionalists"[4]. Somewhat later he confessed

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[1] Grabar, I., *Moya zhizn. Avtomonografiya* (My Life. Automonograph), p.125.

[2] Guide to the French Art Exhibition organised with the permission of His Imperial Majesty with the assistance of the French Ministry of Fine Arts for the benefit of the Care Committee of the Red Cross Sisters under the patronage of Her Imperial Highness Princess Eugenia Maximilianovna of Oldenburg, St Petersburg, 1896, p. 27, 63, 75.

[3] See letter to F. Chizhov, 24 June 1874. // Polenov, V.D., Polenova, E.D., *Khronika semiy khudozhnikov* (Chronicles of an Artists' Family), Moscow, 1964, p. 134.

[4] Letter of 29 August 1875, Paris – Correspondence of I. N. Kramskoy, vol. 2, Moscow, 1954, p. 345.

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to another correspondent: "…I adore all the Impressionalists, who are increasingly gaining rights for themselves here. Manet is already a long-time celebrity"[1]. Yet familiarity and, possibly, a certain influence that found expression, for instance, in the study *On a Turf Bench* (1876, State Russian Museum) by no means indicated reception. Way back in early 1874 Kramskoy and Repin exchanged letters, in which they formulated the ethically substantiated rejection of any future impressionistic "temptation" with colour and light for the sake of ideological painting, the mission of which is the truth of life[2].

A little later, in 1876, Emile Zola, a correspondent for the St Petersburg *Vestnik Evropy* who had attended the Second Impressionist Exhibition, told the Russian readers about Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Degas and Sisley[3]. I should agree with Rosalind Blakesley who believes this article to be "…perhaps, the most comprehensive interpretation of impressionism to appear by that time in the Russian press"[4]. However, his detailed account of the goals and specifics of new painting based on Edmond Duranty's characterisation did not reference the audience's visual experience: Zola's descriptions were not backed by either illustrations or even less so exhibition practice. His articles about the Impressionists published by the Russian periodicals were of little help in introducing the local public to Impressionism.

In 1886, Vladimir Stasov published a lengthy and rather sympathetic review of *Critique d'avant-garde* (Paris, 1885) by Theodore Duret and quoted at length, among other things, the article about Manet[5]. Nevertheless, Stasov's article was rather an exception. Rafail Kaufman pointed out that readers of domestic magazines of that period usually "…could not even learn what the world 'Impressionist' meant specifically"[6].

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[1] Letter to N. A. Aleksandrov. 16 March 1876. Paris – I. Repin. *Izbrannye pisma* (Selected Correspondence) in 2 vols. 1867–1930. Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 175. Published with corruptions.

[2] See *I. Kramskoy's Correspondence*, vol. 2, pp. 295, 303. For details see David Jackson, "Western Art and Russian Ethics: Repin in Paris, 1873–76" // *Russian Review,* 1998, July, pp. 394–409. Cf. Dmitrieva, N.A., Peredvizhniki i impressionisty (The Peredvizhniki and the Impressionists) // Iz istorii russkogo iskusstva vtoroi poloviny XIX – nachala XX veka (From the History of Russian Art of the Late 19th – Early 20th Centuries), Moscow, 1978, pp. 18–39; Elizabeth Kriedl Valkenier, Opening Up to Europe: The Peredvizhniki and The Miriskusniki Respond to the West // Rosalind P. Blakesly, Susan E. Reid (eds.). *Russian Art and the West: a Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and Decorative Arts*. DeKalb, 2007, 45–60.

[3] Emile Zola, "Parizhskie pisma. Dve khudozhestvennyie vystavki v maie" (Letters from Paris. Two Art Exhibitions in May), *Vestnik Evropy*, 1876, No. 6, pp. 873–903.

[4] Rosalind P. Blakesley. Emile Zola's Art Criticism in Russia – Carol Adlam and Juliet Simpson (eds.), Critical Exchange: Art Criticism of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries in Russia and Western Europe. Oxford et al., 2009, p. 270.

[5] See *Khudozhestvennye novosti* (Art News), No. 5, 1886, pp. 141–52.

[6] Kaufman, R.S., *Ocherki istorii russkoi khudozhestvennoi kritiki XIX veka. Ot Konstantina Batyushkova do Aleksandra Benua* (Essays on the History of Russian Art Criticism of the 19th Century. From Konstantin Batyushkov to Alexander Benois), Moscow, 1990, p. 222.

In the 1880s some of the young Russian artists who were subsequently to be associated with "Russian Impressionism" started going to Europe. in 1885 Valentin Serov visited Munich; Konstantin Korovin stayed in Paris in 1887. Much later he recalled that trip: "I also remember my first impression of French painting. [...] Light colours [...] Much of what we also have, but there is something of an entirely different sort. Puvis de Chavannes, what a beautiful thing! And the Impressionists... I have found in them all that for which I was so berated at home in Moscow"[1]. It should be borne in mind, though, that the last exhibition of the Impressionists opened in May 1886 and that its exhibits strongly indicated a gradual shift to pointillism. Korovin's *Portrait of a Chorus Girl* (1887, State Tretyakov Gallery, formerly dated 1883), *At the Tea-Table* (1888, State Polenov Memorial Historical, Art and Nature Museum Reserve, Tula Region) and *in the Boat* (1888, State Tretyakov Gallery) painted right after his return to Russia bear no imprint of that avant-garde poetics, although the impact of impressionism is obvious.

For the European viewers impressionism of the 1880s – early 1890s was far from always associated with works by the Batignolles Group. The movement's relative integrity of the 1870s was a thing of the past even before the series of impressionistic expositions came to a close. Its members now entered personal relations with official exhibitions, dealers and collectors. in parallel, the relatively uniform impressionistic vision of painting of the 1870s was also eroded (cf., for instance, Renoir's gravitation to the "classics" and Pissarro's Neo-impressionistic aspirations). John House analyzed this process and pointed out that almost simultaneously, "In the years around 1880, many former star students from the Ecole des Beaux Arts turned to contemporary subjects and adopted modified forms of impressionist handling; many of their new works won them medals at the Salon, or were purchased by the State... (Albert Besnard, Alfred Roll, Jules Bastien-Lepage, Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret) "[2]. Roll's huge canvas Le *14 juillet 1880* (1882, Petit Palais, Paris) exemplified such adaptation of impressionistic techniques and modern subjects. That government commission commemorated the establishment of a new national holiday and simultaneously produced a socially presentable "portrait" of the Third Republic, thus helping the Salon public accept modern themes of city life interpreted in the impressionistic manner. That was how the phenomenon Robert Jensen aptly called the "after-Impressionist *juste milieu*"[3] took shape. According to Jensen, it was that phenomenon, which soon turned international, that formed the basic modernist institutes (the Salon de Champ-de-Mars, Secessions, etc.), found an ally in the system of commercial galleries that promoted modern art and gradually accustomed visitors of European art exhibitions to new painterly

[1] Korovin, K. *Moi ranniye gody – Konstantin Korovin vspominaet...* (My Early Years – Konstantin Korovin Recalls...) I. S. Zilbershtein and V. A. Samkov (eds.), Moscow, 1990, p. 364.

[2] John House. *Impressionism: Paint and Politics*. New Haven and London, 2004, p. 198.

[3] Robert Jensen. *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siecle Europe*, Princeton University Press, 1994, p. 138 ff.

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poetics, albeit in its compromise versions: "The *juste milieu* were able to carry the banner of modernity without insisting upon the radical independence of the Impressionists... The Impressionists laboured throughout the 1870s to establish the veneer of independence that would place their art above commercial concerns, whereas the *juste milieu*, outside the Impressionist coterie, and more importantly, outside Paris, were able to appear immediately and simply as internationally recognized 'masters'."[1] It was in this "second-hand" way that the new painterly idiom was perceived both inside and outside France in the 1880s-1890s.

The first truly representative exhibition of modern French art of the 1890s was a result of the slowly but inexorably forming political and military alliance between Russia and France against the German Empire. In late April a large-scale art and industry exposition that presented the resources of France and her colonies and her achievements in industry, farming, arts and crafts opened in the pavilions which had survived from the 1882 All-Russia Exhibition on the Khodynskoye Field and ran until early October. Painting and sculpture were allocated sixteen halls, in which nearly 700 artworks (including 650 paintings) were on display. Thus, the exhibition reproduced on a smaller scale a model of the French sector of the Universal Exposition and included some of its exhibits. Like other monarchies, the Russian Empire refrained from taking official part in the 1889 Universal Exposition, which commemorated the centenary of the French Revolution, but did not prevent domestic entrepreneurs from contributing to it privately. Some reporters now presented the Moscow exposition as a gesture of gratitude for the Russian contribution: "...there has been no precedent of the state occupying the top rung of civilization coming with all the novelties of efficient labour, technology, taste and talent to visit another nation. The French have the honour to make such an innovation; meanwhile Russia has the pleasure of being the first country to get such attention and high esteem"[2]. The political importance of the exposition was stressed by the status of its organisers, visits paid by royalty (Alexander III visited the exposition on 18 May) and the repercussions of concomitant events: on 13 July a large French squadron entered Kronstadt and then its crew visited Moscow. Such symbolical gestures gained special importance against the backdrop of the resumption of the Tripartite Union between Germany, Austro-Hungary and Italy in May 1891.

Despite the significance of the exposition, its practical organisation left much to be desired: work on it continued for nearly a month after the official opening and entailed a financial imbroglio[3]. Reviewers unanimously complained about the inordinately dense placement of the pictures, many

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[1] Jensen, Op. cit., p. 149.

[2] [No byline] "Frantsuzskaya vystavka v Moskve" (French Exhibition in Moscow), *Novosti i birzhevaya gazeta*, 29 April (11 May) 1891, No. 117, p. 1.

[3] See [No byline] "Iz zhizni i pechati" (From Life and the Press) // *Russkii vestnik*, No. 6, 1891, pp. 334–5.

of them (including those aspiring to be the hits) hung against the light and lacking labels or even index numbers. The catalogue had glaring mistakes in the translation of the titles of some canvases into Russian. But even when some of those shortcomings had been eliminated, reviewers continued to question the choice of works, which failed to give an intelligible idea of the modern French school. Reviews sounded disappointment: "The entire exhibition of artworks has the nature of a purely chance assemblage of pictures, statues etc. from some very large collection amassed not by a connoisseur, nor even an amateur, but a mere trader who has put up his goods for sale";[1] "…the present French exhibition fails to give a true idea of the French school. The choice of pictures and sculptures was a rush job and is rather slapdash";[2] "Rumours of the brilliant success of French art at the latest Universal Exposition in Paris have whetted these expectations among our public. And now that the exhibition is open, it has failed to meet even half the hopes pinned on it"[3].

Meanwhile, the exhibition did demonstrate the major trends of mainstream French art. Stalwarts of the Salon were there, among them William-Adolphe Bouguereau (*The Youth of Bacchus*), Léon Bonnat *(Idylle*, 1890), Jean-Léone Gérôme (*Slave Auction*, 1884, Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich's collection, currently State Hermitage) and Benjamin-Constant (*Victrix*, Salon of 1890). Historical paintings were represented by Jean-Paul Laurens (*Interrogation* [Bernard Délicieux at the Inquisition Tribunal], c. 1882–3, *After an Interrogation*, 1882), Évariste Luminais (*The Sons of Clovis II*, c. 1880). The piece de resistance was a large bravura canvas by Ferdinand Roybet, *Charles the Bold at Nesle* (1890 (?)), for which a special cubicle had to be built in the exhibition pavilion. Naturalism was represented on a fairly large scale from city scenes by Jean Beraud, "The Salon Jury" 1885) by Henri Gervex to *To the Capstan!* (1890) by Léon Couturier and *Blessing of the Young Couple before Marriage* (1880–1) by Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret. Pierre Lagarde (*Vision of Saint John of the Cross*) demonstrated symbolist leanings towards simplicity that reviewers attributed to the influence of Puvis de Chavannes. Painted with impressionistic glamour, *After the Ball* (Courting, 1889, private collection) by H. – L. Doucet added a piquant touch of Parisian demi-monde sensuality to the exposition. And, finally, canvases by Albert Aublet, Alfred Roll and Gaston Latouche tackled *plein air* studies on easel painting scale.

Russian reviewers had good reason to be unhappy. The exhibition art section obviously lacked any pivotal idea that could make it integral and expressive. On the one hand, it adequately reflected the image of French art,

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[1] [No byline] "Frantsuzskaya vystavka v Moskve" (French Exhibition in Moscow). Arts Section – *Russkaia mysl,* September 1891, p. 192.

[2] Stasov V. V., "Moskva i dve eyo vystavki" (Moscow and Its Two Exhibitions) // *Severny vestnik,* 1891, No. 8, 2nd pagination, p. 272.

[3] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki 1891 g. v Moskve) " (French Painting. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 16, October 1891, Year 3, p. 43.

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which a visitor to annual Salons could have formed by the time the main exhibition organization split in 1890–1. of course, far from every leading artist of France contributed to the exhibition and far from every exhibitor had a worthy representation. Some reporters listed what they thought to be lamentable omissions. Stasov missed Bastien-Lepage, Lhermitte, Raffaelli and the late Millet and Manet and was sorry that Meissonier, Beraud, Neuville, Breton and Dagnan-Bouveret had only one work each on show (the latter two were represented by works from S. Tretyakov's collection)[1]. Alexander Kiselev deplored that Meissonier, Carolus-Duran, Bastien-Lepage and Rochegrosse had either no or scant representation at the exhibition[2].

It seems that, when reviewing the omissions, Russian critics proceeded from either the French "table of ranks" they knew or from preference for paintings showing local nature, the life of the people and social characters that had been inculcated by the Wanderers. Consciously or not, they looked for the usual, the expected and what was capable of striking a familiar chord in the Russian viewer. Hence their attention to the representations of nature, which the domestic public of that period saw in plenitude at exhibitions, and special dissatisfaction with French landscapes[3].

Preference for narrative genre scenes with clearly outlined social and psychological characters led to the following judgements: "...there are hardly two hundred ideological pictures at the entire exhibition, but even among those most have half-baked, half-formulated or even barely outlined ideas and give way to outward painting";[4] "Despite the large number of the exhibited pictures, they give next to no idea of French social life, at least inasmuch as genre pictures and scenes of everyday life do"[5]. An influential Petersburg newspaper's correspondent who signed his reviews with a cryptonym claimed: "The salon has absolutely no 'drama of our days'"[6] and deplored the absence of socially meaningful canvases that would, if only remotely, bring to mind Zola's *La Terre* and *Germinal.* It was obviously no accident that the landscape painter and critic of the *Artist* magazine Kiselev especially liked *Return of a Missionary*, a scrupulously executed

[1] Stasov, V.V., Op. cit., p. 273.

[2] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) " (French Painting. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 17, November 1891, Year 3, p. 44.

[3] Cf.: Novy ukazatel khudozhestvennogo otdeleniya Frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve v 1891 godu (s kriticheskim obzorom naiboleye vydayushchikhsya proizvedenii) (New Guide to Art Section of the 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow (with a critical review of the more outstanding artworks), Moscow, Tovarishchestvo Skoropechatnia A. A. Levenson, 1891, pp. 40–2; [No byline] "Frantsuzskaya vystavka v Moskve" (French Exhibition in Moscow), Arts Section – *Russkaia Mysl*, September 1891, p. 197.

[4] Ki[se]lev, A., Op. cit., p. 44.

[5] [No byline] "Frantsuzskaya vystavka v Moskve" (French Exhibition in Moscow), Arts Section – Russkaia Mysl, September 1891, p. 194.

[6] Sv. Frantsuzskaia vystavka v Moskve (Ot nashego korrespondenta) (French Exhibition in Moscow (From our correspondent)) – *Novosti i birzhevaia gazeta,* No. 133, 15 (27) May 1891, p. 2.

anecdotic picture by Jose Frappa, famous for his scenes from the life of the French clergy[1].

Reviewers pointed to art market pressure on French artists as expressed, among other things, in their specialization and sticking to the genre or technique that had once brought success. Russian critics invariably recognised the exceptional technical craftsmanship of the French painters, at times rather simple-heartedly attributing it to the well-developed system of drawing in secondary school. The reverse side of this praise was the implied or directly stated superficiality of French art going after illusory painterly effects and decorative qualities of representation rather than social or psychological content.

Such an approach resulted in a circumstance that was rare in the history of Russian criticism: contact with the unprecedentedly large exhibition by the chief art school of modernity led to conclusions about the triumph of contemporary domestic art rather than self-doubts and thoughts about one's own "backwardness". That motif came through distinctly in a number of articles. As could be expected, Stasov arrived at the same conclusion: "As soon as you return from the exhibition to the city, cross the Moskva River and ask for admission to the great Russian gallery collected by P. M. Tretyakov... [...] You take a breath with a gratifying and calm feeling. Russian talent is being gained without any detriment."[2] Kiselev formulated a similar attitude at greater length, however, while observing a rhetorical distance: "A different opinion [...] is distinguished by a patriotic tenor. People holding it find nothing that Russian artists could learn from the French. 'True, they say, the French nearly always have very exact drawing, often excellent moulding, a lot of taste in tones and combination of colours, there are charming heads and interesting characters and portraits, and melancholic landscapes marked by an indisputable mood. However, all that is not so exemplary as to keep us from finding in our school works not only of the same power, but even in many respects superior to all these marvels'."[3]

Critics had already voiced their pride in the modern state of Russian painting even before the French exhibition. in 1890, Piotr Gnedich deplored in the *Artist*, the main national art mouthpiece, the missed opportunity of creating a national art section at the Universal Exposition of 1889 that could have demonstrated the local school with its highest accomplishments and unity of diverse trends, from Repin to Siemiradzki. He believed that Russian art of the past few decades, "...brought together, [...] could have

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[1] Ki[se]lev, A., Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) (French Painting. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 19, January 1892, Year 4, Vol. 1/Season 3, Vol. 5, p. 87. This is the only painting from the exhibition reproduced on a separate insert in this volume of the journal. It also appeared on the title page of Issue 9 of "Journal de l'exposition Française à Moscou en 1891. / Журнал Французской выставки в Москве 1891 года."

[2] Stasov, V., Op. cit., pp. 277–8.

[3] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) " (French Painting. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 16, October 1891, Year 3, p. 42–3.

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drawn a result that could hardly have been attained by the French, Spaniards or Germans, who had significantly outstripped us in technique. [...] We can proudly say that, even though we have no Meissonier, Knaus, [Carolus-]Duran, Defregger, [Gabriel von] Max, Makart, Piloti or [Alma-]Tadema, we have much of what foreigners would be wise to learn from us."[1]

The organisers of the French exhibition had obviously not foreseen one of its results: never before had local viewers come across such a number of nudes displayed in public. Even in the second half of the 19th century Russian painting rarely depicted nude females and left next to no notable specimens of the "nude" genre[2]. Exceptions were few and far between: ranging from Konstantin Makovsky's *Rusalki* (Mermaids, 1879, State Russian Museum) and Henryk Siemiradzki's *Phryne at the Poseidonia in Eleusis* (1889, State Russian Museum) to Martselii Sukharovsky's *Nana* (1882), branded as pornography. Now female nudity could be seen in the Khodynskoye Field pavilions on dozens of canvases by French masters, ranging from mythological and allegorical compositions in accordance with theme requirements to *plein air* studies with their purely painterly interest in the naked body: "The French are great masters of painting flesh. As usual, pictures showing female bodies in all sorts of views and postures predominate at the exhibition. There are so many of them that we won't even bother to enumerate. We see male bodies in no more than five or six pictures..."[3]

Russian reviewers found themselves hard put. For obvious reasons they did not grasp the many social contexts of nude representations in modern French painting[4] nor did they have suitable language and intonation to speak about nudity in painting, a circumstance fairly reflected in press coverage. Some reviews revealed a conflict between the tradition inherited from the Academy to associate nudity with an abstract ideal and the custom to consider a picture as a representation of reality: seeming departures from "perfection" were associated with the real physical defects of the sitter. The provocative eroticism of Aublet's *Oriental Beauty (Turkish Woman at a Bath)* or Benjamin-Constant's Victrix seemed to be ignored, and talk about it was replaced with discussion of a coloristic trick performed by the artist or of the imperfect shape of the sitter[5].

[1] Rectus [Gnedich, P.P.]. *Sovremennoye russkoye iskusstvo*, No. 8, September 1890, Year 2, Vol. 1, pp. 70–1.

[2] Cf. Nesterova, E., *Pozdnii akademizm i Salon* (Late Academism and the Salon), St Petersburg, 2004, pp. 387–404.

[3] [No byline] "Frantsuzakaya vystavka v Moskve. Khudozhestvennyi otdel" (French Exhibition in Moscow. Art Section) // *Russkaya mysl*, September 1891, p. 200.

[4] See, for example, Heather Dawkins, *The Nude in French Art and Culture, 1870–1910*. Cambridge, 2001; Richard Thomson, *The Troubled Republic: Visual Culture and Social Debate in France, 1889–1900*. New Haven and London, 2004, pp. 19–76.

[5] Cf. Dukhovetsky, F., Art Section (hall V) // *Journal de l'exposition Française à Moscou en 1891. Journal hebdomadaire. Seul organe de la Commission Supériere de l'Exposition*, p. 4.

Russian critics of that period had a specific attitude towards "nudes", considering them a field of art devoid of any clearly formulated meaning, but acceptable because it helped solve purely decorative or painterly problems. At the same time, speaking about several examples of female nudity at the 1891 exhibition of the Society of Saint Petersburg Artists, Sergei Glagol' saw in them the result of undesirable Paris influences: "...just so, one of the senseless nudités cluttering both our French exhibition in Moscow and every one of the Paris Salons. We have felt a gap in this field ever since the time of [Timofei] Neff [...], but God save them from such senseless imitation of the French."[1]

Kiselev, a Wanderer painter who made his debut as an *Artist* reviewer with a report about the French exhibition, was especially harsh in his impressions of the plenitude of naked French females in the Khodynskoye Field pavilions. He repeatedly addressed the problem of nudity in his article. It was precisely on that sensitive subject for the domestic public that Kiselev reproduced the hypothetical response of a Wanderer type viewer as the basis of the essential difference between Russian and French art, with the latter's self-sufficient virtuosity and hypocritical hedonism: "...any representation of body with the aim of exclusively showing up a modern really naked woman [...] is inappropriate at an art exhibition. Irrespective of the fact that this aim in itself has nothing to do with art, unless linked with an artistic idea, [...] it is just indecent by dint of the importance art has in real life, by dint of the wild contradiction, which arises in the heart of every ethically developed human [...]. To say nothing of the situation of women who are as yet not used to looking at the pictures without seeing in them a reflection of life. I have more than once observed a glaring colour of shame and painful dismay on their faces. However, most of us men take no consideration of these sufferings, all the more so since they are caused by the sight of something that gives us pleasure, albeit of a beastly nature. [...] But such a protest would not even be understandable to the French."[2]

By no means everybody shared Kiselev's categorical attitude, but beyond doubt it reflected the purism of the Russian public. Anyhow, out of the numerous nudes reviewers chose a few acceptable ones in which pictures of naked women were justified by the genre situation, which seemed somewhat to level out eroticism. Some critics listed Gerome's *Slave Auction* among such works. However, reviewers especially sympathized with *A Mould from Nature* by the young artist Edouard Dantan (1887): the realistically depicted scene at the studio of a sculptor who is intently taking a plaster cast of the leg of a patiently waiting and naked girl might have been interpreted as irony of the positivist age over the Pygmalion myth.

[1] Glagol, [S.] [Gloushev, S.S.]. "Kartinnye vystavki letnego sezona 1891 goda" (Picture Exhibitions of the 1891 Summer Season) // *Artist*, No. 15, September 1891, p. 132.

[2] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) " (French Painting. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 19, January 1892, Year 4, Vol. 1/Season 3, Vol. 5, p. 77.

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Even Kiselev made an exception for this canvas: "...the best that the school
could give is combined in this picture with a fresh sense of the beauty
of form and colour scheme and then used to implement an idea so exquisite,
innocent and at the same time piquant as taking a mould of the sitter's leg,
produced as a result a work of such fine taste and bouquet that it can only
be compared with the most expensive wine, healthy, pleasant and slightly
inebriating. For all her reality the model from whose leg the plaster cast is
being made is practically the most exquisite and virtuous of all the real nu-
dités of the exhibition"[1].

It was natural to expect that a large-scale exhibition like that would also
exhibit works by the Impressionists, with whom the Russian public was fa-
miliar only from hearsay. However, that did not happen, and some observ-
ers took the absence of impressionistic canvases as a significant drawback
of the exhibition. Clamouring again over the choice of exhibits, Kiselev
wrote: "Where is that throbbing life, sunlight and the notorious *plein air*,
where are the Impressionists who have freed painting from the tight shack-
les of lighting and outdated composition and perspective methods? With
a very small exception, the exhibition has nothing of this sort"[2]. Stasov
remarked in passing that only Tattegrain's *Pêcheur à la foëne dans la baie
d'Authie* (1890), of which he had a positive opinion, was executed "in the
manner of the Impressionists"[3]. Kiselev, who was more insistent in looking
for the Impressionists, categorized works by only three artists, Roll, Au-
blet and Auguste Durst, as belonging to that trend: "In his *In the Park* Roll
placed a half-naked woman seated on a chair with her back to the viewer
and a black dog next to her on the grass. The surprising bare back is shining
and glaring in the sun against the dark background of the park and makes
one think about the technical power of talent that is satisfied with such
a meaningless story.

In *Fête-Dieu* Aublet presents a whole group of elegant ladies fussing
around a rosebush in the bright blazing sun [...] The excellently, delicate-
ly drawn and painted ladies with bared heads, however, do not feel that
scorching sun and are all eyes, as if they were indoors and mocking the art-
ist's futile attempts to convey real sunlight. True, the picture is very light,
but not sunny; the green of the trees and especially grass is of unpleasant

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[1] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) " (French Paint-
ing. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 19, January 1892, Year 4, Vol. 1/Season
3, Vol. 5, pp. 87–8. Cf. "...ordinary workers are taking plaster casts of a naked woman. It is a factory
production of plaster statues. Neither the moulders nor the female sitter are aware or even see body
'nudity'; all the three of them are just workers concentrated on their job in exactly the same way as
if they were making casts of some ancient marble" ([No byline] "Frantsuzskaya vystavka v Moskve.
Khudozhestvennyi otdel" (French Exhibition in Moscow. Art Section) // *Russkaya mysl*, September
1891, p. 200). Cf.: Sophie de Javigny, Edouard Dantan, 1848–1897. Paris [2000], p. 110–114.

[2] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) " (French Paint-
ing. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 16, October 1891, Year 3, p. 42.

[3] Stasov, V.V., Op. cit., p. 276.

spinach colour. [...] Duresat's *L'après midi* on a huge canvas and his other, miniature piece, *Après dejeuner*, ridiculously and typically emphasise the original craving of the Impressionists to inflate the empty content inordinately and belittle subjects of greater significance and human interest."[1]

   This opinion of individual artworks is in line with the overall assessment of Impressionism, which, according to Kiselev, had basically nothing to distinguish it from modern French painting, the main characteristic of which, he thought, was interest in outward effects and lack of ideological content: "...they do not go beyond the stereotype objective of impressing the eye with original and beautiful outlines, arranging light and shade spots, choosing auxiliary tone to the brightly coloured outstanding object, forcing relief until it becomes tangible, or blinding with a fleck killing all the rest. in this realm [...] the aged classics and realists inevitably agree on the outward objectives of landscape and nature mort, going hand-in-hand with the young descendants of the latter – the impressionists and *plein air* painters [...]; The entire main force of French art, these large ships of classicism, materialism and impressionism, together with the small fleet of as yet undecided innovators, are following the mainstream towards tinsel aims in taste, style and ephemeral originality, or often without any aim whatsoever, driven by nothing but the market demand of unprincipled and vain plutocracy"[2].

   The painter Kiselev found impressionism in no way outstanding from the general flow of French art. The reader could find a different – alarmist – view of impressionism in an unexpected place, namely, the pages of the official exhibition weekly. Starting from issue 8 it published an art section review by the journalist Fedor Dukhovetsky. The review opened with a lengthy warning about the sickly tendencies in modern French culture, against which the author deemed it necessary to immediately caution his readers: "Of late, in parallel with the emergence of a realistic and naturalistic trend in French literature, art, too, has become dominated by realism, but just as literary realism has led to decadent extremes, real art has degenerated into impressionism. Decadents in literature and impressionists in art represent two homogeneous extreme trends striving to dominate the intellectual life of France. [...] Impressionists [...] introduce in the field of art new techniques, with the help of which they try to convey the impressions that they perceive and that are incomprehensible for most of the people. Sharp effects of colour contrasts, lighting with scattered light,

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[1] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) " (French Painting. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 19, January 1892, Year 4, Vol. 1/Season 3, Vol. 5, pp. 74–5. Another observer describes Alfred Roll's canvas in a similar way: Glagol, [S.], "225 let Parizhskogo salona i poslednii salon 1891 g." (225 Years of the Paris Salon and the Latest Salon of 1891) // *Artist*, No. 15, September 1891, p. 29.

[2] Ki[se]lev, A., "Frantsuzskaya zhivopis (Po povodu frantsuzskoi vystavki v Moskve) " (French Painting. Apropos 1891 French Exhibition in Moscow) – *Artist,* No. 19, January 1892, Year 4, Vol. 1/Season 3, Vol. 5, pp. 71, 73.

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the deadly colouring of human body which is rarely encountered in real-
ity and produces all the more stronger effect on the impressionists, care-
less drawing, the impossible execution of the accessories or their utter lack
are all the characteristic features of the new school, which has so far had
modest success, although recent reports claim that its works have this year
flooded the Salon de Champ-de-Mars, which opened on 15 May"[1]. It seems
that, examining the exposition hall by hall, Dukhovetsky should have cit-
ed the examples of impressionism that had alarmed him so much. Yet his
descriptions of canvases in the impressionistic manner (e.g., *The Spring* by
Latouche) differed little from similar passages by Kiselev, including "gas-
tronomic" and "vegetable" metaphors often applied at that time to im-
pressionist works (the green of "unpleasant spinach colour" in Kiselev, and
"light green botvinia for grass" in Dukhovetsky[2]). As the word "impres-
sionism" was not sounded, the warning opening the art section description
remained hanging in the air.

However, in early 1893 the *Na pamyat* (To Remember) almanac edit-
ed by the selfsame Dukhovetsky (censor's permit of 31 October 1892) was
issued by Théophile Gagen, who published *Zhurnal Frantsuzskoi vystav-
ki* (French Exhibition Weekly) in 1891. The editors stated that contributors
had "...exclusively purely literary and artistic objectives, [...] and position
themselves above party affiliations and disputes dividing our journalist
world into strictly closed circles"[3]. The book consisted of poetry, prose, ro-
mances, critical articles and reproductions of paintings. These included
verses and poems by Prince D. Tsertelev, Prince M. Volkonsky, stories and
features by V. Nemirovich-Danchenko and P. Gnedich, the comic mystery
play joke *Belaya liliya* (White Lily) by V. Soloviev and several translations
from the French. Insets reproduced K. Trutovsky's *At the Fence* (a specimen
of Ukrainian folk scene typical of that artist), H. Siemiradski's *Rus Buri-
al in Bulgaria* (a variant of the painting for the Historical Museum of Mos-
cow), *Reception at Maecenas* by S. Bakalowicz (1890), a study by V. Perov,
Show-booth Interiors at Promenade during a Performance (1863–4, current-
ly State Tretyakov Gallery), and Kemerer's watercolour *Parisian Character*,
showing a young Parisian girl adjusting a stocking, as if accidentally, on the
sidewalk. The almanac closed with the disproportionately large advertis-
ing supplement "About Industry", which broadly represented the business-
es run by the publisher Hagen.

On the face of it both the literary section and the reproductions con-
formed with the principle of "non-affiliation", but it was the artistic section

[1] Dukhovetsky, F., "Art section (Hall 1) ". *Journal de l'exposition Française à Moscou en 1891*
(Journal hebdomadaire. Seul organe de la Comission Supériere de l'Exposition), Ed. Théophile
Hagen, No. 8, 16 June, p. 6.

[2] Dukhovesky, F., "Art section (Hall 4) ". *Journal de l'exposition Française à Moscou en 1891*
(Journal hebdomadaire. Seul organe de la Comission Supériere de l'Exposition), No. 14, 28 July, p. 8.

[3] *Na pamyat* (To Remember) almanac, published by T. I. Hagen, ed. F. A. Dukhovetsky. Book 1. Mos-
cow: T. I. Hagen printing house, 1893, no page number.

that shattered that illusion. The almanac included two articles by Vladimir Gringmut (1851–1907), a leading journalist of the influential monarchist newspaper *Moskovskiye vedomosti* and a number of other likeminded periodicals that formulated the ideology of the reign of Alexander III. In the early 20th century, Gringmut was one of the founders of the *Chornaya sotnya* (Black Hundreds) organisation. A former member of the Mikhail Katkov milieu, Gringmut became an unswerving enemy of liberal reforms and advocate of the idea of a Russian Orthodox kingdom based on the primordial union of the sovereign and the people. in this respect Russia was opposed to the rest of the world: "Russia is neither West nor East: it has no use for either the wretched materialist lack of ideology of Europe or the strict fanaticism of Asia [...] Russia is Russia, a state absolutely peculiar, a state mostly Orthodox Christian and if only for this reason standing immeasurably higher than other European and Asian states and nations"[1]. Gringmut saw a guarantee for the existence of Russia in immutable autocracy. Naturally, any constitutional regimes and first and foremost the Third Republic served for him as a living negative example of a social system. Gringmut paid special attention to education problems: he not only taught at the Crown Prince (Katkov) Lyceum for many years and headed it from 1894, but worked actively to promote classical education[2]. Being primarily a political journalist, he often addressed problems of art and literature. In that, too, he remained a champion of tradition and an enemy of such phenomena as Wagnerianism in music and naturalism in literature[3].

One of Gringmut's articles accompanied the publication of a study of an unfinished composition Perov created as a Paris pensioner. Gringmut spoke highly of the artist's ability to convey characters and psychological states and in this way contrasted him with modern artists who have turned into "walking photographic cameras" and substituted interest in the surface of phenomena for attention "to the inner aspect of the visible world"[4]. Citing Perov as an example for contemporaries, Gringmut placed his own accents in the artist's works. He hailed the departure of the author of *The Easter Procession...* from "the spurious 'denunciatory' yet fashionable trend of that period" and admired his *Hunters at Rest* that "had become the heritage of all Russian people"[5].

[1] Gringmut, V.A., *Sobranie statei* (Collected articles). 1896–1907, Moscow, 1908, p. 233.

[2] Cf. Gringmut, V. 1) O nekotorykh merakh, mogushchikh sposobstvovat uluchsheniyu prepodavaniya drevnikh yazykov v nashikh gymnaziyakh (On Some Measures Capable of Improving Teaching of Ancient Languages at Our Gymnasias), Moscow, [undated]; 2) Nash classicism (Our Classicism), Moscow, 1890.

[3] Cf. Temlinsky, S., [V. Gringmut], Zolaizm v Rossii. Kriticheskii etyud (Zolaism. Critical study), Moscow, 1880.

[4] Gringmut, V., "Vnutrennost balagana na gulyanii vo vremya predstavleniya." Eskiz V. G. Perova ("Show-booth Interiors at the Promenade during the Performance". Study by V. G. Perov // *Na pamyat*, p. 112.

[5] Ibid.

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However, it was Gringmut's article "Storm Gathering over Russian Art" that emerged as the critical centrepiece of the almanac. It opened with the statement that modern literature was in crisis: the multitude of new phenomena and names, according to the author, opened up no roads to the revival of literature that had sunken in decline from the times of Goethe, Pushkin, Byron and Hugo. That state was characteristic of modern culture as such: "Just as in literature, there appeared 'new schools' and 'new theories' in music and painting, all of them characterized by the same signs of that perversion, negation and annihilation of art ..."[1] One of the reasons was the disappearance of talents on a par with those who worked in the first half and middle of the century. In the world of art Cornelius, Kaulbach, Horace Vernet, Delaroche, Calame, Thorvaldsen and Canova remained the master standards for Gringmut. Meanwhile, according to him, modern "mediocrities" sought to produce not so much artworks as new theories. That scourge first hit music and literature and only then art, which explained the fact Russian music and literature "had already managed to get infected with the western anti-artistic epidemic while Russian painting is yet untouched by it"[2]. Now if in music such a destructive theory was created by Wagner, an artist of "near genius", "the pompous mediocrities" Zola and Manet were responsible for their appearance in literature and painting. Formulating his vision of the objectives of creativity, Gringmut resorted to the authority of Goethe, Lessing and A. K. Tolstoy, but in fact reiterated the common places of idealist aesthetics: "To comprehend the beauty of the universe, he [*artist*, I.D] needs no painstaking experiments or reasoning: in the moments of inspiration he grasps the *invisible beauty of the visible world,* which is the final objective of his art ..."[3]. The outward aspect of phenomena has no value of its own, therefore artistic means producing an illusion of reality are only valuable inasmuch as they make it possible to reach out to the "hidden soul" of what is being depicted. in the canvases of the masters of the Renaissance who repeatedly represented the Madonna "... the main merit consisted not in the theme but in its execution and, consequently, what mattered the most was not 'what' but 'how'"[4]. The situation was different in painting schools Gringmut called "naturalistic", as well as "tendentiously political" and "socialist" (without explaining what he meant by the latter), that aimed to depict the sordid aspects of reality.

It is only towards the middle of the article that Gringmut names the danger the title had warned the reader about. Until then decline had manifested itself in either content or form, but not in the increasingly perfected artistic technique, whereas now art risked losing any artistry whatsoever

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[1] Gringmut, V., "Groza, nadvigayushchayasya na russkoye iskusstvo" (Storm Gathering over Russian Art) // *Na pamyat*, p. 58.

[2] Ibid., pp. 58–9.

[3] Ibid., p. 60.

[4] Ibid., p. 62.

because the crisis had affected all the three aspects of creativity. Now the ominous attributes of "anti-artistry" "…were openly preached by the entire school of painters who call themselves 'impressionists'"[1].

Gringmut cited several exhibits of the 1891 Moscow exposition as examples: "We did not believe our own eyes looking at that childish daubery in rich gilded and carved frames that was passed to us as artworks. Bright gaudy blots splattered over the canvas without any perspective were supposed to depict diverse absolutely banal things, but did so with such deliberately careless clumsiness that we decidedly wondered how those *lubok* pictures could have made it to the exhibition, which was to present French painting in its best and most attractive aspect"[2]. According to Gringmut, the objective of the movement which had grown from Manet's *Luncheon on the Grass* consisted "…of the slavishly true copying of nature based on […] purely outward *impressions* it produced on you, as a result of which those new-fangled artists call themselves 'impressionists'"[3].

In his description of the new school Gringmut proceeded from the literary understood name. He sought to trap the impressionists with the contradiction, claiming that the painter's view was inevitably subjective, and that if ten cameras produced ten identical pictures of the same object, ten impressionists would deliver ten different canvases based on the same motif: "meanwhile Manet declared 'unconditional objectivity' as the main dogma of the impressionists […] and all his followers were convinced that they were depicting the first objects which came handy with photographic precision…"[4] Fundamental indifference to the object they represented was for Gringmut a cardinal sin of impressionism: "For them all objects, phenomena and creatures have only an outer shell without any inner content. They will paint for you a full-size woman in a white dress seated on the grass with the sole purpose of daubing a huge white spot against bright green spinach, but they have no concern about the expression on that woman's face or about her character, or for that matter about her inner world…"[5]

Gringmut drew a direct parallel between Zola's naturalist school and the followers of Manet, accusing them of lack of substance and story, of the "photographic" reflection of the outward appearance of phenomena and the desire to produce an impression on the public at all costs, but "…not on its spiritual world or its *nerves,* with the help of blunt, bright, disharmonious and gaudy effects"[6]. He explained the success of impressionism by three circumstances: the impressionistic manner was too easy and therefore

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[1] Gringmut, V., "Groza, nadvigayushchayasya na russkoye iskusstvo" (Storm Gathering over

   Russian Art), p. 62.

[2] Ibid., p. 62.

[3] Ibid., p. 62.

[4] Ibid., p. 63.

[5] Ibid., p. 63.

[6] Ibid., p. 65.

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accessible to anyone without talent[1], the public *en masse* was ignorant and, finally, practically all modern critics lacked principles, lived by chasing originality and sensation and for this reason helped advertise charlatans in art.

The Moscow journalist expressed solidarity with the "no-nonsense" French critics who were disgusted with impressionism[2], yet pointed out that the very circumstance that indignation had not abated for nearly thirty years was evidence of the growing influence of the school: "From 'martyrs of convictions' they have now become triumphant prophets of 'new art' and embarked on their triumphal march all over the globe [...]. Germany is already full of French and domestic 'impressionists' now; last year they made their first attack on Russia..."[3] He saw the first symptom of domestic painting being infected in a picture of the Wanderers exhibition of 1892 – *Returning from a Walk* by the artist S.K. Piotrovich, who was not named in the article and whose works bespeak interest in *plein air.* However, it is now difficult to say to what extent his canvas of 1892 was indeed a product of French influence.

The conclusion drawn by Gringmut is full of alarm: "It will take less than ten years for this storm heading towards Russian painting to break out over it with all its destructive force [...]."[4] However, while stating the helplessness of Russian painting that inevitably had in store the fate of the already decadent music and literature, Gringmut impulsively raises his stakes. Calling for combatting the "epidemic" in art and pinning hopes on the revival of Russian art in the new 20th century, he bases his alarmist optimism on the fundamental spiritual and political difference between Europe and Russia. He views the impressionist invasion as a battle doomed to be lost in the great war, which is still to be won eventually by the autocratic Orthodox country: "I don't know if the West can nurture such hopes [for the revival of art, – I.D.]: they have another storm there gathering not only over art, but over the entire society and government, one that is far more terrible and destructive – the storm of *socialism* that we Russians have every means to get rid of"[5].

A few months after the publication of the almanac Gringmut reprinted his article as the first section of a brochure, *Enemies of Painting*[6].

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[1] That common place in anti-impressionist criticism is illustrated by a caricature of Caran d'Ache (pseudonym of Emmanuel Poiré), "Impressionist and His Picture", reproduced on a colour inset between pages 64 and 65.

[2] Gringmut's sources remain an open question. He shows familiarity with Zola's essay on Manet in *Mes haines*, which had several editions in the 1870s and 1880s. The only critic Gringmut referenced sympathetically was Arthur Baignères 1834–1913), published, among others, by *Gazette des Beaux-arts*. At the same time, he names no other artist apart from Manet and erroneously cites 1877 (instead of 1865) as the year when *Olympia* was exhibited at the Salon.

[3] Ibid., p. 64. The article was written in 1892.

[4] Ibid., p. 64.

[5] Ibid., p. 66.

[6] Gringmut, V., *Vragi zhivopisi (Enemies of Painting). I. Impressionism. II. Photography.* Moscow [1893], pp. 1–48. Censor's permit of 9 April 1893.

Predictably, photography was announced to be another enemy[1]. The text of the section on impressionism underwent practically no change with a sole exception: one more example of hostile invasion had been added: "…when the French impressionist Dumoulin came to Moscow in 1893, he found himself *en pays de connaisssance*. True, serious critics gave unfavourable reviews of his pictures: for instance, F. Dukhovetsky of *Moskovskiye vedomosti* rather aptly called his art 'reporting in painting' (it is indeed reporting and of a very poor sort, literally 'reporter's daubery'); nevertheless, Mr Dumoulin has already found considerable sympathy amid the public and painters."[2]

Dumoulin could be considered an impressionist as much as Roll or Aublet: he applied spectacular techniques to the exotic Oriental landscape, a genre that was traditional and popular with the public[3]. His Russian voyage and exhibitions (for instance, the exposition at the Saint Petersburg Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in the spring of 1892)[4] came as the result of a commission to paint a panorama, *The North Squadron of Battleships in the Port of Kronstadt* (jointly with A. P. Bogolyubov, 1893, Versailles), showing the historic visit of the French fleet in 1891. The Petersburg exhibition catalogue indeed characterized him as an impressionist, "…but one of the most sensible ones, the advantage owing to which he had been elected to the latest Salon jury"[5].

Gringmut's article met with a number of biting, albeit fleeting responses in the *Artist*, at that time the leading art magazine in Russia. For instance, the Moscow University reader and prolific literary reviewer Ivan Ivanov denounced the entire almanac *Na pamyat* (To Remember) as an attempt at commercial advertising under the smokescreen of "pure" art and called Gringmut's article "a rambling feuilleton", yet had no objections of substance and did not even mention the word "impressionism"[6]. Somewhat later, poking fun at one of Gringmut's critical reviews in *Moskovskiye vedomosti*, A. Kiselev remarked in passing: "The graveness of his intentions in the

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[1] The second part of the brochure based on Gringmut's report to the Society of Art Lovers
      and the article in *Moskovskiye vedomosti* (No. 80, 1893) is arranged as a polemic with Robert
      de la Sizeranne, who upheld the right of artists to use photography when creating their
      pictures.

[2] Gringmut, V., *Vragi zhivopisi* (Enemies of Painting), p. 39.

[3] L. Dumoulin (1864–1920) founded the Société Coloniale des Artistes Français in 1908.

[4] Exposition Louis Dumoulin. Tableaux & Etudes. Japon, Chine – Cochinchine, Malaisie,
      Italie – France. 19 Avril 1892. St. Petersbourg / Société Impériale d'Encouragement
      des Arts.

[5] Ibid., p. 8. Further on, the author of the text Jean Fleury tries to dispel a prejudice: "For many an
      impressionist means the same as an improviser who hastens to fix on paper or canvas the first
      impression he gets from an object. [...] But we see that this concern to capture and stress all the
      shades is incompatible with improvisation". Ibid.

[6] Ivanov, Iv., "Reklama na pochve chistogo iskusstva" (Advertising on Pure Art) // *Artist*, No. 28,
      March 1893, Year 5, Vol. 3, pp. 137–9.

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capacity of an art critic went even as far as attempting to save Russian art from the storm heading towards it from the west"[1].

It seems that the world of art did not take Gringmut's forecasts seriously; nevertheless, the word "impressionist" in the mouths of Russian critics remained more likely an undesirable characteristic. For example, Nikolai Dosekin sought to ward suspicion of belonging to that trend off K. Korovin, explaining the existing opinion by the fact that the artist had lived in Paris for some time. Singling out Chavannes-like canvases, such as *a Northern Idyll* (1892, State Tretyakov Gallery), he wrote: "Colouring, the harmony of tones... differ sharply from modern French impressionism. The latter... is characterized by light and a fairly bright gamut of colours. Korovin's paintings have a dark, barely coloured palette that is exclusively his distinctive mark."[2]

For a long time a considerable portion of what the *Artist* published about art abroad was based on retelling material from foreign publications and on reproductions[3]. But the September issue of the magazine finally carried a lengthy review of the Salon de Champs-de-Mars and the Salon de Champs-Élysées written by an eyewitness. This was the young Odessa painter Piotr Nilus. While on the whole sharing the Russian artists' conviction about the superiority of art of substance that consciously set itself lofty tasks and explored human psychology, he at the same time pointed to the preponderance of the *plein air* approach in all fields of French painting which was already spreading to all the leading European schools. According to Nilus, as a result of the vogue for *plein air* "present-day landscape artists of a new formation are primarily after: 1) conveying just an overall spot of light and colour and 2) the quivering of both on objects, which is attained by special methods of applying colour. [...] in a sunny landscape we usually notice that colours are taken of utmost brightness and at the same time the lightest. All details are nearly absent from the drawing and tones: they dull the colour and make the drawing look pedantic. [...] but taken together, all that in skilful hands, of course, produces such a stunning chord of light and colour that it blinds you, albeit temporarily"[4]. Nilus seems to be the first in Russia to have spoken of the growing influence of the pointillists

[1] Kiselev, A., "Etyudy po voprosam iskusstva (Pisma k chitatelyu). Pismo 2-e. Nasha publika i nasha kritika" (Studies on Art Problems (Letters to the Readers). Letter 2. Our Public and Our Criticism) // *Artist*, No. 29, April 1893, Year 5, Vol. 4, p. 47.

[2] As quoted in: Kaufman, R.S., "Ocherki istorii russkoi khudozhestvennoi kritiki XIX veka. Ot Konstantina Batyushkova do Aleksandra Benua" (Essays on the History of Russian Art Criticism of the 19th Century. From Konstantin Batyushkov to Alexander Benois), Moscow, 1990, p. 247.

[3] Cf., for example, Ki[se]lev, A., "Kartiny parizhskikh Salonov 1892 g. (po ikh reproduktsiyam)" (Pictures of the 1892 Paris Salons (from their reproductions) // *Artist*, No.22, September 1892, Year 4, Vol. 9, pp. 101–6.

[4] Nilus, P., "Neskolko zamechanii o frantsuzsskoi zhivopisi v svyazi s obzorom Salonov 1894 goda" (A Few Notes on French Painting in Connection with 1894 Salon Review) // *Artist*, No. 41, 1894, p. 80–81.

and tried to give an unprejudiced explanation of striving after brightness in shades: "even now that this trend has comparatively very few exemplary works […] one could, if not borrow the idea of pointism [sic! – I.D.] in general, learn a great deal"[1]. Anyhow, he had to point out that the pointillists repeated themselves and bred numerous imitators. in parallel he stated that impressionism, which taught modern painters resonant colours, was ceding ground: "[…] the remaining extreme impressionists […] are now in obvious decline and do not understand the fruit of what they have sown"[2].

Right after the article by Nilus, who in fact excluded impressionism from the range of relevant artistic phenomena, the same September issue of the magazine included the first part of a story, *The Impressionist*, by Gnedich (to be continued in the following issue)[3]. Written with ease and brimming with comic episodes, it cardinally changed the tone of the debate and seemed to clarify the meaning of the word "impressionism" in the Russian art discourse of the early 1890s.

Piotr Gnedich (1855–1925) started publishing his writings in the late 1870s, and by the early 1890s he was famous as an exceptionally prolific and widely read man of letters, author of numerous short and long stories, plays and feuilletons. An *Artist* magazine chronicler even believed that Gnedich "...ought to be ranked among the leading novelists of modern times"[4]. However, that opinion is a compliment: Gnedich published critical articles in the magazine under the penname Rectus. Before taking up *belles lettres* the writer had studied painting at the Saint Petersburg Academy of Arts for five years, but did not matriculate, which enabled him to act as an art critic and write a universal History of Arts, which, though compilatory, had several reprints.

The story opens with the French Marguerite Cursey coming to the studio of the painter Nikolai Pletnev[5] to sit. They had met by chance when the Muscovite paid the tram fare for the young foreign girl whose purse had been stolen. The girl identified him as an artist by his drawing portfolio and confessed having worked as a sitter in Paris. She had moved to Moscow because French artists were getting "used" to her[6] and she now served as a governess. But her true vocation was "being a sitter", so Marguerite was bored with her chores, yet did no sit for anybody because "Moscow art-

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[1] Nilus, P., *Neskolko zamechanii o frantsuzsskoi zhivopisi v svyazi s obzorom Salonov 1894 goda*, p. 82.

[2] Ibid., p .83. Albert Besnard was cited as an example of this type of impressionist.

[3] *Artist*, No. 41, September 1894, Year 6, Vol. 9, pp. 85–98; No. 42, October 1894, Year 6, Vol. 10, pp. 104–16. Reprinted: Gnedich, P.P., *Mgnoveniye i drugiye rasskazy* (Instant and Other Stories). 1890–1895, Saint Petersburg, 1896, pp. 99–191.

[4] *Artist*, No. 36, April 1894, Year 6, Vol. 4, p. 176.
Артист. 1894. апрель. № 36. Год 6. Книга 4. С. 176.

[5] Pyotr Gnedich was a grandnephew of the writer Nikolai Gnedich (1784–1833), who was a friend of Pyotr Pletnev (1791–1866). The name of the main character seems to suggest that he could be the author's alter ego. I am grateful to Natalia Mazur for having brought this to my attention.

[6] Gnedich ignored the obviously put-on motif.

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ists say that a 'nu' is pornography" "…mixing up two notions – un modèle et une fille[1], and paid little for sitting. She finds in Pletnev a rare person for Russia who regards a sitter as a colleague rather than a chasee and readily agrees to sit for a mural commissioned to him by some Caucasus branch of the Ethnography Museum. The mural is to show a Scythian youth taken prisoner by Amazons who had inhabited the steppe foothills of the Caucasus in the days of yore. For Gnedich Scythians were the ancestors of the Slavs and therefore "…there was much of Russian blood in the veins of the daring semi-mythical heroines of the Caucasus" (41; 89). Judging by the lengthy ecphrasis, the result was to look like Siemiradzki canvases: "Pletnev showed a moment when the Queen and her retinue had ridden up to the prisoner. […] The handsome Scythian youth with his arms tied behind his back was standing proudly amid the guards, but when his eyes met the dark eyes of the Queen, he bent his head […]. The Queen, too, […] seems to be astounded by his beauty" (41; 89). Pletnev is a fairly young but respectable mainstream artist, a member of the Academy who stays away from the Bohemians and experimentation. His studio is full of old expensive furniture, glass cases with Japanese dishes and Pompeii vases "…with the inevitable Makart bouquets and even more inevitable statue of Venus de Milo" (41; 86). When after seeing Pletnev's work, Marguerite wants to pay him a compliment, she says: "C'est du vrai talent! C'est un Rochegrosse!" (41; 88).

At first Gnedich focuses on the relations between the sitter and the artist. Dictated by the plot opening, the motif is apparently largely prompted by the situation in domestic art – the recent French exhibition shocked viewers with a multitude of female nudes. The question of female sitters was discussed especially actively in the year of the publication of this story[2], and after the 1893–4 reform of the Academy of Arts female sitters began to sit at the Academy studios (they appeared at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in 1897)[3]. in February 1894 the *Artist* published a poem by Iakov Polonsky "Model", whose message is clearly present in Gnedich's story: "Forgetting hours of need and leisure, / in work we found pleasure, / When catching light and shade, / On your young body. […] You managed, serving art, / To breath, like marble, cold / And bend our wild desires / To the mere aesthetic feeling"[4]. The narrator's thoughts gradually become those of Pletnev himself: "There is not a shade of sensuality here. […] Some pure, sacred link of common service to art always takes shape between the model and the artist. Should flesh triumph over spirit

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[1] *Artist*, No. 41, 1894, p. 88. Hereinafter the issue and page numbers are given in brackets after the quotation.

[2] Cf. "Naturshchitsy" (Female Sitters) // *Peterburgskaya gazeta*, No. 84, 27 March 1894; No. 94, 6 April. For details see Samu, M., "Sluzha iskusstvu… Khudozhnik i model v russkoi khudozhestvennoi culture XIX veka" (In Service to Art… The Artist and the Sitter in Russian Artistic Culture of the 19th Century)// *Iskusstvoznanie*, Nos. 3–4, 2014, pp. 434–47.

[3] See Shamu, M., Op. cit., p. 444.

[4] Polonsky, Ia., "Naturshchitsa" (Model) // *Artist*, No. 34, February 1894, Year 6, Vol. 2, p. 117.

and mutual platonic interest shift to material ground, this will spell the end of an artwork: its sincerity will be gone!" (41; 87). As an example of such collaboration Pletnev recalls a picture that he saw "at one of the Paris Salons" (41; 87), depicting a cast being made of the naked model's leg: "The three of them seem to have put their heart in the question: 'will we make it or not?' The old man, his assistant and the young girl are all so far away from any conventional staged sensuality, so preoccupied with the common mission of art that an outside viewer from the crowd would perhaps hardly believe the sincerity of the author of this genre" (41; 87). Visitors to the Russian exhibitions would easily recognise Dantan's canvas *A Mould from Nature* (1887) that was shown in Saint Petersburg in 1888 and in Moscow in 1891.

A new commission received by Pletnev gave an impulse to the development of the plot: he was asked to design a bathroom in the mansion of a certain baron. The proposal, which the main character found somewhat unworthy of a true artist, was nevertheless accepted because the adjacent premises were designed by Dufresne, Siemiradzki, Makovsky and Liphart. The nature of the room dictated the choice of a nude for the motif; meanwhile, according to Pletnev, "...it is considered with us short of a mauvais ton..." Pletnev shares his doubts with his model, reiterating platitudes about the objective of a Russian artist consisting of the search for character and profundity, and Marguerite in fact provokes him into taking the commission by piquing his self-esteem: "It is just that you don't know how to paint a female body and besides have no models. I've been to the Tretyakov Gallery here... I've never seen such a collection of monsters as your sitters" (41, 90).

It is in this dialogue that the theme of impressionism is first brought up. Pletnev thinks that "... a nude is needed for the bathroom, semi-antique, semi-modern, yet without a tinge of that sensuality typical of the French impressionists" (41, 90). It is Marguerite that nudges him to turn to *plein air*: "Paint a body the right way, the way genuine masters do it; not pink and yellow, but alive with reflexes of the sky and the water" (41, 90). As it is impossible to attain such an effect in a studio, Pletnev, who has never painted a body in full life, is carried away by the thrill of a new task and decides to go to the country away from Moscow, to the Vladimir Gubernia, where his only relative, the widow of his uncle who was a priest, lives with her brother, prior of the Astafievo village church.

The new creative project leads Pletnev to start thinking about the objectives of painting. At first he had thoughts of Starodum, who had read Max Nordau's bestseller: "He did not recognise impressionism the way it is understood by the contemporary painters of France. He saw little nature in their milky pictures painted, as it were, on chalk, and found more affectation in the simplicity they sought after than in the former conventionality of the Old Masters. The whole of their newest school smacked of some psychopathy, as it were. As if all those young people had just been released from Salpetriere deparments... Colouring has been lost with them, and

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what is left is a mosaic, chaos instead of colours" (41, 92). But "…impressionism… in the sense of immediately capturing a chance image if it has a strong character or lyrical mood – Pletnev recognized that and was ready to go after it" (41, 92). Then the artist went on to recollecting his studies at the Academy, the routine reigning in its classes and "the deadly pedantism"[1], from which a trip to Europe had saved him. In Paris Pletnev was struck by Meissonier and Fortuney, in Spain he did copies of Velasquez, in Amsterdam contemplated Rembrandt and "…came back more than ever aware of the falsehood and conventionality of modern painting techniques (41, 94). Then finally, before going to sleep, the artist at last decides to do "…something new, strong and more definite" (41, 94).

His trip to the Vladimir Gubernia results in a chain of comic situations. To begin with, Pletnev has to explain to the widow and her brother the priest what he does with the young French woman sitting for him in the nude ("painting Susanna… from the Book of the Prophet Daniel"). For the sake of decorum Pletnev stays at his aunt's, leaving Marguerite in the village policeman's care. The appearance of the young attractive foreigner stirs up the men: the village policeman makes a display of hospitability while the priest puts on his best robe and racks his brains for a few foreign words. The aunt suspects Marguerite of matrimonial intentions and tries to protect her unsuspecting nephew.

On the first morning before getting down to work Pletnev noticed several times that the natural effects of light and shade made him recall impressionist pictures (42; 104, 105). For work in the wood by the spring pool a space had been fenced off with a canvas sheet for Marguerite to sit, and the artist got down to depicting a mermaid by the water. He was inspired: "It now seemed to him that he had to cast everything aside, forget everything and start something new, but he did not know what" (42; 110). In front of his eyes the quietly sitting Marguerite begins to transform, as it were, into a painting: "She was all matt greenish halftones on the one side and all transparent warm orange on the other. Some crawling shadows now and then went sliding over her and disappeared below, at her feet in the grass. […] It was altogether not the body he had been used to painting, there was much of the new there, something fairytale, airy and flat. The face came out entirely flat, with a goldish green reflex really burning on her cheek" (42; 110). Excited, Pletnev understands that a picture painted like that would provoke attacks from journalists and "connoisseurs", and a grim picture of an Academy art exhibition began to unfold in his mind: "Siverko, February morning. The snow had melted, and the sledge runners are cutting through naked stones. The houses are all splattered with jaundiced blots, as if a perennial spite against the human race makes their liver ache. […] With his lively bright mood the artist addresses the public and says: "Look how warm and light my picture is, how far it all is from rent,

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[1] This story echoes the writer's later recollections. See Gnedich, P.P., *Kniga zhizni. Vospominaniya. 1855–1918* (A Book of Life. Memoirs. 1855–1918), Moscow, 2000, pp. 46–82.

from piles and Ingermanland hoarfrost". [...] But the connoisseurs say: "Outrageous – a green chin and a geographical map of the United States for a face! Poor thing, he must have contracted impressionism" (42; 110).

That feeling of hopeless routine that had passed on from Academy studies to art makes the artist trust his impression wholeheartedly: "And with some frenzy Pletnev starts painting a green chin because with the green grass lit up by the sun it could be of no other colour. [...] Do we indeed see the colour of objects the way they are? No, we see everything conventionally changed and this is the way it should be painted" (42; 110). "He liked the thought that he [...] would irk those thick-headed idiots at the exhibition with his technique and his ideas that were diametrically opposite to theirs" (42; 112).

Back from his *plein air* studies, the inspired Pletnev found his aunt conferring with the elder Sozont, a "half-prophesizing or half-raving" (42; 113) keeper of the old behests. Sofia Anempodistovna resorted to the elder's advice to free her nephew from the French woman's charms. As soon as Pletnev and Marguerite appeared, the elder demanded that the "woman of different faith" leave the table, but encountered the artist's joyful rage that finished off his new "identification":

"So, you, father, don't want to be defiled and sit amid us?"
"I don't!"
"Then get the hell out of here!"
[...]
"Blessed are you when men revile you and utter all kinds of evil", the elder broke out, apparently unwilling to part with his lunch. "I'll leave and shake off the dust. But before that answer two questions: [...]
"Who are you?"
Pletnev squinted his eyes.
"An impressionist", he said.
"I don't know what this word means. What do you want to do under the cloak of this word? To ruin the old world and create a new one?"
"That's it!"

To his aunt's dismay and the content of the priest, for whom the preaching elder was a bothersome rival, Sozont retreated and Pletnev had to answer Sofia Anempodistovna's question as to what after all impressionism was: "And this, auntie, is something like a bugaboo, only scarier..." (42; 115).

Gnedich did not explain to the Russian reader the principles of the new painting – he only described a *plein air* experience, which had nothing specifically impressionistic about it (save for the mention of the green reflex). Nor was the writer a champion of impressionism, as his repeatedly reprinted review of the history of art graphically showed. in its 1898 edition, which had Meissonier as the key figure of modern French painting, Gnedich devoted but a few words to Manet: "...he lively and truthfully perceives the varicoloured objects in full light and strives after flexibility and

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simplicity in moulding, knows the nature of modern life and, finally, makes use of lighter tones of colours"[1]. Nothing was said of impressionism even in connection with landscape. It was not until the beginning of the new century that Gnedich found a few words for that phenomenon: "The *plein air* artists, impressionists, pointists [pointillists – I.D.] and so on, are all those that hunger and thirst for truth. They may occasionally deviate and one may feel passion, decadence and baroque in their quests, but this is still better than the dull, self-righteous Academy stultification"[2].

The question whether this story of Gnedich, polemical as regards the stereotypes of Russian artistic consciousness, could have had a direct target remains open. Could there have been a link between it and Gringmut's article and brochure? One can hardly speak of Gnedich's opposition to the conservative monarchists: as a writer he pursued an opportunist policy and contributed to publications of different leanings, including the *Russkii vestnik* (Russian Messenger). Two of his pieces were published in the *Na pamyat* almanac, and precisely this circumstance makes it possible to assert that he was familiar with Gringmut's article. There was hardly any polemic in Pletnev's inner monologue with the dogmatic scholarly approach in aesthetics, stating, among other things: "...the Germans started claiming that Cornelius and Kaulbach were great artists. And the Russians believed it" (42; 112), although Gringmut included precisely these two names in his short list of genuine 19th-century talents[3]. in this respect far more significant is the parody image of Sozont appearing by the end of the story, a guardian of Orthodoxy and victimizer of people of other faith, who accuses Pletnev of the desire to destroy the old world and build a new one, that is to say, one way or another using apocalyptic and revolutionary vocabulary[4].

Thus, for Gnedich in 1894 "impressionism" was not so much a method or school of painting as a sign of the liberation of the artist who trusts his own observation and sense of nature. During the same period the British painter and critic Charles Furse described the situation in Europe in a similar way: "...readers of modern art criticism are probably familiar with the use of the term impressionism. It is one of the commonest in the art jargon of the day and bears with it the peculiar advantage of being, to most people, a mere phrase, utterly unintelligible... it has come to be a title differentiating the

[1] Gnedich, P., "Istoriya iskusstv (Zodchestvo, zhivopis, vayaniye)" (History of Arts. Architecture, Painting, Sculpture). Vol.III. "Ot epokhi Vozrozhdeniya do nashikh dnei" (From Renaissance to Our Days). Saint Petersburg: Izdaniye A. F. Marksa / *Niva* Illustrated Library 1898, p. 279.

[2] Gnedich, P.P., "Istoriya iskusstv (Zodchestvo, zhivopis, vayaniye)" (History of Arts. Architecture, Painting, Sculpture). "Iskusstvo Zapadnoi Evropy posle epokhi Vozrozhdeniya. Russkoye iskusstvo" (West European Art after the Epoch of Renaissance. Russian Art). Third edition. Saint Petersburg: Izdaniye A. F. Marksa / *Niva* Illustrated Library 1907, p.186.

[3] Gringmut, V., Storm Gathering over Russian Art, p. 58.

[4] The glaring parallel with the Russian text of *The Internationale* is groundless: Arkadii Kotz did his translation using the words "We will destroy the world of brute force... / And we will build our own new world..." in 1902.

work of those painters who are striving after an expression of their artistic individuality from those who look upon art as a commodity, the supply of which is consequent on the demand"[1].

Gnedich published his story, in which impressionism comes across as a symbol of creative individuality that trusts its experience, in 1894, marking a sort of intermediary milestone in the Russian acquaintance with a new phenomenon in painting. However, the *Artist* magazine could no longer influence the evolution of a more sophisticated idea of impressionism: its publication stopped in early 1895[2]. Monet, Renoir and Degas canvases were first shown in Russia in 1896, but that episode did not have a decisive influence on the Russians' acquaintance with impressionism either. To understand it conceptually, a modernist and at the same time distinctly "western-leaning" vector had to take shape in the domestic art process, accompanied by the purposeful exhibition policy of the World of Art and the recognition of impressionism as the central art phenomenon of the second half of the 19th century, which came after the 1900 Exposition Universelle.

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[1] Charles W. Furse, "Impressionism – What It Means" // *Albermarle Review*, 1 August 1892. Cit. R. Jensen. Op. cit., p. 140.

[2] Cf. the story of the donation of Caillebotte's collection to the Luxembourg Museum based on French periodicals. *Artist*, No. 45, January 1895, Vol. 1, p. 241.

Jean-Claude Marcade

The Russian Avant-garde or Avant-garde Art of Russia?

In my articles and books I more than once drew attention to the fact that the name the Russian avant-garde was conventionally registered in the second half of the 20th century under the influence of European Marxist intellectuals or those with Marxist leanings, who generated the myth of the 1920s that the October 1917 Revolution had given birth to the great avant-garde art. I am not going to repeat the claim that in fact the so-called Russian Futurism, likewise a conventional and not quite appropriate term, had caused the main breakthrough in world art before 1917, when it revised all the dominant codes from the Renaissance period. Neo-primitivism, Fauvist Cezannism, Cubo-Futurism, Suprematism, objectlessness, and Tatlin's "concrete abstraction" are all the major avant-garde accomplishments that were already in Russia before the revolutions of 1917. One can only say that the spread of Russia's achievements became possible due to the worldwide impact of Soviet history. The 1920s gave birth to at least three major innovative trends – the Organic School of Matyushin, Soviet Constructivism, and the analytical art of Filonov and his school.

Let us, however, go back to the problem of the name "Russian avant-garde" in order to challenge it from a different point of view.

To begin with, it would have made more sense to restore the name "left-wing art" to the innovative school that appeared in the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union, "left-wing" understood before the October

Revolution not in the political sense, but as distinguished from "right-wing", conservative, routine academic art[1].

Now let us address the question of whether "left-wing art" in Russia and the Soviet Union was really "Russian". To judge by the passport, within the Russian Empire all citizens were "Russians" of different faiths, in the Soviet Union, too, all citizens were Soviet of different ethnicity. For instance, Malevich was a Russian Roman Catholic prior to 1917, he said he was Ukrainian in the Soviet Union and Polish when he filled out questionnaires abroad.

Today, the words "rossiyanin" and "rossiisky" are used in linguistic practice in reference to non-Russian citizens of the Russian Federation, even though they are yet to be formalised in dictionaries. A constant desire to Russify all components of the Russian Federation, which is readily identified with Russia, is observed in government quarters and even among many members of the intelligentsia. I think this process started with Peter the Great and the establishment of the Russian Empire, which laid claim to the exclusive legacy of Old Rus'. It is indicative in this respect that the ambiguous "Russian" rather than the grammatically correct "Rosskii" serves as the adjective derived from "Russia".

I have taken the liberty to bring up these lexical peculiarities not because of the pedantic desire to clear up some specific linguistic problems underpinning the dominant ideology in culture, among other spheres, which means that the same is true of art. No need to reiterate here that in art, pictorial art in particular, forms in different creative periods of different artists do not come *ex nihilo*. It sometimes seems to creators themselves that they create out of nothing. However, there has been no case when a work of art, consciously or not, has not used or transformed elements accumulated in its creative memory upon contact with reality and other creations. That is why I find the phrase "Russian avant-garde" inappropriate, despite the fact that it has become current as a "brand", to use this horrible post-Soviet term, and that it will be hard to do without it. Just as "Cubism" is inadequate to define the maximum geometrism derived from Cezanne's works, so "Russian avant-garde", if we consider its components, is not reduced to the Russian elements alone. That is why it would make more sense to talk

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[1] As early as 1922, when the first Soviet exhibition of all trends was held at the Van Diemen Gallery in Berlin, they spoke and wrote about the situation in arts of Russia precisely in those terms. Kseniya Boguslavskaya-Puni published a review of that exhibition in one of the Berlin newspapers under the title "Bolschewismus und Kunst", in which she writes about the "right wing", a "group of artists of the centre (Cezannists)" and objectless artists (see the second publication of that article and its translation into English in the catalogue *Die Russen in Berlin, 1910–1930*, Berlin, Stolz, 1995, pp. 42–50). The Swiss archive of the late Herman Berninger kept the typewritten French translation of Boguslavskaya's article that I published in the *Petit journal de l'exposition Jean Pougny. 1892–1956*, Paris, Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, 1993. That French version was translated into English, see Jean-Claude Marcadé, "Ksenija Boguslavskaja (Pougny) on the 'First Russian Exposition' in Berlin, 1922" in: *For SK. In Celebration of the Life and Career of Simon Karlinsky*, Berkeley, Slavic Specialities, 1994, pp. 184–90.

about the "avant-garde of Russia" while bearing in mind the new under-standing of the term "rossiisky" (Russian).

I want to sum up the theses I set forth in my book about *The Russian Avant-garde between 1907 and 1927* that have not yet been presented in Russian. I postulate "geographical" differences when writing about artists hailing from the Russian Empire. There was always rivalry between Moscow and St Petersburg that found expression in the aesthetic make-up and different artistic styles. in this respect, in the catalogue of Diaghilev's "Exhibition of Russian Art" in Paris in 1906 Alexander Benois identified "two utterly different trends" in contemporary art: "The St Petersburg World of Art, be-ing at times somewhat literary, gives preference to refined sensations char-acteristic of the periods of great finesse, finds pleasure in charming strolls into the past and preaches the cult of the intimate, precious and exotic."[1]

Benois contrasts this "art of St Petersburg" with the "art of Moscow, which originates primarily in the works of the great decorator Vrubel" and "tends to be more decorative and largely purely painterly"[2].

Of course, these oppositions, at times too generalised and reductive, should be nuanced in every particular case. However, in the left-wing art of Russia one can observe different signal and iconographic lines and dis-tinguishing features that owe their specificity to the different cultural tra-ditions of the places where they took shape.

If we apply this distinction between the "St Petersburg" and "Moscow" schools to the left-wing art of Russia, it could be traced in the countless creative elements of the protagonists of these schools. Let me take but one example. in Chinese ink drawings made by Puni in 1916–7 we find the em-blems of St Petersburg, the capital on the Neva, a city of ghosts, wander-ing shadows, doubles and hallucinations which have inhabited it since the times of Pushkin's and Gogol's stories and flowed through the dreary stairs and dark corners of Dostoevsky to the weird labyrinths of Andrei Bely. With his stunningly fluent strokes Puni conveyed bits of street and house interi-ors. There is some special tonality here, characteristic only of Puni, a world formed of superposed abstract planes and scraps of reality, all of it splinter-ing, "running" and faltering in dreamlike space. in contrast to this world, Kandinsky produced works of Moscow picturesqueness, such as *Colourful Life,* and left behind the well-known hymn to Moscow in his memoirs.

One cannot sidestep the wholesale involvement of the Ukrainian School in the so-called "Russian" avant-garde. Let it be remembered that the so-called "Russian Futurism" (another inappropriate term!) originated with the Burliuk brothers in Ukraine. Many protagonists of left-wing art

[1] A. Benois, "Préface", *Salon d'Automne. Exposition de l'Art Russe*, Paris, 1906, p. 11, see the Russian translation in my article "Saint Petersburg as the Main Axis of Modernity" in *Saint Petersburg. A Window on Russia 1900–1935*, St Petersburg: Feniks, 1997, p. 208.

[2] *Ibid.*

manifested in their works impulses stemming from the territory called *Malorossia* under the tsarist regime; the most graphic examples are the Burliuks, Malevich, Tatlin, Larionov, Alexandra Exter, Archipenko and Sonia Delaunay.

Every country produces artists forever marked by the sunlight of that particular land, the contours of its landscapes, forms and colours of the surrounding world (architecture, fabrics, household utensils, folklore rituals and so on), as well as the religious and cultural weave that pervades their creative thought from childhood. This mix determines the specificity of "national" art and accounts for the fact that a mature artist working in a different country noticeably differs from his/her counterparts of the host country. Suffice it to remember the numerous examples, including El Greco, Picasso, Kandinsky, Archipenko, Sonia Delaunay and Marc Chagall.

Who would have thought to make Picasso a French painter, even though he wholly belongs to the history of French painting? Now is Kandinsky not a Russian artist in Germany or France? Does it make any difference to know that and write about that, of course, not because of narrow nationalist or – *horribile dictu!* – socio-biological or ethnic considerations, but so as the better to understand their works. Or perhaps one should confine oneself to the horizontal reading of art products.

So, I distinguish a very influential and important "Ukrainian School" in the art of historical Russia, and also Oriental trends, among which the "Armenian School" stands out thanks to its luminaries G. B. Yakulov and M. S. Saryan, plus one more phenomenon such as the Tashkent "Masters of the New Orient".

I won't be able to show in detail within the framework of this report how all those non-Russian schools within the left-wing art of Russia or at its periphery bear the mark of a specific space, light, colour gamut and forms of traditional art of their land.

I will only cite a few general examples. Take the Suprematism of Malevich and that of his followers in Russia. If you compare Liubov Popova's Suprematism with that of Malevich, you will see that space is not free in Popova's pictures and shapes are fast to the painting surface whereas Malevich's quadrangles, rectangles and circles hover like planets ready to take off.

The question of space is, beyond doubt, connected with geography. To my mind, the most Russian of all Russian artists, Filonov, packs the picture space to utmost tension. I cannot but recall here the Russian forest, which, as V. O. Kliuchevsky pointed out, had such a crucial influence on the formation of Russian mentality and Russian Orthodox spirituality in particular[1].

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[1] "Kliuchevsky starts his survey with the forest, pointing out the great role that the forest played in the history of Russia. Up to the second half of the 18th century most of the Russian people lived in the forested zone. The forest rendered economic, political and even ethical services to the Russian man. It replaced mountains and castles, serving as a most reliable shelter for the Russian man against external enemies. The Russian state could consolidate itself only in the north, far away from Kiev, under the cover of forests from the side of the steppe. At the same time, despite

Another example is the work of Alexandra Exter of Kiev, who is indisputably a major representative of the Ukrainian School in the left-wing art of Russia. I was stunned to read a certain well-known Russian art student arguing that Exter joined a Moscow group of artists as a "cosmopolitan"! I would only like to cite two excerpts from G. F. Kovalenko's monumental two-volume monograph that would show the absurdity of such assertions better than any discourse:

"Most of Alexandra Exter's life is connected with Kiev and Ukraine. She travelled a lot and lived for long in Paris and Moscow, Rome and St Petersburg. Yet she always returned: she had her house, workshop and her famous studio in Kiev. When she had to leave Kiev forever, she would organize her household in Paris exactly as she had had it in Kiev. There would be many bright Ukrainian rugs, embroideries, ceramics and icons there.

"However, it is not even a matter of these things which were so dear to her heart and with which Exter lived all her life. Another thing is more important – Kiev very early and, one could say, forever became one of the main and invariable protagonists of her painting: its outlines, landscapes and architecture made themselves felt not only in her Kiev cityscapes, but in the unfathomable way they transformed most of her city motifs, be they of Paris, Genoa or Florence"[1].

Now as regards Exter's objectless pictures that are full of "nostalgia over youth in Kiev and the impressions of Ukrainian folk art that never left the artist": "Take a closer look and you can see that the crenelated figures are reminiscent of the flower cup slits characteristic of peasant paintings, the curves of narrow strips, the resilient lines of their stems; triangles, trapezoids and diamonds, their corners and aspect ratio, their proportions and spatial rhythms all obviously echo Ukrainian ornaments; and, of course, the life of colour is full-blooded, unrestrained and resounding, as if the very soul of the folk master has been inherited by the 20th-century artist who tends to test everything with algebra"[2].

Now about the other, Oriental elements, the Orient and its landscapes and traditions, the religious and cultural origins of which are sometimes rooted in the days of yore. Take Yakulov and Saryan, sons of the great

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its services, the forest was always hard on the Russian man: it threatened with wild beasts and robbers, and it was difficult to win new areas for farming from it. The Russian man's unfriendly and careless attitude to the forest manifests itself in that he has peopled it with all sorts of fears: monsters, and other representatives of 'evil forces'." N. V. Solmanidina. *Kliuchevsky o roli prirody kak sotsialnogo fona i potentsiala formirovaniya russkogo naroda i ego mentalnosti* (Kliuchevsky on the Role of Nature as a Social Background and Potential for the Formation of the Russian People and Their Mentality).

http://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/v-o-klyuchevskiy-o-roli-prirody-kak-sotsialnogo-fona-i-potentsiala-formirovaniya-russkogo-naroda-i-ego-mentalnosti#ixzz3F7XX7o64)

[1] Georgy Kovalenko. *Alexandra Exter*, Moscow: Moscow Museum of Modern Art, 2010, vol. 1, p. 8.

[2] Ibid., p. 176.

Armenia. Although both belong to the history of the art of Russia, their works are outside its mainstream. From early on Saryan, with the energy of his sign and colour system, stood apart from the often anaemic paintings of his "Blue Rose" associates and I am convinced that Saryan played a paramount role in his Moscow friend Pavel Kuznetsov's shift towards the Orient and Matisse in his works after 1910. All shades of blue in Saryan are very remote from the bluishness of the "Blue Rose" artists and go back to the dominant blue of polychrome Armenian miniatures. The place accorded to trees in Saryan's pictures brings to mind the place, importance and interpretation of the Tree of Life in old Armenian art.

As for Yakulov, everything about him sets him apart from the other protagonists of the painting school of Russia. Incidentally, Georgy Bogdanovich refused to join any group of left-wing art; the only exception was his active theoretical involvement in founding imaginism (together with Yesenin). Yakulov's singularity found expression not only in his Oriental themes or exotic subjects. He transformed all the formal subject elements, which he borrowed from classical art, the Renaissance, be it in the colour optical experiments of Orphism or in conveying the storm and "glassiness" of the modern crowd, with the help of his early artistic illumination, namely, "the idea that the difference between cultures consisted in the difference of lights" and also with the help of penetrating the multifaceted aspects of Chinese art. That is why his "Chinese linear graphicity" and the watercolour transparency of the "moist spectrum of China", as he wrote about his famous *The Races* at the Tretyakov Gallery, are so stunning.

I want now to draw your attention to the activity of the artists of the "Russian East" from the Siberian regions to the Sea of Aral, the Transcaucasia and the Caucasus, where the great world cultures – the dominant Muslim, Christian, Tibetan and Chinese – come into contact to this day. The famous collection of the Igor Savitsky Museum in Nukus, Uzbekistan, contains gems by representatives of that periphery of the left-wing art of the Russian Orient and still awaits comprehensive study. To name a few, there is the art of Mikhail Kurzin (1888–1957), Viktor Ufimtsev (1899–1964), Ural Tansykbaev (1904–1964), Nikolai Karakhan (1900–1970) or the better-known Alexander Volkov (1886–1957).

Of course, Oriental themes leap to the eye. They are exotic to the Europeans. But this is not the point. Schematic outlines, the bright sun prism and Chinese linearity preponderate in the works of Mikhail Kurzin. To judge by the ardent force of red, blue, brown and green accurately and compactly dovetailed into one another, Viktor Ufimtsev produces the impression of a lesson of Matisse seen through the prism of Saryan.

Pictures by Alexander Volkov, Ural Tansykbaev and Nikolai Karakhan oscillate between primitivism, Fauvist Cezannism and the colour energy characteristic of those parts where surrounding household things generously share their multicoloured opulence.

My report was in part caused by the observation of the present-day tendency in Russian historiographic studies to Russify all cultural and artistic manifestations, no matter what they are, and ignore outside influences and roots. Misguided patriotism usually does not welcome free-living versatility, cultural osmosis or unique creative processes. The co-existence of heterogeneous extraneous sources in this culture in no way diminishes its grandeur, and it is not worthy of the rules of true science to deliberately ignore or assimilate them. That is why I personally replace the name "Russian avant-garde" with the more appropriate term "left-wing art of Russia" or "left-wing art in Russia" of the first quarter of the 20th century.

Nina Gourianova

THE TRADITION OF OLD BELIEF IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL MEMORY OF THE AVANT-GARDE

During the past two decades the inheritance of Old Belief has been enthu-siastically discussed in Russia, for the most part in its religious, histori-cal, and social aspects. In contrast, within the field of art history scholars have only begun to investigate this most important issue. In this article I would like to consider the influence of the cultural traditions of Old Be-lief on the formation of a new aesthetic and national self-consciousness in the beginning of the 20th century within the context of one of the ma-jor concepts of Dmitri Sarabianov's philosophy of art, namely his theory of "rupture" and "continuation" in the evolution of Russian art. The es-sence of this theory intersects with the idea initially explored by Lotman, in his book "Culture and Explosion" (1992), focused upon the mechanics of interaction of two types of fundamental processes, which Lotman deals with in his semiotics of culture, designating them "as opposition of ex-plosion and gradual development."[1] The "original point of primary ex-plosion", according to Lotman, appears simultaneously with the "turning point of the process", defining its direction in the history of culture. How-ever, in the interpretation of Sarabianov, the semiotic "moment of explo-sion" transforms into a more elaborate concept of "breaking" or rupture with tradition, acquiring an ideological nature, while the mechanical idea of "gradual processes" changes into the historical concept "continuity (or discontinuity) of tradition":

Granted, the greatest contrast between deliberate rupture and inadver-tent continuity can be observed in the 1910s, when the Russian avant-garde declared war on its predecessors, while at the same time, voluntarily or not,

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[1] Lotman, Y.M. *Culture and Explosion*. New York, 2009. P. 138.

picking up on many of their undertakings. Among all situations of the
avant-garde – this is the most demonstrative and intensive.[1]

Discarding the more abstract mechanics of Lotman's semiotic model,
Sarabianov brings the situation of breaking or rupture into the historical
plane of cultural memory, examining it within the capacity of the complex
problem of the substitution of tradition and of the very existence of the tra-
ditional (conservative by definition) in the radical art of the avant-garde.
He comes to the paradoxical conclusion of an "interdependent unity of *con-
tinuity* and *rupture*" in their general spiritual-intellectual dimensions;
it would seem that this duo is unified by opposing concepts:

Anti-traditionalism became a distinguishing character of the avant-gar-
de, although in fact it searched for alternative traditions – foremost in
primitive and Old Russian art. It needs to be said that this heritage had
remained unexplored by Russian painting for the duration of almost two
hundred years. […] These common features, circumventing the breaches,
strengthened culture. The question arises: what better characterizes the
mentality of Russian culture – the abundance of uncompromising rup-
tures, or the features that continually reestablish a connection? Still fur-
ther questions arise: is there not in programmatic rupture a feigned de-
termination, which does not conform to reality? Is this determination not
provoked by continual self-comparison with the West?[2]

Much has been written of the influence of Old Russian icon painting upon
the pictorial art of the avant-garde and modernism, beginning with Mura-
tov and Punin, and concluding with the published studies of recent years,
which thoroughly analyse the problems of tradition and innovation, there-
fore I will touch upon this issue in only one aspect here. Specifically the
role of "alternative" Old Belief tradition in the "awakening" of cultural
memory and forming a national mentality of the early Russian avant-gar-
de. The culture of Old Belief, essentially emerging from Old Russian tradi-
tion, as well as in many ways becoming the alter ego of this tradition in the
contemporary world to the avant-garde, would seem a unique phenomenon
of such a "duality" of tradition and rupture. This culture presents an alter-
native to a western European civilizational model, and brings with it a pos-
sibility to escape from the dead end of self-reflection prompted by compar-
isons to the West.

Is it possible that the "schism" appears as the quintessence of such a break
or "rupture?" Yes, but this ideological break was "reestablishing continui-
ty", to use the formulation of Sarab'ianov. Indeed, namely due to fidelity
to old tradition and the reluctance to "blend in" with the society that re-
jected this tradition, old believers – conservatives and traditionalists in es-
sence – were perceived in the beginning of the twentieth century as radi-
cals, "schismatics". Paradoxically one could liken the early avant-garde to a

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[1] Sarabianov D.V. Situatsiia razryva v istorii russkogo iskusstva // Russkaia zhivopis'. Probuzhdenie
    pamiati. M., 1998. P. 61.

[2] Ibid., P. 62.

"schism", but exclusively in the sphere of art, as it preferred social and artistic marginalization to the loss of its own autonomy in settling into the accepted "mainstream".

It does not seem incidental that, above all, in the years of the most intensive development of the early Russian avant-garde, the neo-primitivism of Larionov and Goncharova chronologically coincided with the so-called "golden age" in the culture of Russian Old Belief continually for more than a decade, from 1905 to 1917. And the main issue here is not even that Larionov came from a family of Pomors, one of the most significant branches of priest-less Old Belief.

The rediscovery of pre-Petrine art and the active continuation of this Old Russian tradition in the living folk culture of Old Believer communities, especially in the North, strikingly reshaped the aesthetic and ideological discourses of the Russian avant-garde. Additionally, it led to a divorce with the dominant Eurocentric tradition in an attempt to find a new self-identity and to see the world anew. Thus, in the words of Dmitry Likhachev, "Old Rus' lived in parallel with that other predominant culture that considered it somehow non-existent. Rus' survived within multitudes of Old Believer communities, which created their own literary language in continuity with the carefully preserved old one, its own architecture, its own visual and applied art. There existed lubok prints and books […], the icon painting tradition continued, folk toys were created for every new generation forming children's tastes […]."[1]

This remarkable, and, as it may seem, unforeseen "memory awakening" and discovery of an "alternative" culture also pushed towards a renewed national self-conscious, which, for the first time since Peter the Great, claimed an integral self-identify rather than a torn one between West and East; between the Caesaropapist dogma of the Synodal period of "orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality", and Westernizer's hysterical repentance of the eternal evil and backwardness of everything Russian versus everything European, which had become tiresome after two hundred-odd years. I would argue that this awakening was directly connected to the fact that "the world of Old Belief", representing a large part of the Russian population, which had been under censorship since the 17th century, or to quote Muratov, "still locked hitherto", was "now opened".[2]

In 1906 Nikolai II issued a decree "On the order of forming and functioning of Old Believer and sectarian communities and on the rights and obligations of those who are a part of these communities who dissented from the Orthodox Church", in continuation of a series of his manifestos on religious tolerance and freedom of conscience of the previous year. Old Believers were given the right to freely practice their faith, publish books,

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[1] Likhachev D.S. Russkaia kul'tura Novogo vremeni i Drevniaia Rus' // D.S. Likhachev. Vospominaniia. Razdum'ia. Raboty raznykh let. SPb., 2006. T. 2. P. 193.

[2] P. Muratov. Drevnerusskaia ikonopis' v sobranii I.S. Ostroukhova, Moskva, izd. K.F. Nekrasova, 1914, 450 numerovannykh eks. P. 5.

publicly perform religious rites, and, most importantly, to register as a legal body, which gave the right to own and manage property.

Finally, only after the years 1905–06 did a "breakthrough"[1] in discovering and understanding of the spiritual and aesthetic traditions of Old Rus', which had been "neglected" for centuries, become possible, and was connected with the names of art historians Muratov, Punin, Ainalov, as well as the artists of the early avant-garde: Kandinskii, Larionov, Goncharova, and the whole circle of neo-primitivists. By the end of 1905, due to the efforts of the Committee for the Patronage of Russian Icon Painting, which had been established in 1901, the first volume of old iconographic canons was published, which previously had been held under censorship owing to the depiction of a two-fingered benediction. In 1909, a private museum of old icons belonging to the famous Moscow collector and artist, Ilia Ostroukhov, was opened to the public. a year later, in December 1911, an exposition of icons that had been cleaned from all the over-painted layers applied since the reforms and mainly from the collection of Nikolai Likhachev was organized in connection with the Second All-Russian Convention of Artists in Petrograd (December 1911 to January 1912). The convention was in many ways focused on the concerns of national traditions of Russian art, and, in particular, towards the conservation and restoration of Old Russian heritage. In February 1913 there took place a much-discussed exhibition of Old Russian art, dedicated to the 300-year anniversary of the Romanov dynasty, assembled mainly from private collections, and organized under the auspices of the Moscow Imperial Archaeological Institute. Simultaneously with this exhibit, "The First Exhibition of Lubok" was held at the Moscow Art, Sculpture, and Architecture Institute, put together by D.N. Vinogradov – a friend of Larionov and Goncharova, where luboks from their personal collections were shown, including contemporary Old Believer luboks as well as the "new Russian luboks" of Goncharova created in the same tradition. In March, alongside the neo-primitivist exhibition "Target", Larionov assembled his own exhibition of icons and luboks, including lubok books, as well as shop signs and objects of urban as well as peasant material culture.

These events, which reflect the interest of the avant-garde towards various aspects of Old Believer tradition, can appear isolated and seemingly disconnected. However, from this perspective, they can be interpreted as an ongoing tendency towards primitivism: a fascination with folk culture and toys, the investigation and collecting of lubok by Kandinsky, Larionov, and Rogovin, the interest of Kruchenykh and Khlebnikov in the religious texts and oral traditions of Old Believers, the detailed study of the iconography of religious lubok by Goncharova, along with so-called "peasant" icons, including copper castings (Vygovskii and Guslitskii), as well as the development by Rozanova of a new model of hand-painted futuristic lithographic and hectographic publications based on techniques widespread among Old Believers.

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[1] See: Sarabianov V.D., Smirnova E.S. Istoriia drevnerusskoi zhivopisi. M., P. 12–14.

Many to this day perceive the avant-garde solely from the perspective of formal innovation, forgetting about the new ideology of this movement, which informs all programmatic texts and manifestos of the years 1912–15. In this ideology the question of the self-identification of the artist – personal, artistic, and national – is brought to the fore. If the discovery of Old Russian icon painting in the beginning of the twentieth century was, according to the scholar of classic antiquity as well as Old Russian aesthetics Victor Bychkov, the "foremost discovery in the history of world art in the 20th century",[1] then in the evolution of Russian modernism and avant-garde, and in particular neo-primitivism, such a return – or, in the words of Sarab'ianov, "integration" towards a newly regained cultural tradition ("especially since the latter was their very own – Russian"),[2] – was indicative with respect to the national self-conscious of the artist, and goes beyond the scope of an aesthetic phenomenon.

In order to appreciate the full significance of this "rediscovery" of an alternative tradition, purged from national history for two centuries, for the formation of an artistic ideology and national self-identity of a new Russian culture, it is enough to compare the conception of Russian icon painting that existed at the end of the 19th century with our contemporary perception of Old Russian art, and to realize how different they are. For example, when we speak of icon painting and antique frescos today, we are immediately reminded of the Novgorod, Pskov, Vladimir, and Moscow schools of the 12–15th centuries, and the first name that comes to mind is Andrei Rublev. Nonetheless, until 1904–1905, when restoration work on Rublev's Trinity began, his name was practically unknown, not to mention other icon painters. Instead, even by the beginning of the 19th century, the icons of Simon Ushakov from the end of the 17th century, marked by their awkward attempt to merge traditional symbolics with naturalistic elements, were considered the best examples of Old Russian icons with a helping hand from such scholars as Buslaev.[3]

Nonetheless, by the year 1917, artist Victor Vasnetsov, who by no means belonged to the avant-garde, already connected the end of the 17th century with "the complete decline of tradition" and the end of the "creative" period of "our ancient national icon painting." In his landmark paper "On Russian Icon Painting", prepared for the Council of Orthodox Russian Churches in 1917, Vasnetsov, a member of the Committee for the Patronage of Russian Icon Painting since 1901, very precisely captured this change of historical paradigm occurring in Russian society. Before such an elevated audience he referred to Old Russian icon painting as "national art", "Russian icon painting is not only distinct from the Byzantine, but it has also acquired an autonomous existence and turned into the national art of the Russian

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[1] Bychkov V.V. Russkaia teurgicheskaia estetika. M., 2007. P. 443.

[2] Sarabianov D.V. Avangard i traditsiia // Russkaia zhivopis'. Probuzhdenie pamiati. M., 1998. P. 297.

[3] P. Muratov. Drevnerusskaia ikonopis' v sobranii I.S. Ostroukhova, Moskva, izd. K.F. Nekrasova, 1914, 450 numerovannykh ekz. P. 4.

Orthodox people."[1] And here he adds, "It behoves us to remind ourselves
that Old Believers preserved the art of old icon painting and Russian antiq-
uity with particular care, and for the sake of justice we should express for
this service a deep gratitude."[2]

Therefore, the history of Russian painting was rewritten around the years
1905–1910, and to no small degree owing to the activity of Old Believer col-
lectors as well as a new generation of modernist and avant-garde artists
and art historians. Up until this period, the only environment in which this
alternative aesthetic tradition was preserved and cherished was among the
Russian peasantry (and a certain segment of the merchants), being large-
ly composed of Old Believer communities, primarily in the Russian North.[3]

"Old Believers, firmly holding on to the faith of their fathers, collected
old icons either as sacred objects, or as rare and treasured relics," remarked
Lazarev in his essay regarding the "discovery" of Old Russian icons.[4] "That
is how the famous Postnikov, Prianishnikov, Egorov, and Rakhmanov col-
lections came to exist. It is worth mentioning that at the same time as this
long-term and diligent activity of individual Old Believer enthusiasts was
taking place, both state and church agencies displayed complete indiffer-
ence to Russian antiquity."[5] Moreover, in the opinion of Buseva-Davydova,
contemporary scholar of Old Believer icon painting, the 20th-century resur-
gence of the traditional icon to its "Stroganov" iconography must be en-
tirely credited to Old Believers.[6]

It is necessary to mention that the first researchers of Old Russian ico-
nography, D.A. Rovinskii, F.I. Buslaev, and N.P. Kondakov, based their re-
search completely on Old Believer archives and collections. Back then,
towards the second half of the 19th century, the icon was not even being
considered as an artistic phenomenon, but rather was investigated from
the purely archaeological perspective. "In the 18th century," Pavel Mura-
tov wrote with bitterness in 1914, "there was no place for the preservation
of ancient traditions, chronicles, and icons. Within a few decades all that
had been accumulated over centuries was scattered… Ancient icons were
trashed in church basements or in bell towers. Painted over and distorted
they remained only in forgotten churches in remote towns… The ancient
icon disappeared completely from the life of the landowners, which pros-
pered during the 18th century and the first half of the 19th. It would be of the

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[1] Vasnethov, V.M. [Doklad] O russkoi ikonopisi // Deiania Sviaschennogo Sobora Pravoslavnoi Rossi-
iskoi tserkvi 1917–1918 gg.. (reprint) T. 5. M., 1996. P. 46.

[2] Vasnethov, V.M. [Doklad] O russkoi ikonopisi // Deiania Sviaschennogo Sobora Pravoslavnoi Rossi-
iskoi tserkvi 1917–1918 gg.. (reprint) T. 5. M., 1996. P. 48.

[3] Severnykh pisem, Likhachev v Apokalipsisakh o russkosti, Muratov o Severe.

[4] Lazarev, V. Otkritie russkoi ikoni i ee izuchenie // Russkaia ikonopis' ot istokov do nachala 16 veka.
M., 2000. P. 12.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Buseva-Davydova I.L. Staroobriadcheskaia ikonopis' i ee granitsy: material k diskussii // Staroobri-
adchestvo v Rossii. Vyp. 4 M., 2010. P. 496–529.

utmost rarity to find icons of the 16th and even the 17th centuries which have been preserved in a present-day family of the gentry."[1]

Muratov has good reason to state that an appreciation of the aesthetic – or even religious for that matter – value of the icon as "contemplation in colour", (specifically, a perception of icon painting as an art) did not exist in Russian cultural discourse for over two centuries, "The *routine production* of icon painting did not only displace the *art* of icon painting in the end, but hid the earlier art from a whole series of new generations."[2]

The tragic consequences of Nikon's reforms and the Moscow Synod of 1666–1667, which ratified the reformed rituals and iconography, and imposed anathema on old books, icons, rituals, and all Orthodox populations who refused to observe church reforms, led to a religious schism which was expanded and resulted in an even larger cultural rupture beginning from the end of the 17th century.[3] After the Petrine decrees, and up until the end of the 19th century, hundreds of Greek, Byzantine, and Old Russian icons were destroyed as "schismatic" – that is, associated directly with the tradition of old orthodox faith, or Old Belief, and most of all in its cultural and socio-political existence as an ostracised and persecuted segment of society.[4]

Instead, by the 18th and through the 19th centuries, the implied volume, perspective, along with mimetic illusion, unthinkable and unacceptable for a traditional icon painter, and imitation of the real world (characteristic of the genres of secular painting), became integral features of the new canon of religious painting. This new iconographic "dogma" of the reformed church was approved by the Synod, and favourably perceived by the elites and its "enlightened" social circles. Unlike the situation in the secular arts, where Western influences greatly stimulated the development of the

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[1] P. Muratov. Drevnerusskaia ikonopis' v sobranii I.S. Ostroukhova, Moskva, izd. K.F. Nekrasova, 1914, 450 numerovannykh ekz. P. 4.

[2] P. Muratov. Ibid., P. 9.

[3] Kozhurin K. Ia. Povsednevnaia zhizn' staroobriadtsev. M., 2014. P. 9. The author gives a remarkable quote from V.P. Riabushinskii's book, *The Old Belief and Russian Religious Feeling*, where he defines this phenomenon as a split between the culture of the peasant ("muzhik") and that of the "master": "A well-read, rich Old-Believer merchant, with a beard and in folk Russian dress, a talented industrialist, and the boss of hundreds, sometimes thousands of workers, at the same time an expert in Old Russian art, an archaeologist, collector of icons, books, manuscripts, who understands historical and economic issues, who is fond of his work, but who is also concerned with spiritual ideas, this person was considered to be a peasant, "muzhik"; while a petty clerical worker, shaved, in a Western camisole, who managed to grasp some snippets of an education, but in essence a man of little culture who often takes bribes, although by necessity, who secretly critiques and denunciates everyone who is above him, deeply despises the "muzhik", and is one of the predecessors of the upcoming intelligentsia, – this man, of course, is already "a master." (Ibid.)

[4] Damnations and anathema were acknowledged as mistakes and annulled only in 1971 by the act "Regarding the repeal of vows upon old ceremonies and on those who uphold them" at the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Russian national school of painting for the past three centuries, there were
no positive outcomes of such impact in the field of icon painting, as Vas-
netsov states in the above-mentioned report, "Not only did European influ-
ence fail to provide anything remarkable in our religious art, but it brought
this art to an almost complete decline, turning it into a formal, lifeless
thing."[1]

Nikolai Leskov, who touched upon the topic of Old Belief in *The Sealed
Angel* and *The Enchanted Wanderer*, and who appreciated icon painting
and described it in his own words as "Russian national art", recognized in
this decline "the ultimate degradation of it to its present state of obscurity
and disregard by the Church." Leskov continues, "the great majority either
knows nothing at all about it, or are convinced that Russian icon painting is
that sort of religious "daub" produced by jacks and gals in Kholuy, Suzdal',
Palekhov, and Mstera."[2] As for aesthetics and the Russian cultural tradi-
tion, "not a single Russian painter engages in Russian iconography. He re-
jects the very thought of doing so as something humiliating, ludicrous, and
not worthy of his artistic calling" attested Leskov in 1873, while discuss-
ing this quasi-existential shame of the Russian intellectual and an artistic
mentality split, or "torn", between the idea of Eurocentrism and the nihil-
istic denial on the part of the intelligentsia of its own authentic 'Russiann-
ness', as well as of all those centuries of the national past that went against
European ideology of enlightenment and progress.[3] Wendy Salmond, an
American scholar of Russian icon painting and applied art, very precise-
ly defined this moment, commenting on the quite contemporary mentali-
ty of the "prohibitive" decrees of Peter I, which demonstrated the Russian
consciousness's excessive self-reflection upon "the impression that Russian
culture and religion made on foreigners."[4] Thus, for instance, the Petrine
edicts of 1707 and 1722, and all the Synodal statutes that followed banning
icon painters from creating images lacking "craftiness", which can be seen
as ugly to the Western eye and provoke the "reproach of the holy Church
from the heterodox."[5]

Returning to the context of the early Russian avant-garde, in a very sim-
ilar "self-comparison", sometimes grown into an exaggerated juxtaposition
of the Western to the Russian aesthetic, philosophical, and religious per-
ceptions of the world, Sarabianov, paradoxically, saw the first step towards

[1] Vasnethov, V.M. [Doklad] O russkoi ikonopisi // Deiania Sviaschennogo Sobora Pravoslavnoi Rossi-
iskoi tserkvi 1917–1918 gg.. (reprint) T. 5. M., 1996. P. 47.

[2] Leskov N. O russkoi ikonopisi // Sobranie sochinenii v 11 t. M., 1957. T. 10

This article was first published anonymously in the journal "Russkii Mir", 254 (26 September 1873).

[3] Ibid.

[4] Wendy R. Salmond, *Tradition in Transition: Russian Icons in the Age of the Romanovs* (Washington:
Hillwood Museum and Gardens, 2004), pp. 16–17.

[5] Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii po Vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniia, t. 2. Postanovlenie 516.
P. 293–294. Cited in: L.A. Uspenskii. Bogoslovie ikony Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi. Izdatel'stvo bratstva
vo imia sviatogo kniazia Aleksandra Nevskogo. 1997.

what he calls "the conscientious aspiration to produce a certain act of national identification":[1]

A constant *presense of the West* as a positive or negative criterion gave an additional impulse for the rupture. However, even in those situations when the Western example was not considered a model for imitation (as it was, for instance, in the Russian avant-garde), the idea was not to circumvent it, but to overcome it from within.[2]

In regards to "overcoming", Sarabianov, it seems, addresses directly the issue of cultural memory as an instrument for the building of a national self-consciousness. In the early Russian avant-garde, this occurs through the "integration" of new radical Western modernist aesthetics, originated in defiance of the established cultural dogma of the preceding centuries of Eurocentrism, to the *autonomous* national cultural memory, still marginalized within Russian society, and strengthened by an anti-Eurocentric ideology as well.

Natalia Goncharova's words, spoken in anticipation of the second All-Russian Convention of Artists in 1911, sound in a similar vein:

"It seems to me that we are experiencing the most crucial moment in the existence of Russian art. The factors that define it are the strong influence of French art of the last decades and a strong increase in the interest towards Old Russian painting."[3]

The mechanics of interaction between tradition and the early Russian avant-garde are far from being unambiguous, and we cannot discount the factor of 'reverse' influence, which, following Benois and Grischenko, has been identified by Bychkov: precisely through "the efforts of the artist-innovators of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, starting with the impressionists and ending with the early avant-gardists, who placed primary emphasis upon the purely painterly language of colour, shape, and line... the artistic community was already prepared for the reception of this kind of art. In many elements of its artistic language, medieval icon painting resonated with the quest of the avant-gardists."[4] By agreeing with such an interpretation, we cannot deny the other side of the same phenomenon: maybe the first collectors of Matisse and Picasso, merchant-patrons of art Shchukin and Morozov, who came from Old Believer families and had been brought up to appreciate the abstract ideals of beauty of the old Russian spiritual tradition, were particularly attuned to the creative aspirations of French modernism, which had given up on a naturalistic imitation of the perceptible physical world? Old Russian heritage became a revelation and a source of inspiration not only for Russian artists. Matisse, who visited

[1] Sarabianov D.V. Avangard i traditsiia // Russkaia zhivopis'. Probuzhdenie pamiati. M., 1998. P. 297

[2] Sarabianov D.V. Situatsiia razryva v istorii russkogo iskusstva // Russkaia zhivopis'. Probuzhdenie pamiati. M., 1998. P. 65.

[3] Moskva o s'ezde // Protiv techeniia. 1911, 15 (39). 24 December. P. 2. Cited in: Krusanov A.V. Russkii avangard 1907–1932. Istoricheskii obzor. T. 1. Boevoe desiatiletie. Kn. 1. M., 2010. P. 379.

[4] Bychkov V.V. Russkaia teurgicheskaia estetika. M., 2007. P. 443.

Moscow on the invitation of Sergey Shchukin in the fall of the same year, 1911, made it his goal to familiarize himself with all accessible private collections of ancient icons.[1] According to the testimony of the famous Moscow collectors Ilia Ostroukhov and Shchukin, who were equally passionate about collecting both Russian antiques and contemporary Western paintings, Matisse was enrapt with the icons.[2] He shared his impressions in several interviews he gave to Moscow newspapers: "This is a genuinely great art. I am in love with their touching simplicity, which for me is closer and dearer than the paintings of Fra Angelico. In these icons the soul of the artists who painted them opens up like a mystic flower. And it is necessary that we learn from them an understanding of art."[3] "This is primitive, it is a true folk art. Here is the primary source of artistic endeavours."[4] Let's not forget that the tendency towards a rejection of Eurocentrism in culture was a characteristic feature of many different schools of modernism and avant-garde and, generally speaking, of Western European modernism. But if for Matisse old Russian icons were first and foremost fascinating due to the formal stylistic categories of artistic language, concordant with his exploration of the abstract in art, than for Goncharova, Larionov, and other neo-primitivists and futurists this newly "found" cultural tradition of Old Russia primarily carried within itself the potential for a new model of a resurrected national and aesthetic self-consciousness: "Great and serious art cannot avoid being national art. By ridding oneself of the heritage of the past, Russian art cuts itself from its roots."[5]

However, if Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso searched for sources of new artistic inspirations in lands exotic for Europeans of that era, and in *the other*, *alien* "found" traditions, such as those of Africa and Polynesia, as well as Russia (in the case of Matisse), then in contradistinction to them, Russian neo-primitivists and futurists directed their aesthetic journey deep through the layers of time and into their *own, native* history. By definition such exploration could not be limited to the aesthetic sphere, and intruded into the sphere of national self-identity. It is not a question

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[1] According to Irina Shevelenko, Matisse was the first to be able to see Russian icons of the 16th and 17th century during the Salon exhibition of 1906, when Diaghilev brought them with him to Paris. Diaghilev and Alexandre Benois included 36 icons from the Novgorod, Moscow, and Stroganov schools from the 16–17th centuries in the exposition of a retrospective exhibition of Russian art, *Salon d'automne. Exposition de l' art russe.* See: Shevelenko, I. "Suzdal'skie bogomazy", "novgorodskoe kvatrochento" i russkii avangard // Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 124 (6/2013).

[2] See: Rusakov Iu.A. Matiss v Rossii osen'iu 1911 goda // Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha, 14 (1973). P. 167–184.

[3] M. Sh. U Matissa. (Iz besed) // Rannee utro. 1911, 246. 26 October. P. 4. Cited in: Krusanov A.V. Russkii avangard 1907–1932. Istoricheskii obzor. T. 1. Boevoe desiatiletie. Kn. 1. M., 2010. P. 324.

[4] [B.n.] Matiss o Moskve // Utro Rossii. 1911, 247. 27 October. P. 5. Cited in: Kursanov A.V. Russkii avangard 1907–1932. Istoricheskii obzor. T. 1. Boevoe desiatiletie. Kn. 1. M., 2010. P. 324.

[5] Moskva o s'ezde // Protiv techeniia. 1911, 15 (39). 24 December. P. 2. Cited in: Krusanov A.V. Russkii avangard 1907–1932. Istoricheskii obzor. T. 1. Boevoe desiatiletie. Kn. 1. M., 2010. P. 379

of substituting one dogma for another, once and for all, in order to replace the memory of *nation* (or national ideology, in other words), sanctioned by the political and social authorities with a newly developed standard legitimized by the new cultural and intellectual elite and implanted into the public conscience. Rather, we talk here about the elemental cultural memory of the *people*, a memory ostracized, now reawakening, alive in its process of constant formation and revelation, at each stage suggesting a richness and polysemy of tradition, and therefore, a possibility of free choice. It seems to me that it is precisely this polysemy that was emphasized by Dmitry Likhachev in one of his essays, where he brilliantly compared Russian history and culture with "a river breaking its ice" where "the moving islands of the ice floe collide, move forward, while some get stuck for a long time, encountering an obstacle... The structure of Russian culture was not monolithic, under which it would have developed as a whole – relatively uniformly and steadily."[1]

[1] Likhachev D.S. Russkaia kul'tura v sovremennom mire // Novii mir, 1991.

Ekaterina Bobrinskaya

Cultural Memory and Anti-Western Utopias of Russian Futurians

In his book *Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory* Dmitry Sarabianov wrote about the "inherent tradition" that pervades culture and works "over and above changing styles", the tradition connected with the innermost characteristics of man's disposition formed by geography and religion, history and language. "Art itself", he pointed out, "regardless of the artist's will, has the ability to remember"[1]. Sarabianov attributed the specifics of Russian culture, its "inner memory" to the Orthodox tradition and Eastern Christianity. According to Sarabianov, "the clue to the riddle of Russian artistic culture should be sought" in the distinguishing features of Eastern Christianity "not only of the period when art and religion were inseparable, but also when the time of secularisation set in. Herein lies the 'Eastern component', which is indisputably present in Russian culture but does not coincide with Eastern culture as such"[2].

I will bear in mind this ability of art "to remember despite the artist's will" when considering a mythologem of the Russian avant-garde of the 1910s, namely, the anti-Western utopia of Russian Futurists. I will focus on those components of their utopian project in which the hidden traditions and "inherent memory" of culture manifest themselves. The anti-Western myth in question formed in the 1910s primarily among artists and poets associated with Mikhail Larionov and Natalia Goncharova. It was

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[1] Sarabianov D., "Preliminary Notes" // Sarabianov D., *Russkaia zhivopis. Probuzhdeniye pamiati* (Russian Painting. The Awakening of Memory). Moscow: Iskusstvoznanie, 1998, p. 22.

[2] Sarabianov D., "Obraz Vostoka v russkoi zhivopisi Novogo vremeni" (The Image of the East in Russian Painting of Modern Times) // Op. cit., p. 42.

their milieu that used the Russian word "budushchniki" (literary Futurians) instead of the foreign, "Western" word "Futurists".

Anti-Western motifs are a stable archetype in Russian culture. on the one side, anti-Western ideas are rooted in confessional differences or even opposition, that is, the struggle waged by the Russian church against Catholic and Protestant influences. The religious element was essential even to the secular versions of the anti-Western sentiments. on the other side, the anti-Western idea had to do with the modernisation processes and the assertion of a new type of national identity (especially actively in the 19th century). in this respect Russian anti-Westernism was in the mainstream pan-European processes: the formation of nation states and national cultures of a new type proceeded through contrasting oneself with others. Within the framework of those concepts art was viewed as a tool of developing, maintaining and promoting national identity.

The anti-Western mythologem incorporated many an important theme of Russian Futurism. on the one hand, it is of course linked with the tactical objective of asserting the independence of their own version of new art, and on the other, it falls in line with many fundamental features of Russian modernism, such as the tendency towards archaisation and interest in national self-identification problems and Eastern cultures, that scholars have already written about and that were characteristic of not only the *budushchniks*. I am going to dwell on yet another aspect of the anti-Western myth in Russian Futurism.

The anti-Western archetype has a long history in Russian culture. I will review it in a very rough outline. The early 19th century saw the appearance of a myth of the perishing West traced back to the aesthetics of Romanticism and above all to the legacy of the German Romanticists. The historiosophic concept of Romanticism, according to which countries, nations and cultures go through stages similar to the birth, growth, maturity, aging and death of living organisms, was behind the numerous prophesies of the forthcoming demise of the Western world and arguments about the frailty and old age of Europe. European culture that had already reached the age of maturity was inevitably to head towards decline: it was growing decrepit, aging and was eventually doomed to die. in his article "A Journey to France" (1803) Friedrich Schlegel drew a grim picture of the decay of the Western world: "Division has reached its apogee; the character of Europe has revealed itself in full and is complete, and this is precisely the essence of our epoch. Hence the utter inaptitude towards religion (…) absolute dying out of the higher bodies. Man can fall no deeper (…) The race of people in Europe will not change for the better, but after several fruitless attempts will continue increasingly to deteriorate by dint of inner depravity and will finally sink outwardly into a state of frailty and destitution"[1].

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[1] Schlegel, F., *Reise nach Frankreich* (Journey to France) // Estetika. Filosofia, Kritica (Aesthetics.
Philosophy. Criticism. Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1983, in 2 vols. Vol. 2, pp. 16–7.

The mythologem of the "oldness of Europe", which was compared to an old infirm man or a sick and waning organism, appeared in the Liubomudry (Lovers of Wisdom) Society in Russia in the 1820s-1830s and was then taken up by the Slavophiles. in the epilogue to his *Russian Nights* Vladimir Odoevsky wrote about the "old West", where science and philosophy were no longer capable of perceiving and understanding the world comprehensively, art was devoid of its great meaning and power, and religious feeling had petered out. "The West is perishing!" Odoevsky proclaims. "While it is collecting its petty treasure, while it abandons itself to despair, time flies (…), it flies and will soon overtake the old and decrepit Europe and maybe cover it with the same layers of immobile ashes that have covered the huge buildings of the peoples of old America, peoples without names"[1]. Several decades later the Westerniser Alexander Herzen would depict similar pictures of the imminent demise of the West: "in the middle of the grim and heart-rending requiem, in the middle of the dark night falling over the tired and sick West I turn away from the terminal groan of the great fighter whom I respect but who cannot be helped, and look with hope at our dear East"[2].

Next to the image of the old and dying West the German Romanticists nurture the images of the East, of Asia where, according to Schlegel, there was still a "possibility of enthusiasm". It is these young peoples who have retained an integral world outlook and a live religious feeling that would be able to breathe new power into waning Europe. The future belongs to them. Youth oriented to the future became the constant motif of anti-Western arguments in Russian culture. Contrary to the West, which is sinking into darkness, the East is associated with the images of light, dawn or the brightness of the Sun.

I would like to stress the paradoxical nature of this version of the anti-Western myth, which did not originate in Russia but was borrowed from Europe. in other words, it was the voice of that very "perishing West", which even contemporaries noted. For instance, N. Chernyshevsky queried with annoyance: "Whither did we (and part of the Western public) get the idea, or rather not the idea but the melodramatic phrase that the West is a decrepit oldster who has already extracted from life everything there is to be extracted, who has been exhausted by life and so on? Well, from all sorts of little shallow or stupid Western books and articles"[3]. in its basic aspects this romanticist and Slavophile version of anti-Westernism survived until the early 20th century. of course, with the passage of time the mythologem of the "aging and decaying West" sunk in the dark and the young East illuminated by light kept growing like a snowball. It could be laced with

[1] Odoevsky V., *Russkie nochi* (Russian Nights), Leningrad: Nauka, 1975, p. 147.

[2] Herzen, A., *Collected Works* in 30 vols., Moscow, 1954–66. Vol. 12, pp.431–2.

[3] Chernyshevsky N., Ocherki gogolevskogo perioda russkoi literatury (Essays of the Gogol Period of Russian Literature) // Chernyshevsky N., Izbrannyie Filosofskiye Sochineniya (Selected Philosophical Works) in three volumes, Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1950, Vol. 1, p. 507.

motifs of personal disillusionment in Europe (as was the case with Herzen or Merezhkovsky, for example), or the theme of Western betrayal of Christian culture in the circle of the so-called "Scythians"[1].

Western anti-West was an essential component of Russian culture of the early 20th century, and in their declarations the *budushchniks* likewise reproduced the stable elements of that mythologem. in his lecture "On Futurism" Ilya Zdanevich used metaphors referencing the romanticist rhetoric of youth and of going out of dark into light: "There is still much of what is barbarian in us, and in this respect we are better placed than Europe... We should study the masters of Asia rather than those of the West. We are [Mongols] Asians. We have been wandering blind and have now seen the light. Look, the sky is being touched with dawn, [it is the time of sunrise] (...) we are young, and our youth will prevail"[2]. The *budushchniks'* declarations about the inability of modern Western culture to create anything genuinely new and about its infertility likewise reference the stable motifs of old age, exhaustion and frailty. Natalia Goncharova writes: "I turn my back on the West in view of its depletion"[3]. "Europe has not, nor can have any new art", claim the authors of the *We and the West* manifesto"[4].

In addition to the Western version of anti-Westernism, there existed another version of the anti-Western myth in Russia. Conventionally, it can be called eschatological. Although it is traced back to the confessional opposition to Catholicism and Protestantism, it took its final form after the 17th-century schism and had as its basis the feeling of life approaching the end of time, or, to quote Georgy Florovsky, the "eschatological fright" that swept over Russian society on the eve and especially after the 1666–7 Council. This version of anti-Westernism references the

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[1] R. Ivanov-Razumnik: "Two foes are standing face to face: the Russian 'Scythian' and the European, a 'bourgeois', new Russia and old Europe. So if Russia does have a mission, here it is: blowing up the old world of Europe from within with it 'Scythianism', its spiritual and social 'maximalism', that is, doing what the old world once did the other way round with the spiritual and social maximalism of Christianity. The old world entered that 'barbarity' and blew it up from within: it made Christianity philistine. So now the mission of the new Russia is to imbue the 'cultured' old world with the spirit of maximalism. Indeed, only this spiritual maximalism, this 'Scythianism' opens the way to that true liberation of man that Christianity never achieved because Christianity itself never 'came into its own'." Ivanov-Razumnik R., Ispytaniye v groze i bure (A Trial in Storm and Tempest), Berlin, 1920, p. 37.

[2] Zdanevich I., O futurizme (On Futurism) // Zdanevich I., *Futurizm i vsyochestvo* (Futurism and Everythingism), Moscow: Hylaea, 2014. in 2 vols., Vol. 1, p. 86.

[3] Goncharova, N. Predisloviye k katalogu vystavki kartin (Foreword to the Picture Exhibition Catalogue (Moscow, 1913). Cit. Kovalev, A., *Mikhail Larionov v Rossii 1881–1915 gg.* (Mikhail Larionov in Russia 1881–1915), Moscow: Elizium, 2005, p. 466.

[4] Livshits, B., Yakulov, G., Lurie, A., *My i Zapad* (We and the West) // *Russkii futurism. Teoriya. Praktika. Kritika, Vospominaniya* (Russian Futurism. Theory. Practice, Criticism. Memoirs, Moscow: Naslediye, 1999, p. 243.

national myth linked with messianic ideas of Russia as the last Orthodox power warding off the end of time and resisting the advent of Antichrist. The messianic national idea was formalised in the notorious concept of Moscow as the Third Rome and in a number of other writings. (For instance, in the *Story of the White Cowl*, which was widespread already in the 16th century). The ideas of the messianic centre having moved to Russia prompted rejection of all things Western as associated with the fallen and depraved world of apostasy and abandonment of truth. in the context of such an eschatological feeling of life Patriarch Nikon's reforms were seen as movement towards the West. For the large mass of the Russian people the rejection of the old faith signalled that the world definitively embarked on its last stage. After the schism the apocalyptic vision of modernity governed by "spiritual Antichrist" became forever engrained in the world outlook of all types of the Old Believers. Such eschatological anti-Westernism gave rise to popular myths (not only among the Old Believers) that identified things "Western" with forces undermining the truth of faith and life and signalled the imminent end of time. The wholesale inculcation of Western culture and lifestyle in the Petrine period finally imparted the meaning of heretical, depraved and pernicious to things Western in popular myth. The impact of this eschatological anti-Western myth on secular culture has been little studied to date. Needless to say, I do not aspire to give any comprehensive picture in this short article, but merely want to formulate the problem and point to the existence of such a layer of "inner traditions" in the Russian avant-garde.

  Florovsky characterised the Old Believers' culture as a "socially apocalyptic utopia"[1]. Although secularised, yet nevertheless in accord with the popular tradition, the "apocalyptic utopia" became a key element of the way the *budushchniks* saw modern times and, to quote Larionov, a tool for the "Russification of western forms"[2]. The close associates of Larionov and Goncharova manifested their ties with popular eschatology especially consistently not only theoretically in their declaration rhetoric, but also in their works[3]. Artists and poets in Larionov's milieu programmatically addressed folk culture as a national tradition that escaped Western influence. in one of his speeches Ilya Zdanevich stressed the fundamental difference between Western urban and rural folk art: "To cultivate Westernism is tantamount to broadening the rift between our art and our people. We needed Westernism so that, after overcoming the ruin of urban art, mind you, urban because in the countryside it has always stood up to the mark, the Russian master could rise in his understanding to the level

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[1] Florovsky G., *Puti russkogo bogoslovia* (The Paths of Russian Theology), Vilnius, 1991, p. 67.

[2] M. Larionov's letter (March 1913) to M. Le Dantu. OR GRM. F. 135, ed. khr. 7.

[3] However, similar motifs are found also in other Russian avant-garde artists and poets, such as
   A. Kruchenykh, V. Khlebnikov, B. Livshits, P. Filonov, and in part D. Burliuk and G. Yakulov, many
   of whom were close to Larionov and Goncharova at certain times.

of old and rural Russian art"[1]. Such programmatic address of folk culture helped "awaken memory" in the art of the *budushchniks* not only at the level of motifs and iconography, but also in creative work philosophy. It was precisely in connection with this programmatic address of folk art that the *budushchniks* developed an interest in the Old Believers' culture.

The Romanticists' myth of the demise of the West merged with eschatological anti-Westernism in the *budushchniks'* works and theoretical writings to form the basis of their own version of anti-Western utopia, in which cultural archetypes went hand in hand with a keen sense of modernity. I will dwell on only one aspect of the *budushchniks'* anti-Western mythologem that has to do above all with their special understanding of time. I am interested not so much in the rhetoric of their declarative rejection of the West as in their attempts at formulating their own version of contemporaneity based on the archetypes of folk myths in their art or self-representation strategies. It was here that what the Russian *budushchniks* did touched common ground with innermost cultural memory, and in particular with the eschatological disposition that persisted among the people and especially the Old Believers.

Rejection of linear time, progress and the forward movement of history was an important strategy of the *budushchniks* that enabled, according to Benedict Livshits, "casting aside the shameful and ludicrous yoke of Europe"[2]. a sort of chronoclasm, or struggle with time and the logic of progress, and an attempt to build a new system of coordinates for art that would substitute synchrony for linear development and cause-and-effect relationship became a central theme with the *budushchniks* and the basis for programmatic rejection of Futurism as an exhausted Western trend. *Vsyochestvo* (Everythingism) was proclaimed as a new trend instead of Futurism. According to Zdanevich, *vsyochestvo* was "our national trend". The birth of *vsyochestvo* coincided with the peak of anti-Western sentiments among the *budushchniks*. in his lecture about Natalia Goncharova Zdanevich proclaimed the overthrow of Futurism: "*Vsyochestvo* makes struggle against the past absurd and thus overthrows Futurism"[3]. *Vsyochestvo*, Zdanevich claimed, was a new trend "that definitively abolished time and space and liberated art from its temporal and spatial dependence"[4].

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[1] Zdanevich I., *on Futurism*. Op. Cit., p. 85.

  One of the most ardent advocates of anti-Westernism, Zdanevich was at the same time far from the profundity of the anti-Western myth. While proclaiming in his speeches: "we demand patriotism, love for Russia and her victoriousness. We hold dear everything that is of our nation", he simultaneously constructed his concepts as replicas of the nationalist rhetoric of the Italian Futurists. Zdanevich I., *on Futurism*. OR GRM. F. 177, ed.khr. 10.

[2] Livshits B., *Polutoraglazyi strelets* (One-and-a-half-eyed Strelets)…

[3] Zdanevich I., Natalia Goncharova i vsyochestvo // N, Goncharova, M. Larionov, Issledovaniya i publikatsii (Studies and Publications), Moscow: Nauka, 2001, p. 174.

[4] Zdanevich, Futurizm i vsyochestvo, OR GRM, F. 177, ed. khr. 21

The concept of *vsyochestvo* accumulated the ideas of Larionov and his associates about art outside the evolution process and free from the notions of innovation and historicism ("the value and objective of a work of art are not considered from the point of view of time", Larionov claimed[1]). in his foreword to the catalogue of the "Exhibition of Original Icons and Luboks" (1913), which was programmatic for Larionov's associates, Larionov presented a mystification, make-believe concept of the history of art that lacked linear development or any differentiation between historical epochs and styles, the new and the old. He cited fragments of an "unpublished history of art", in which the event of the exhibition itself was shifted to the mythical past, to the reign of the King Hammurabi of Assyria: "An exhibition of 19th- and 20th- century *luboks* was staged in the reign of King Hammurabi of Assyria... They caused such an upsurge of feelings of the order of the arts that time was killed by the extratemporal and the extraspatial"[2]. on account of Goncharova's solo exhibition in the autumn of 1913 Zdanevich made a public report "Natalia Goncharova and Vsyochestvo", in which he used Goncharova's works as an example to expound the concept of art outside time or the logic of progress, together with the principles of an imaginary, mystification history of art. "There is no historical perspective," Zdanevich claimed. "There are only systems created by man. Struggle against the past is absurd because there is no past. Striving after the future is absurd because there is no future: the future can be made the past and vice versa... There is neither aging nor innovation."[3] The noteworthy fact is that the exhibition itself complied with the principle of rejection of historical sequence and linear time: the chronological principle to which the public was used was ignored when hanging the pictures.

The rejection of linear progressive time was not merely proclaimed in theoretical declarations. The *budushchniks* also proceeded from it when elaborating the new principles of creativity in painting and poetry. in poetry it was polyphony, that is, the creation of works intended for the simultaneous sounding of several voices built as "sound chords" despite the linear principle of writing and reading. Zdanevich formulated the principles of such poetry in his manifesto "Multiple Poetry and Vsyochestvo" (1914) and applied them in his *zaum'* works. in pictorial art this abandonment of linear thinking found expression in the programmatic multistyle and the abandoned principle of division into high and low art. "We recognise all styles suitable for the assertion of our creative work", the *budushchniks* stressed[4].

[1] Livshits B., Polutoraglazyi strelets. (One-and-a-half-eyed Strelets) L.: Sovetskij-pisatel, 1989, p. 57.

[2] "The Exhibition of Original Icons and Luboks", organised by M. Larionov, Moscow, 1913, p. 3.

[3] Zdanevich I., Natalia Goncharova i Vsyochestvo // Op. cit., p. 172.

[4] "Luchisty i budushchniki" (Rayonists and Futurians) // *Russkii futurism. Teoriya. Praktika. Kritika. Vospominaniya* (Russian Futurism. Theory. Practice. Criticism. Memoirs.), eds. V. Terekhina and A. Zimenkov, Moscow: Nasledie, 1999, p. 241.

According to the Romanticists, the "demise of the West" was always associated with a special sense of time: terror of the irreversible flight of time or "terror of history", to quote M. Eliade. The immutable law of the unidirectional movement of time was pivotal to the myth of the "demise of the West" and the forthcoming old age of European culture. The abandonment of linear time emerged as an important component of the *budushchniks'* anti-Western utopia and an attempt to avoid the fate of the West, that is to say, to escape death and drop out of history[1]. The *budushchniks* overcame the myth of the "demise of the West" by professing nonlinear, extrahistorical time through the apocalyptic exit from history. Instead of the inexorable flight of time, that is, instead of the all-consuming and destructive time of the "demise of the West", the *budushchniks* addressed eschatological time that promised "the new sky and the new earth" and had eschatological enthusiasm instead of the "eschatological terror".

In some aspects the Book of Revelation is of the same nature as the disposition of the *budushchniks*, primarily as a prototype of the crack of time, the exhaustion of energy and forces of the dilapidated world and the creation of the new one: "And he who sat upon the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new'" (Rev 21.5). The "apocalyptic" striving of the Russian Futurists after things new was one of the most paradoxical images of modern times. Their aspiration towards novelty, search of novelty and hankering for novelty come across as a craving for and search of the end. This apocalyptic perception of things new is a crucial point that brings the avant-garde and popular eschatological disposition close together. Ever since the time of the schism the agonizing feeling of the catastrophic crack of time dominated the popular mood, together with the understanding of the new epoch as that of the end, as the epoch drawing the Sacred History to a close and the nearing end of world history. As Archpriest Avvakum wrote: "The time of the Writ has come"[2] or "God has given to live to the edge"[3]. Such sentiments not only conditioned the specific disposition in the concrete historical period, but became engraved in Russian mentality.

"Artificial Optimism" proclaimed by the Italian Futurists forces them to welcome progress and plunge ecstatically into the vortex of time. The *budushchniks* asserted eschatological enthusiasm as a means of overcoming linear time. Eschatological enthusiasm was at the heart of one of Natalia

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[1] Poets of the Russian avant-garde frequently used motifs of dodging death. Elena Guro, for instance, wrote: "And we, if we still die, will do so quite believing in the immortality of the body and open spaces! Our death is just a mistake, a failure of the inapt". Elena Guro. Selected Writings from the Archives. Ed. A. Ljunggren, N. Gourianova, Stockholm,1995, p. 91.

[2] *Zhitye Protopopa Avvakuma im samim napisannoe* (The Life of the Archpriest Avvakum Written by Himself), Moscow: Direkt-Media, 2014, p. 34.

[3] Avvakum. Letter to Simeon // *Zhitye Protopopa Avvakuma im samim napisannoe i drugie ego sochineniya* (The Life of the Archpriest Avvakum Written by Himself and His Other Writings), Moscow: Academia, 1934, p. 341.

Goncharova's central works of the 1910s, the apocalyptic cycle *Harvest* (1911) brimming with an optimistic, joyous and festive mood. Goncharova opted for the combination of "fiery" colours that were frequently used in peasant-drawn pictures of the apocalypse. She created an image of the utmost tension of life, red-hot to the moment of explosion, and simultaneously a solemnly festive atmosphere. Goncharova proceeded from the traditional images of the end of the world from the Revelation and the Gospel: "the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels" (Mt 13.39). She follows not only the canonical text, but the stable narrative as represented in prints or hand-drawn *luboks* and manuscript illustrations of the Old Believers' books. Meanwhile she never ever reproduces the well-known iconographic schemes directly. in her interpretations of the revelations of St John the Evangelist she acts in the spirit of folk masters who far from always stuck to the canonical representations and frequently developed their own iconography and style in the manuscript books of the apocalypse they produced instead of working with tracing models. in her *Harvest* cycle Goncharova invented new modernist optics to depict "the end of time". Dynamics, sharp paradoxical angles, fragmented pictures next to hieratic immobility, flat forms and ornamentality produce an explosive effect of the archaic wedded to modernism. Her pictures are instants of explosion snatched out of the flow of time and breaking the linear unidirectional movement of time.

  The *budushchniks* had a special kind of eschatologism that was directly embedded in modernity and tied to the realities of modern life. It was the eschatologism of popular myths in which "a great red dragon, having seven heads" from the Apocalypse becomes a "fiery serpent" that has come to earth in the form of new technical inventions, such as steam engines, steamboats or trams[1]. I will briefly review just some of the motifs connected with the way the *budushchniks* saw new machines as symbols of the apocalyptic period. The image of "iron birds" common already in the 19th century was a popular motif in the descriptions of "the end of time" in popular myths[2]. P. Chubinsky, a 19th-century ethnographer, recounted those myths as follows: "Birds with long iron beaks that are still in the sky will come flying to kill living people"[3]. in the 20th century aeroplanes seen as the "iron birds" of the end of time came to embody those eschatological fears. One of the authors who collected popular legends of the First World War in 1915 left the following evidence: "old men took the aeroplane for the legendary

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[1] Bessonov I., *Russkaia narodnaia eskhatologiya: istoria i sovremennost* (Russian Folk Eschatology: History and Modern Times), Moscow: Gnosis, 2014, pp. 137–8.

[2] In folk eschatology the images of iron birds go back to the text of the Apocalypse: "Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly in midheaven, 'Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great'." (Rev 19.17–18).

[3] Cit. Bessonov I., Op. cit., p. 146.

iron bird, which was to appear before the Judgement Day and start pecking at the Orthodox"[1].

In a 1913 poem A. Kruchenykh directly used that image of folk eschatology:

> Mir konchilsya. Umerli truby…
> Ptitsy zheleznye stali letet
> Tonushchikh mokrye chuby
> Kosti zhelteiushchei plet[2].
> [The world is over. Pipes are dead…
> Birds of iron start taking wing
> People drowning, their forelocks wet,
> Yellowish bone hanging like a string.]

Birds with copper beaks also appear in the poem *Ef luchi* (Ef Rays), in which Kruchenykh describes apocalyptic visions, lacing myths with modernity. V. Khlebnikov, too, gives an image of a similar monster bird in his poem *Zhuravl* (Crane). N. Goncharova's *Angels and Aeroplanes* from the series Mystical Images of War (1914) indirectly references the same motifs. "Iron birds" and angels find themselves in the same space as signs of calamitous times. The *budushchniks* often placed new machines next to disasters. in one of his linocuts Malevich shows *Death of the Man on the Airplane and on the Train at the Same Time* (1913). Goncharova's painting *Plane over Train* (1913) is also pervaded with alarming undertones of an impending disaster of a clash and compositionally is reminiscent of the calamitous subject of Malevich.

There are other examples of such an apocalyptic vision of modern times in the works of Russian Futurists. Khlebnikov, too, sees the modern city through apocalyptic allusions, referencing popular prints in which the lords of hell are frying sinners: "There is a certain lover of dainties and podge who loves piercing precisely human souls with a spit, taking slight delight in the sizzle and crackle and seeing the glistering drops fall into the fire and streak downwards, and that podge is the city"[3]. Finally, traces of eschatological motifs can be found in the concept of zaum' and alogism. The rejection of reason proclaimed by Malevich ("At a public lecture on 19 February 1914 I renounced reason… the supreme work of art is produced in the absence of mind") references visions of the last times from the Book of Ezra "then understanding will be hidden, and reason withdraw to her secret chamber" (Second Book of Ezra: 5, 9)

Eschatological time, the period of waiting for "the end of time" and destruction, for overpowering the rule of linear time, accounts for still another

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[1] Cit. Bessonov I., p. 144.

[2] Kruchenykh A., *Stikhotvoreniya. Poemy. Romany. Opera* (Verses. Poems. Novels. Opera). St Petersburg: Akademichesky proekt, 2001, p. 263.

[3] Khlebnikov V., *Collected Works*, Leningrad, 1928–1933. in 5 vols. Vol. 4, p. 211.

aspect of the *budushchniks*' utopia. Their anti-Western slogans served as a basis for the rejection of the European principle of developing national culture that was used as a model for the development of Europeanized Russian art. "My national and Oriental aspirations," Goncharova stressed, "are not to narrow the objectives of art but, on the contrary, to make it all-embracing and worldwide"[1]. The "national trend" of *vsyochestvo* rejects things "Western" as narrowly national, or to quote the *We and the West* manifesto, narrowly territorial, local, and asserts instead the cosmic, universal elements, or the principle of "omnipresence", to use Zdanevich's terminology. The *budushchniks* likewise treated omnipresence or universalism as an option to escape the fate of the West and an attempt to destroy the logic and the very myth of the "demise of the West". in one of his speeches Zdanevich described the utopian model of the special time of *vsyochestvo* as follows: "The self-sufficient *vsyochestvo*, with its extratemporaneity and leap forward and return and infinity"[2].

By way of conclusion let me single out yet another aspect of the *budushchniks*' anti-Western utopia that also has to do with the abandonment of linear time. in his article "The Church and the Kingdom" Giorgio Agamben wrote about a special "experience of messianic time" which is devoid of linearity: "Messianic time means not chronological duration but the qualitative transformation of the experienced time. (…) in the Gospels Messiah is called *ho erchomenos*, that is, he who never ceases to come. Messianic time is not the end of time, but rather the correlation of every instant, every time (kairos) with the end of time and with eternity"[3]. Traces of such experience of time can be observed in the Russian Futurists' concept of the future. It attracted them not merely as the power of youth, which the logic of progress deems it mandatory to seek, but, speaking conventionally, from the messianic point of view, as something which is always only forthcoming, but "never ceases to come". Mikhail Larionov set forth precisely such a concept of the future and of the new. For him "the new" "never ceases to come", that is, cannot become a consummate school or trend. in the collection "Donkey's Tail and Target" Zdanevich related Larionov's views as follows: "My goal is not to assert new art because it will cease to be new after that, but to try and… do as life itself does, every second it gives birth to new people, creates a new image of life, and new opportunities endlessly arise from that"[4].

Despite the declarative split with the historical tradition, the avant-garde culture does not boil down to "destructive gestures" and the creation of the new. Alongside the destruction strategies, the mechanisms of recollection and restoration of the broken and forgotten images of the tradition were

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[1] Goncharova N., Predisloviye k katalogu vystavki kartin (Foreword to a Picture Exhibition Catalogue) // Kovalev A. Op.cit, p. 466.

[2] Zdanevich I., O Natalii Goncharovoi // Zdanevich I., Op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 143.

[3] Agamben, G. "The Church and the Kingdom" http://www.bogoslov.ru/text/2331830.html

[4] Zdanevich, Op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 12.

operating in the avant-garde art, and the new frequently appeared through recollection and the revival of the past. in his book *Cultural Memory* Jan Assmann pointed out paradoxical points in the way the mechanism of cultural memory operates. a break in historical continuity provokes culture to give birth to new things by moving back to the past: "Renovation, revivals and restoration always take the form of addressing the past. While mastering the future, they create, recreate and discover the past"[1]. The *budushchniks* interpreted modernity and the new in this vein. They rather recollected than invented in their art. For them the modern and the new frequently looked not so much towards the future as towards the past and were seen as a recollection and going back to the sources. These qualities make it possible to point out elements of their theoretical programmes and works that can be defined as "conservative avant-gardism". I think it important to point to the existence of such a conservative impulse in avant-garde culture that has so far remained unexplored and is yet to be properly described. The anti-Western utopia of the *budushchniks* can be viewed as one of the brightest embodiments of such conservative avant-gardism.

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[1] Assman Jan, *Kulturnaya pamyat. Pismo, pamyat o proshlom i politicheskaia identichnost v vysokikh kulturakh* (Cultural Memory. Writing, Memory of the Past and Political Identity in High Cultures), Moscow: Yazyki slavyanskoi kultury, 2004, p. 33.

Anna Chudetskaya

Memory Reset: "Formalist" Experience Actualised by Young Painters of the Thaw Period

I am going to discuss a period well covered in recent publications. The 50th anniversary of the famous exhibition celebrating 30 years of the Moscow branch of the Artists' Union (MOSKh) served as a catalyst of sorts for a host of memoir-type reports. of special value are memoirs of Pavel Nikonov that were in part published, in part shared orally in his report to an Academy of Arts conference in 2012, in interviews uploaded to the oralhistory web resource[1] and in private talks. When collated with archival documents and magazine publications of the second half of the 1950s, this evidence has prompted me to take a look at the well-known events from a different angle.

Let me refresh the events of that period. "Exoneration" in art somewhat outpaced political developments. The "First Exhibition of Works by Young Artists" took place in Moscow in the spring of 1954. Students of Moscow art schools and young artists not affiliated with the Artists' Union contributed to that exhibition, which was a novelty in itself. Yuri Gerchuk, who witnessed those events, believed that "the self-identification of the new generation of the Thaw period started already with that exhibition". The exhibition opened in early spring, before the *Znamy* a (Banner) magazine published in May Ily a Ehrenburg's story *The Thaw*, which gave the name to that period of the general liberalization of life in the Soviet Union after Stalin's death.

Nikit a Khrushchev was yet to make his report on the personality cult and its consequences at the closed Party session of 25 February 1956 when months-long debates on tradition and innovation in art were launched in January 1956, involving Mikhail Alpatov, Martiros Saryan, Vladimir

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[1] oralhistory.ru/members/nikonov.

Favorsky and Alexander Gerasimov, among others. Solo shows of Saryan, Pavel Kuznetsov, Pyotr Konchalovsky, Aristarkh Lentulov and Ily a Mashkov were staged at Moscow exhibition halls. The year 1956 can be characterised as decisive for the evolution of new pictorial art. One could say that all strat a of the artistic community came into motion. Practical efforts were made to exonerate "plastic values" branded earlier as formalism. "Formalists" was a blanket term for a wide range of artists who engaged in plastic experiments in their works. To one extent or another, official criticism had accused them of different sins, from "denigrating reality" to directly "abetting imperialism".

The "Second Exhibition of Works by Young Artists of Moscow and the Moscow Region", which was held at several Moscow venues in spring 1956 and had a considerable attendance, was a highlight of that year. It marked the beginning of an open and fierce opposition of polar aesthetical views: conservative, traditionally Soviet and allegedly realistic vs innovative efforts to regenerate art. The exhibition of works of Pablo Picasso staged by the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in October 1956 further aggravated that opposition. The All-Union Congress of Artists convened in spring 1957 stripped the odious Alexander Gerasimov of his leading post and powers.

Scholars have more than once pondered why *pictorial arts proved the weakest link* in the chain of other Soviet arts such as literature, music and theatre. The usual answer is that it was through "neglect of the Party curators", who focused on the arts that were more popular and for this reason required more attention. Furthermore, it was precisely in pictorial art that whatever was not mainstream Socialist Realism was anathematized most bitterly. This applied to both exhibition space and art training. in the late 1940s, even the "cautious" artists such as Alexander Osmerkin were barred from teaching. Art schools focused exclusively on the craftsmanship aspect of painting, enforced absurd ideological restrictions and, more importantly, replaced the spontaneous creative process with an artificial one prescribed from above. Many students felt the grim atmosphere deaden every living impulse and that inevitably provoked a sense of protest.

Let me quote from Pavel Nikonov's recollections of the field studies Surikov Institute students carried out in Vladimir in 1949: *"The years 1948–9 were the worst… But then they developed a sense of protest in us. That was precisely how it started. At first we just didn't want to listen to some Lev Borisovich or Ivan Ivanovich, just didn't want to. And then it arose: he was telling me something like, 'The sky should be painted like that: take yellow gum, ultramarine and lake pigment, lower to the horizon it should be gum and lake pigment, then more of the ultramarine and nothing but ultramarine at the top.' That was the scheme. My foot, I won't do it! Or take our field studies in Vladimir. 'This group will go to a tractor works to paint there, and that one to the automatic tools factory.' Meanwhile, they have such views all around there! Everyone rushed to paint churches. 'Whoever paints churches again will be dismissed from field studies and expelled from the Institute.' Such were the guidelines, which could not but evoke an incredible sense of protest. Perhaps that was precisely what*

raised that feeling of antagonism to everything around.[1]*"* Many artists shared
the same memories, including Eric Bulatov and Alexei Kamensky.

A fascinating paradox: students of the Moscow Art School (MKhSh) re-
called that in their school library they could find books and postcards with
reproductions of works of Impressionists and European modernists from the
collection of the Museum of New Western Art and from foreign museums,
but they knew practically nothing about the art of their native land from the
1920s and early 1930s. a whole sphere of homeland art was deliberately con-
cealed from viewers, art critics and especially zealously from young artists.
The paradox was that all the while "formalist art" and its representatives ex-
isted at the periphery of art life, but were off-limits. It is also worth mention-
ing the fact that many of those who could have served as a sort of "bridge"
for young artists to the innovative quests of the 1920s were no longer capa-
ble of playing that role: their creative potential had long been suppressed by
years-long harassment and fear. For instance, Solomon Nikritin, Fyodor Pla-
tov and Konstantin Vialov continued working in the MOSKh organisations
and the Art Fund system, but took no part in "revaluating the past". Pavel
Nikonov recalls: "*Kosty a Vialov (that was how I called him, although he was
much older, but everybody called him that because he no longer worked and was
past fifty or maybe even sixty) in a fit of sincerity… over a bottle once said with
irony: 'D'you think you are the first ones? It all already happened earlier'.*"

So, some young artists, with or for some reason without official profes-
sional training embarked on their creative careers with a feeling that the
official trend of art had been fully exhausted and "antagonistic". Their feel-
ing was aggravated by the realisation that their position as artists in public
space was misleading and severed from world culture.

As soon as the oppressive restrictions slightly weakened, art rushed to
liberate itself from ideological patronage and simultaneously broke up into
numerous streams. Let us focus on those who chose homeland art of the
1920s and 1930s as a relevant tradition. Figuratively speaking, that gener-
ation had to wipe out, as it were, the period of Soviet art of the late 1930s
and 1940s. Aware of the need to restore cultural continuity, they hoped "to
go back and find that point at which the normal course of art was forcibly
torn". Several decades of the 20th century were wound back, as if it were
a newsreel, and an attempt was made in the late 1950s to reconstruct the
"right course" of art history. Works of artists who had been accused of for-
malist experiments, such as those of the "Knave of Diamonds", the Society
of Easel Painters (OST) and other associations, elicited tremendous inter-
est. Young artists knew by heart the works within public reach[2].

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[1] oralhistory.ru/members/nikonov.

[2] P. Nikonov recalls: "When I still studied at the art school, I got to know Volodya Slepyan, and he
organised all those meetings. They had on show that period of the 1910s, and the Kyrgyz steppes
cycle. There was a Crimean work of Falk's, *Alupka* or *Alushta*. A very good landscape of the 1930s.
And there was a self-portrait of Konchalovsky in a yellow shirt. Their expositions were confined
to halls. I liked it that Konchalovsky had one hall, Vrubel another, a hall per artist. While Borisov-
Musatov and Pavel Kuznetsov, they were hung all together". oral*history.ru/members*/nikonov

Some of the artists who had been in contact with the first wave of avant-garde art were still teaching at art schools and studios. of the host of names let me mention S. I. Ivashev-Musatov, a disciple and secretary of Ily a Mashkov, who taught at the VTsSPS studio, and M. I. Khazanov of the Imeni 1905 god a Art School. Nikonov recalled that young artists used to visit the studios of Pyotr Konchalovsky, Alexander Labas and Alexander Tyshler, as well as those of the artists' heirs. D. P. Shterenberg's studio was likewise open to students and young artists. *"Fialk a Shterenberg received us at her flat on Begovai a and showed works by David Shterenberg, those remaining in her collection that for some reason or other did not make it to the museum... or that she had kept for herself. It was very stimulating because we were more or less familiar with textbook works such as* Anis'k a *and* Herrings*, but those kept at her place were very interesting.*[1]*"* Nikonov also remembered visiting Pyotr Konchalovsky's studio: those visits could take place owing to Nikolai Andronov's friendship with Mikhail Konchalovsky, who showed his father's works of the 1920s and even the 1910s to the young artists.

The existing barriers could be overcome through friendship or kinship ties, through chance or persistence. Illarion Golitsyn and Vladimir Favorsky happened to be next-door neighbours; Erik Bulatov and Oleg Vasiliev came to Favorsky and Robert Falk for guidance; Vladimir Nemukhin found an older friend and teacher in Pyotr Sokolov because his father knew him. Much has been written about the artists of the so-called "Lianozovo Group" and the role of Evgeni Kropivnitsky. Nevertheless, in the 1950s those contacts between representatives of different generations were of an intimate nature. By the late 1950s efforts to extract the names of artists and their works from oblivion became more open and purposeful, encompassing a wide range of people. Yuri Gerchuk published archive documents about preparations to mark the 25th birth anniversary of MOSKh. The entire MOSKh history was to be retraced in a book that was expected to be published. Although it failed to materialise, work on it at the inspiration of the art critic Vladimir Kostin paved the way to revaluation of one's own past[2]. It should be born in mind that the objective was feasible at that moment: the professional union had been formed a mere 30 years previously and witnesses who remembered the events in art life of the 1920s and 1930s were still alive. Many of the so-called "formalists" were still quite active. Some of them had fallen into obscurity and engaged in "art for themselves", others fulfilled themselves in applied fields, as did G. Rublev in monumental art and Tyshler in stage design. Still others, such as A. Kuprin and P. Konchalovsky, continued taking part in art life and exhibiting works of the past decade already "adapted to Socialist Realism".

When MOSKh elected young energetic people to its management board in 1961, real steps were taken to liven up art life. The programme

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[1] Hereinafter quotes from the interview granted by P. F. Nikonov to me in February 2012.

[2] Gerchuk Yu., "MOSKh Haemorrhage", or Khrushchev at Manege. Moscow, 2008, pp. 33–4.

of "bringing back forgotten art" acquired a systematic character. Several groups of enthusiasts were formed and started visiting studios to meet artists' heirs. One such group visited the studio of Boris Golopolosov, an artist expelled from MOSKh in the 1930s. There was an indicative episode: Pavel Nikonov and Pyotr Smolin found a rolled up canvas at a Soviet Army Museum storeroom. It was the picture *An Offensive Launch Order* by Pyotr Shumikhin. Step-by-step the Tretyakov Gallery storerooms were opened up and one could see works by David Shterenberg and Pavel Kuznetsov. Meanwhile, abstract art remained under lock and key. That might have been responsible for the extent of rejuvenation in the works of artists of the Thaw period. However, the magnetism of "post-avant-garde generation" painting with its combination of existential drama, lyrical mood and sophisticated colorism was fully appreciated.

The painterly experience of artists of the 1920s was being mastered actively. Plastic dynamism, generalised shapes, the intricate colour palette remote from the natural one, and harshly energetic rhythms were signs of continuity between the works of A. Deineka, D. Shterenberg, P. Kuznetsov and R. Falk on the one hand, and the Thaw period paintings on the other. When exhibited, those works provoked a poignant response. Heated debates arose among art critics and historians: the above continuity was obvious to both fierce critics and advocates of the new trend. Conservatively-minded critics directly accused it of being secondary and the denunciation of formalism flared up anew. Even well-wishers reproached artists for stylisation and imitation (for instance, Pavel Nikonov was reprimanded for imitating P. Kuznetsov). Even works meeting official requirements as far as themes were concerned but executed in a new style came under bitter attack. For example, P. Nikonov's painting *Our Workdays*, which now comes across as a very timid departure from the accepted "norms", was rejected by the Exhibition Commission for "formalism". It took the artist much effort finally to show it at the "zonal" exhibition of 1961, the fact he considered a victory. N. Andronov's *Steeplejacks* and Mikhail Nikonov's *First Steps* were shown at the same zonal exhibition.

This continuity of "new painting" became especially evident at the famous exhibition marking 30 years of MOSKh. Formalist works were retrieved from oblivion and displayed next to those of innovative artists. The minutes of the Manege exhibition debates held on 20 November, two weeks after the exhibition opened and prior to Khrushchev's visit, quote D. V. Sarabianov as saying: "The young art of today and the old art of the recent past seem to shake hands here, as if restoring the direct line which has been destroyed deliberately"[1]. The same minutes preserved a telltale pronouncement by A. Gastev: " a branch just the same starts growing where it had been cut off…"[2]

[1] *Minutes of Discussion of the Exhibition Organised by the MOSKh Section of Critics.* RGALI. F. 2943. Op.1. Ed. Khr. 2966.

[2] Ibid.

Art critics voiced similar thoughts decades later. Thus, Marin a Besson-ov a was among the first to suggest that artists of the 1960s sought to bring art back within the framework of its modernist paradigm. "They had to find the point where the autonomous art of self-reflection came into being and which Late Impressionism and Expressionism had left behind..."[1] Some felt they were direct descendants of the Russian avant-garde, others believed they were heirs to French art, Late Impressionism and Postimpressionism. The situation was indeed unique: young artists could choose their own past. V. Mirimanov, a culture theorist, echoed Bessonova: "Heretical works traced painting far back to the first half of the 1920s, the moment when tra-ditions had been violently cut short and the crossroads where Russian art had dropped out of the world artistic process"[2].

We would have said today that the MOSKh 30th anniversary exhibi-tion was a grandiose project "to graft the cut branch back to the tree trunk". Much has been written and published about it and the events and intrigues around it. in addition to the political aspect, it is hard to over-estimate the role played by that exhibition from the purely aesthetical point of view. Those who happened to attend it cherished the memory of a sense of discovery for years on end. Many I managed to talk with about that event could remember nearly half a century later even the works which had impressed them the most. One can say that that exhi-bition prompted many people to realise the value of Russian art of the 1920s-1930s. For instance, Yuri Shchukin's canvas *The Attraction* dis-played at the MOSKh 30th Anniversary Exhibition produced such a strong impression on the critic and art historian Olg a Roytenberg that she ad-dressed the theme of the "forgotten generation" and started working on a book about Yuri Shchukin[3]. That was the beginning of her years-long studies to resuscitate the memory of forgotten names. For Igor Savitsky, too, that exhibition served as an impulse to create a museum of Post-avant-garde art in Nukus.

I am convinced that to understand the development processes in 20th-century Russian national culture, it is of fundamental importance to realise that for decades the artistic experience of Russian avant-garde artists and the "Post-avant-garde generation" had been deliberately con-cealed from the public, art critics and the younger generation of artists. Fear of "raising ghosts of the past" blocked access to the experience of a creatively vibrant generation steeped in romantic enthusiasm.

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[1] Bessonova M. "Mozhno li oboitis bez termina avangard" (Can We Do Without the Term Avant-garde) // Bessonova M., Selected Works, Moscow, 2004, p. 165.

[2] Mirimanov V. B., *Russkii avangard i esteticheskaia revolutsia 20 v. Drugaia paradigma vechnosti* (Rus-sian Avant-garde and the Aesthetical Revolution of the 20th Century. Another Paradigm of Eternity). Moscow, 1995, p. 49.

[3] *Roytenberg* O., *Neuzheli kto-to vspomnil, chto my byli...* (Could Anyone Have Remembered that We Were...), Moscow, 2008, p. 9. The book about Shchukin was published by Sovetsky khudozhnik in 1979.

Over the past decades the historians' community has stepped up attempts to consider memory as a multilayer phenomenon. Even though the fundamental principles are yet to be formulated, beyond doubt, the field of collective research into the nature, forms of manifestation and functions of group memory have been defined. of special interest for our subject is the discovery of the medievalists, which has largely transformed views of the formation of groups. Studies of religious groups and kinship groups have shown that " a decisive factor in the choice of kinship is not the real genealogical ties, but the human mind: who man feels kindred to is a question of not blood, but self-identification"[1]. I think that this holds true of the formation of groups in the Thaw period. The ability to assimilate and memorise knowledge of the past manifested itself in social actions, including appropriating traditions and forming daily experience. The natural conclusion is that active and creative memory is an indispensable factor of the self-identification of the personality.

As it is impossible to pay adequate attention to the philosophical aspects of the memory phenomenon, let us consider its psychological aspect. Modern psychological science defines the function of memory as grasping and using earlier experience in one's current behaviour. From this point of view memory is a crucial basic factor of man's conscious activity. The memory of a healthy human being necessarily has so-called blind spots. These include infancy zones, repressed episodes and forgotten dreams. Furthermore, significant zones of memory can be *blocked* under the impact of fear, anxiety or pain. The blocking of significant zones leads to neurotic states. The more extensively zones are blocked, the more unbalanced the psychological state. What is forcibly repressed does not disappear, but causes constant unconscious worry. There appears a sense of ataxi a and divorce from one's genuine self-consciousness, which is painful for a psychologically wholesome personality.

Blocking that prevents neurotics from perceiving and absorbing meaningful experience can be removed through psychotherapy. What the person feels then is something like euphoria. Something similar is observed when "collective memory is blocked". P. Nikonov recalled that young artists who discovered for themselves the "under-the-sof a paintings" when preparing an exhibition were overwhelmed by a euphoric feeling. They had come in touch with something genuine and real. "Those who have extricated themselves from an ideological trap experience a 'moment of truth'," Vladimir Mirimanov wrote[2].

The Thaw period generation of artists made it possible for a galaxy of names and significant number of artworks to be recovered from oblivion.

[1] Arnautova Yu. E., MEMORIA: "TOTALNYI SOTSIALNYI FENOMEN" I OB'EKT ISSLEDOVANIYA (MEMORIA: "TOTAL SOCIAL PHENOMENON" AND OBJECT OF INVESTIGATION). Obrazy proshlogo i kollektivnaia identichnost v Evrope do nachala Novogo vremeni (Images of the Past and Collective Identity in Europe prior to Modern History). Moscow, 2003, pp. 19–37.

[2] Mirimanov V. B., Op. Cit., p. 48.

The return to the real space of culture was attempted largely through psychological reconstruction. The recovery of memory applied not only and not so much to experimental plastic thinking. Along with that, the entire complex of world outlook that pervaded the art of the 1920s rose from the past and became tangible. It also entailed qualities, such as enthusiasm, faith, naivety, and political inexperience.

The understanding of the mission of art was restored. Debates focused on formal objectives, however, with the very term "formalism" having such negative connotations that it was evaded and replaced with the term "professional": "professional problems" in fact implied formal plastic aspects. Debates of that period were peppered with terms like the specifics of graphical means or "painterliness as such" and colorism. The right of the personality to individual vision of the world was being upheld. Narrative minimalism went hand in hand with the complication and expansion of perception. The specifics of every kind of art, be it painting or drawing, were assigned a special role of a nonverbal language in conveying those new sensations. Numerous publications of that period dealt with this problem of the relationship between style and method.

Artists were concerned not only about regaining the regenerated language of art, but also about expressing with its help something innermost, independent and personal, something to which many of them still lacked access but longed so much to attain that independence. Let me quote from a 1929 article "On Realism" by S. Romanovich, which was hardly known during that period and which sounds in unison with the creative slogans of the art of the Thaw period: "They usually call a work of art realistic if it has something in addition to the correct representation of nature and a manner, or rather style characteristic of every artist. Let us call that something a sense of love of reality. in our opinion, love is that hidden fire and warmth which we unexplainably feel... Agreeing that love of reality is the main thing in a work of art, they may ask how it is to be expressed. To this end it is necessary to find a corresponding and free language, such that reality could pass through without being tarnished by lies or disfigured by clumsiness..."[1] in a pithy way Romanovich expresses the essence of an artistic attitude that the artists of the Thaw period upheld through metaphors and allusions. It is not by chance that the "Thaw generation" was so much concerned with the problems of self-identification.

Restoring what had been "forcibly forgotten" to the space of history and the space of culture had not only therapeutic importance, but to a certain extent was attributed "magical" features: the "right" past was being restored and was to influence and amend the present. Was that pronouncement heard? I suppose the powers that be realised and correctly estimated precisely the *magical* component of that process: it had to be stopped and rendered innocuous. Their response was the resolute refusal "to dig into

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[1] Romanovich S., "*O realizme*" *(*On Realism). *Makovets*, No. 2, 1922. Cit. *Roytenberg* O. *Neuzheli kto-to vspomnil, chto my byli...* (Could Anyone Have Remembered that We Were...), Moscow, 2008, p. 67.

the past". Obstacles were constantly raised and resistance mounted to "recollecting" the experience of the 1920s. Let me cite two episodes of a multitude of similar cases: Miud a Naumovn a Yablonskaya, who had invited a group of artists to look at the works of Kandinsky and Malevich at the Tretyakov Gallery storerooms, was forced to leave the museum. After his picture *Geologists* was criticised for "formalism", Pavel Nikonov had to file in an application "I request my picture to be regarded as a creative failure" (so as to avoid giving back the advance money, which had already been spent). in fact, nothing changed: an order had been given to leave illusions behind and continue living, working and thinking in accordance with instructions from above. However, the mechanism of "memory reset" was already at work.

I am aware that bringing a psychological component into an art study discourse calls for greater theoretical substantiation. in my constructs I tried to draw on the methodological principle of integral knowledge (*tselnoye znaniye*) that D. V. Sarabianov championed consistently. Integral knowledge is a concept borrowed from the Russian philosophical tradition to denote knowledge which combines scientific, intuitive and emotional knowledge. The principle of integral knowledge makes it possible to reveal the link between "world outlook" and plastic ideas; the artist's professional fulfilment in painting proves inseparable from his life and spiritual experience, and hence from the wholesomeness of his memory.

Let me conclude with a quote from an article on existential psychology. According to this trend of psychology, a part of man's mental sphere as represented by the person spontaneously strives after psychological integrity, the integration of the conscious and subconscious material, the elimination of blocking caused by fear and eventually self-healing. Life is understood as movement, a striving after completion and integration. The same can be said about every individual, healthy or not. Unfortunately, for an unhealthy individual his strivings turn out fruitless.

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