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POWER OF ART HOW ONE CONSUMES ART'S METAPHRASIC CONTEXT OF UNDISCLOSED EMOTIONALITY

The paper ventures into the sphere of emotional structure of artistic works from different periods embedded in their visual configuration as a token of the initial idea of the authors and its aesthetic exposition. Deconstructing the “affectionate” tissue of the artistic organism, this article aims at disclosure of the primal “scream” of the artists who created some of the master pieces of the world's heritage.

KEY WORDS: Heraclea Lyncestis, Marko's monastery, Rembrandt Van Rijn, Jackson Pollock, Early Christian mosaics, Byzantine frescoes, Baroque art, Action painting, Dripping method.

Although modern philosophy tends to diminish the emotional dimension of art works, as well as place their undisputable affective charge in a position of quasi sensitive experience¹, we all know that Leonardo's *Last Supper* is not but another illustration of a Gospel event, nor does Turner's *Fighting Téméraire* represents a landscape nobody gets excited about. Maybe Walton, being a philosopher, starts from a position of an *aesthetic surgery* necessary for an objective analysis of the artistic products known as “emotional anesthesia of the heart”, a method so ambitiously praised in the course of my Aesthetics classes that I felt I have had chosen the wrong occupation for myself. Even more so since standing in front of Velazquez' *El Triunfo de Baco (Los Borrachos)* in the Prado Museum, *Vincent's Bedroom in Arles* in Van Gogh's Museum in Amsterdam or Picasso's breathtaking *La Joie de Vivre* (Fig.1) in his Museum in Antibes, I had epiphanies which were nothing if not deeply emotional. In that regard, Walton's suggestion that when consuming a work of art, we are actually pretending to be emotional instead of having a real live experience, is a sole depreciation of the ideas of artistic creation, as well as a single effort for rationalization of the complex process of creative transformation of pure and powerful emo-

tions into an all consuming and overwhelming spectacle. Without intending to argue with the late Robert Solomon², who supports the idea of a cognitive account of emotions, my idea is to unravel just the basic layer of emotional charge of several artistic works that would not have been master-pieces if they had not been conceived out of the most delicate senses, profound feelings, secret sensations, resounding sentiments and intimate experiences. Far from being pretentious or intrusive in my wide area of art history knowledge, I have chosen several master peaces for this short socio-cultural story that will make an attempt to bring their affectability closer to the readers. These are *their* stories.

Episcopal Basilica in Heraclea Lyncestis: mosaic pavement in the narthex

“He is dead in this world who has no belief in another” (Goethe)

Hundreds of pages have been dedicated to different aspects of the colossal visual splendor of the mosaic which paves the floor of the narthex of the Episcopal basilica (Fig. 2) in the ancient town of Her-

¹ K. Walton, *Fearing Fictions*, **Journal of Philosophy** LXXV, New York 1978, p. 75.

² R. Solomon, *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life*, Indianapolis, 1993.



Fig.1 Pablo Picasso, *La Joie de Vivre* (1946), Musée Picasso, Antibes
 Сл. 1 Пикасо, *Радоста на живењето* (1946), Музеј на Пикасо во Антиб

aclea Lyncestis³. Its program concept, iconographic peculiarities, symbolic significance, as well as paint-

³ Г. Цветковиќ-Томашевиќ, *Мозаикот на подот во нартексот на големата базилика во Хераклеја Линкестидска*, Хераклеја III, Битола 1967, pp. 9-65.; Eadem, *Une mosaïque du Ve siècle de Hérakléa Lynkestis et la question de la formation du style de l'art médiéval. Symbolisme et son reflet sur le style*, in: Actas del VIII Congress international de arqueologia cristiana, Barcelona 1972, pp. 567-580; Eadem, *Mosaïques figuratives d'époque paléochrétien découvertes à Hérakléa Lynkestis dans la lumière de la cosmologie antique*, in: Actes du XIVe Congress international d'études byzantines III, Bucarest 1976, pp. 457-463; Eadem, *Рановизантијски подни мозаици. Дарданија, Македонија, Нови Епир*, Београд 1978, pp. 29-38.; E. Dimitrova, *On the Narthex of the Great Basilica in Heraclea*, Macedonian Review, Vol. XXV, 2-3, 1995, pp. 105-112; Eadem, *In Throuhg the Inner Door (the mosaic in the narthex of the large basilica in Heraclea Lyncestis)*, Niš & Byzantium IV, Niš 2006, pp. 179-188; Eadem, *From the Image of the Cosmos to Painted Dogma. Heraclea Lyncestis-Mosaic Pavements*, Makedonsko nasledstvo 27, Скопје 2006, pp. 7-12; Eadem, *Colored Dogma: the Mosaics of Heraclea Lyncestis, a New Interpretation*, in: Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies (London 2006), Vol. II, Abstracts of Communications, London 2006, pp. 314; Eadem, *Ремек-дела на ранохристијанското уметничко творештво во Македонија*, in: П. Кузман, Е. Димитрова, Ј. Donev (Ed.) Македонија. Милениумски културно-историски факти, Скопје 2013, pp. 1407-1412; Eadem, *The Mosaic at the Entrance of the Episcopal Basilica in Heraclea Lyncestis: Its Didactical Charge and Ritual Impact over the Congregation*, Folia Archaeologica Balkanica III (Professoris illustrisimae Elica Maneva in honorem), Скопје 2015, pp. 203-217.

erly impression, have occupied attention of dozens of scholars over the years. Besides the accentuated didactic charge of its structural components and the denominative aspects of its visual functionability⁴, this mosaic master piece displays emotional horizons firmly encompassed by the fundamental idea of faith as an all-embracing coordinative of human existence. Although the central part of the composition (**Fig. 3**) is the thematic core of the iconographic arrangement, the wide range of visual components and their inter-related ideological sublimation into an all-perceptive notion of soteriological facilitation, make this mosaic ensemble one of the most representative artistic accomplishment of the era⁵. Fascinating by the structural cohesion of its iconographic constituents and resplendent by the sophisticated orchestration of the symbolic allusions, the mosaic pavement in the narthex of the Episcopal basilica in Heraclea is, by all means, the pinnacle of Early Christian practice in the domain of visual transmission of Biblical messages into the inventive medium of artistic creation. Besides the accentuated Eucharistic and baptismal connotation of the iconographic components summarized in a grandiose picture that symbolizes the Christian Church⁶, the dogmatic character of this mo-

⁴ E. Dimitrova, *The Unpretentious Crypto Avant-garde or How did the Early Christian Practitioners Envisage Art (Ideological Approach, Concepts, Creators)*, Folia Archaeologica Balkanica IV (In honorem professoris viri clarissimi ac doctissimi Viktor Lilčić Adams), Skopje 2018, pp. 351-356.

⁵ Е. Димитрова, *Ремек-дела на ранохристијанското уметничко творештво во Македонија*, pp. 1407-1412.

⁶ E. Dimitrova, *Art and Ritual In the Episcopal Centers Of Macedonia Paleocristiana (The Floor Mosaics And the*



Fig. 2 Heraclea Lyncestis, *Mosaic in the narthex of the Episcopal basilica* (turn of the 6th century)
 Сл. 2 Хераклеја Линкестис, *Мозаикот во нартексот на Епископската базилика*
 (крај на V - почеток на VI век)

saic is complemented with emotional stratification of zoomorphic nature, one of a kind in the decorative panorama of ancient Christian times.

Cheetah devours an antelope – fear/ fright

In the right portion of the Heraclea mosaic ensemble, close to the southern border of the composition, one can see a depiction of a powerful predator feasting on the dead body of an antelope (**Fig. 4**). The representation is encompassed by the same backdrop as the other iconographic components of the mosaic panorama, namely, the row of different trees which alludes to a natural environment⁷, thus uniting the entire arrangement of symbolic images in a highly organized spectacle of monumental proportions. Positioned next to the depiction of the fearsome Cerberus, watcher of the underworld and keeper of the gates to the Kingdom of the dead⁸, the picture of a wild cat devouring its kill is the most brutal portion

of the entire Heraclea mosaic, constructed as a dynamic counterpart to the serene and composure character of the central motif. Attentively elaborated in regard to the animal anatomy, as well as the colours and the shades which shape the muscular body of the cheetah and the slender silhouette of the gazelle, the picture of the beast feeding to its catch represents the emotional peak of the symbolic connotation of the Heraclea mosaic arrangement.

According to Ruth Kolarik, who is a highly respected authority on ancient mosaics, the zoomorphic images encompassed by the iconographic structure of the Heraclea ensemble denote specific astronomic features⁹. In that regard, the animal imagery encompassed by this complex arrangement of iconographic constituents refers to the changing seasons in the course of a year's calendar. Apart from the ram (Aries), bull (Taurus) and lion (Leo), depicted in the left hand side of the composition and linked to their respected constellations, the cheetah/panther is seen as a symbolic image of the fall, thus "covering" for the

Illustrated Dogma), in: Actas del XV Congreso internacional de arqueologia Cristiana. episcopos, ciuitas, territorium (Toledo 2008), Citta del Vaticano 2013, pp. 1051-1053.

⁷ H. Maguire, *Earth and Ocean: The Terrestrial World in Early Byzantine Art*, University Park and London 1987, pp. 36-40.

⁸ E. Dimitrova, *In Throuhg the Inner Door (the mosaic in the narthex of the large basilica in Heraclea Lyncestis)*, p. 185.

⁹ R. Kolarik, *Seasonal Animals in the Narthex Mosaic of the Large Basilica, Heraclea Lyncestis*, in: Actas do X Colóquio Internacional da Associação Internacional para o Estudo do Mosaico Antigo (AIEMA), Museu Monográfico de Conimbriga, 2005, Conimbriga 2011, pp. 139, 141.



Fig. 3 Heraclea Lyncestis, *Mosaic in the narthex of the Episcopal basilica* (turn of the 6th century), central portion

Сл. 3 Хераклеја Линкестис, *Мозаикот во нартексот на Епископската базилика*, (крај на V - почеток на VI век), централен дел

fourth season of the annual cycle represented in the mosaic. However, regardless of the inventive and lucid approach to the thematic significance of the Heraclea mosaic spectacle, we have to bear in mind that there are four seasons, thus the composition should have had four animal depictions (instead of five or six)* – one for each season of the annual calendar. Furthermore, why would the fall have been depicted as a brutal act of a hunt (“the leopard rips into its prey bleeding beneath its claws”¹⁰), while the other animals stand as individual symbols with their own zoomorphic integrity and character? Nevertheless, I agree with Madame Kolarik in relation to the subtext of this interpretation of the panther as an image ideologically related to the cult of Dionysus, as are the other animals depicted within the Heraclea mosaic arrangement¹¹.

In that regard, as associative coordinates to Dionysus - the pagan victor over death, the represented

*maybe the one missing in the destroyed portion of the mosaic - in the position between the central motif and the canine representation.

¹⁰ R. Kolarik, *Seasonal Animals in the Narthex Mosaic of the Large Basilica, Heraclea Lyncestis*, p. 140.

¹¹ E. Dimitrova, *In Throuhg the Inner Door (the mosaic in the narthex of the large basilica in Heraclea Lyncestis)*, p. 186.

animals are symbolic transients from the older to the newborn belief; except, the depiction of the cheetah is violent and vicious, ferocious and savage, implicating an action which is merciless and ruthless, ravaging and hemorrhaging: the beast has placed one of his paws over the dead body of the antelope mauling its fragile belly tissue and feasting on its warm blood. Although, one can see the “leftovers” of the struggle in the elevated hooves of the fawn, its head is laid down in surrender and left to the hungry and remorseless jaws of the predator. The wounds of the antelope are vividly depicted with red tessellates emulating blood on the stomach of the animal, as well as on its neck, as the victim was strangled to death. Essentially, that is the symbolic connotation of the picture¹² which, most probably, resulted in such a furiously authentic manner of its execution. Everybody fears death; fear is a powerful emotion of profound and all-absorbing intensity. The fear leads to the fundamental search of redemption, in this context, to the escape from death through the benevolent sacrifice which transients towards the deliverance. On the pathway to eternal life, one has to transit through death in order to acquire the rebirth in the salvational embrace of the Saviour¹³. Within the sophisticatedly

¹² Eadem, *Најстарите христијански симболи*, Скопје 1995, p. 158.

¹³ Eadem, *Colored Dogma: the Mosaics of Heraclea Lyncestis, a New Interpretation*, p. 314.



Fig. 4 Heraclea Lyncestis, *Mosaic in the narthex of the Episcopal basilica* (turn of the 6th century), south portion

Сл. 4 Хераклеја Линкестис, *Мозаикот во нартексот на Епископската базилика* (крај на V - почеток на VI век), јужен дел

configured iconographic arrangement of the mosaic executed in the narthex of the Episcopal basilica in Heraclea, the fear of death is but a step towards the ultimate redemption of humanity.

Marko's Monastery: the church of Saint Demetrius at Sušica

*"Heroism is not only in the man,
but in the occasion"* (C. Coolidge)

Among the most expressive artistic attainments of the medieval era, the frescoes of the church dedicated to Saint Demetrius in King Marko's monastery at Sušica occupy one of the most historically deserved positions¹⁴. Although there are some issues in regard

to the temple's history which have been left unre-

Milano 2006, pp. 201-206; I. Sinkevič, *Representing without icon: presence and image of king Marko in the church of St. Demetrios near Susica*, Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies vol. III, London 2006, pp. 317-318; E. Димитрова, *За мизансценом и за кулисите. Сцени од ликовната драматопеја на македонското средновековно сликарство*, Македонско наследство 29, Скопје 2006, pp. 22-26; Eadem, *The Portal to Heaven, Reaching the Gates of Immortality*, Niš & Byzantium Symposium, The Collection of scientific works V, Niš 2007, pp. 378-379; Eadem, *За динамиката на композициските структури во палеологовското сликарство на македонската територија*, Македонско наследство 31, Скопје 2008, pp. 16-19; Eadem, *Spiritual Architects – The Construction of Architectural Backdrops in the Work of Some Painting Studios from the 14th Century*, Niš & Byzantium Symposium, The Collection of scientific works VII, Niš 2009, pp. 241-245; E. Dimitrova, G. Velkov, V. Iljovska, *Skopje. Seven Monuments of Art and Architecture*, Skopje 2010, pp. 48-59; E. Dimitrova, *Pretty Colours: Chromatic Analysis of the Palette of Some renowned 14th Century Fresco Painters*, Niš & Byzantium Symposium, The Collection of scientific works X, Niš 2012, pp. 349-350; E. Димитрова, С. Коруновски, С. Грандаковска, *Средновековна Македонија. Култура и уметност*, in: Македонија. Милениумски културно-историски факти (П.Кузман, Е. Димитрова, Ј. Донеv Eds.), Скопје 2013, pp. 1744-1754; E. Dimitrova, *V. I. Personalities in Medieval Macedonia*, Folia Ar-

¹⁴ Н. Ношпал-Никулска, *За ктиторската композиција и натписот во Марковиот манастир – село Сушица, Скопско*, Гласник на Институтот за национална историја XV, Скопје 1971, pp. 225-235; В. Ј. Ђурић, *Марков манастир - Охрид*, Зборник за ликовне уметности 8, Нови Сад 1972, pp. 131-160; Z. Gavrilović, *The Portrait of King Marko at Markov Manastir (1376-1381)*, Byzantinische Forschungen XVI, Amsterdam 1991, pp. 415-428; И. М. Ђорђевић, *Представа краља Марка на јужној фасади цркве Светог Димитрија у Марковом манастиру*, Кралот Марко во историјата и во традицијата, Прилеп 1997, pp. 299-307; S. Korunovski - E. Dimitrova, *Macedonia L' rte medievale dal IX al XV secolo*,



Fig. 5 The church of Saint Demetrius in King Marko's monastery (1376/77),
View to the north-east portion of the fresco ensemble
Сл. 5 Свети Димитрија – Марков манастир (1376/77),
Поглед кон североисточниот дел од живописот на храмот

solved¹⁵, its painterly decoration is considered as profound and undisputable reflection of current political events over the grim inspiration of the painters who created the fresco programme of the church (**Fig. 5**). Infused with strong pathos in depiction of the saintly portraits, ennobled with emblematic pictures with powerful expression of emotional unrest, accentuated with the sharp rhythm of kinetic anxiety and permeated with bitter outflow of unsurpassed tension, the fresco decoration of King Marko's monastery displays a spectacular range of nuances devoted to dramatic atmosphere and vigorous passion. Aimed at picturing piercing emotional distress, intense dynamicity and crude energy of unconcealed despair, the art of King Marko's monastery grows from the abyss of ecstatic suffering. The whirl of dark, expressive and saturated colour gamut, funded upon indigo blue tones and dra-

matic whirlwind of burgundy red shades, permeated with optic effects of sharp lightning, concurs with the pathetic flow of the lines which shapes the rigid silhouettes of the depicted characters. Although the entire ensemble of the church is "soaked" in potent emotions, some of the pictures, deeply immersed in overwhelming sentiments, can be easily exemplified as enrapturing and ravishing spectacles.

The tragedy of mother Rachel – sorrow/grief

In the high zone of the southern wall in the naos of Saint Demetrius' temple, one can see the depiction of the *Cry of Rachel* who tragically mourns over her slaughtered newborns¹⁶. As an emotional culmination of the mini-cycle dedicated to the *Massacre of the innocents*, this scene pictures the young mother who raises her arms in a desperate gesture of inconsolable weep (**Fig. 6**). Although the historical dimension of the event that has allegedly occurred in Bethlehem cannot be verified by sustainable evidence¹⁷, its tragic

chaeologica Balkanica III, Skopje 2015, pp. 605-609; M. Томић Ђурић, *Фреске Марковог манастира*, Београд 2019; E. Dimitrova, *The Church of Saint Demetrius (King Marko's Monastery) at Sušica*, Skopje 2020, pp. 5-49.

¹⁵ E. Dimitrova, *Cultural CSI – Four Cases of Socio-artistic Investigation: files, exhibits, evidence*, Patrimonium Mk 17, Skopje 2019, pp. 130-133.

¹⁶ E. Dimitrova, *The Church of Saint Demetrius (King Marko's Monastery) at Sušica*, p. 46.

¹⁷ P. L. Maier, *Herod and the Infants of Bethlehem*, in:



Fig. 6 The church of Saint Demetrius in King Marko's monastery (1376/7),
Rachel weeping for her slaughtered children
 Сл. 6 Свети Димитрија – Марков манастир (1376/77), *Плачот на Рахела*

depiction in the Gospel according to Mathew (2:18)* was inspiring enough for the creation of one of the most sorrowful vistas in the Byzantine mural painting of all times¹⁸. Leaving the legendary “sustainability” of the massacre in Bethlehem aside, its depiction and particularly the picture of the comfortless Rachel who laments her offspring seems to summarize the great tragedy ordered by the paranoiac King Herod and realized as a planned execution/infanticide¹⁹ with Biblical proportions.

Chronos, Kairos, Christos II: Chronological, Nativity, and Religious Studies in Memory of Ray Summers, (R. Summers and J. Vardaman Eds.), Macon 1998, pp. 170-171.

**In Ra'ma was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not* (cited according to the *The Holy Bible. Old and New Testament* in the King James Version, Nashville 1972)

¹⁸ М. Томић Ђурић, *Фреске Марковог манастира*, p. 217-218.

¹⁹ Some of the scholars suggest that the Biblical description is “cozy” interpolation of the historic event leading Herod to murder his own children cf. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mathew*, Grand Rapids 2007, p. 83.

As a glorious finale of the illustrated event in Bethlehem, the depiction of the Cry of Rachel has been given an iconic character of visual explication: framed by a semi-circular shape of the spatial coordinates, below the representation of Jewish mothers who beseech the soldiers to spare their infants, there is the one who could not save hers. Surrounded by the little bodies of the murdered babies, she instinctively lifts her arms in a shape of a frozen embrace. Lamenting the “soundly” asleep newborns, instead of a lullaby, she performs the resounding grief of her silent and inconsolable yell. The dark dress and the crimson red veil are her two feminine attributes to express the visual dimension of her motherly sorrow – red for the blood of the innocent toddlers, dark for the death which aligned their cold figures on the ground. The balance of the painterly elements: the two groups of children whose bodies surround the figure of the mother as an inescapable chain, her kneeling figure and the widely spread arms as elements of anatomic concordance, as well as the compositional scheme of the vista constructed as an ouster, yet highly articulated visual narrative – sublime the tragic echo of the Biblical verses with the painterly explosion of grieving sentiments trapped in the arduous atmosphere of parental suffering.



Fig. 7 Master Rembrandt, *The Night Watch* (1642), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam
 Сл.7 Рембрант, *Нокната стража* (1642), Кралски музеј во Амстердам

The historic allusions that permeate the visual context of the fresco programme of King Marko's monastery are indisputable. Diversified in their iconographic concept and associative in the painterly structure, they are much more than pure artistic inventions of their multitalented authors; in the times of inglorious political dependency of the khetor and his compromising vassalage to the Ottoman invaders, the endowment of King Marko was not only a religious commission done in devotion to orthodoxy. It was an illuminative insight into the suffering fate of his territories plundered by the unfaithful and bloodthirsty newcomers. The entire fresco arrangement was designed to reflect the violent atmosphere and the brutal social environment as the most immediate outcomes of the Turkish invasion. In that regard, the Biblical tales became inspiring fundamentals for metaphrastic explication of the real life situations in King Marko's realm torn to pieces by the conquerors and burden with insoluble political issues generated by Serbian aristocracy²⁰. Besides the passionately shaped saintly characters, brutal rhythm of dynamic motion, invasive energy of the sights, powerful and contrasting optical effects, as well as astounded vertigo of dark colours, the commissioner had his painters

convinced in the imaginative power of inconsolable anxiety as a true match for the historical momentum in which the ensemble was created. Hence, the dramatic constellation of Biblical stories had become an inverted perspective for the real life and fictional reflection of the circumstances in which King Marko strived to remain a tragic hero. Thereupon, the *Cry of Rachel* echoes in the explosive expression of emotional resonance reminiscent of tragedies with epic proportions in the interior of King Marko's temple.

Rijks Museum in Amsterdam: The Night Watch by master Rembrandt

“Complete honesty is not the same thing as full disclosure” (R. Brackin)

Peter Greenaway's movie *Nightwatching*²¹ was the decisive breakthrough when everybody on the planet became aware of the allegoric dimension of Rembrandt's masterpiece proudly displayed in the Rijks Museum in Amsterdam (Fig. 7). This motion picture discloses the process and the motifs behind the creation of the Night Watch – Rembrandt's most famous work²², depicting the members of the civilian guard

²⁰ Ц. Грозданов, *Маричката битка, вазалитетот на крал Марко и живописот на Марковиот манастир*, Предавања на XIV меѓународен семинар за македонски јазик, литература и култура (Охрид 1991), Скопје 1992, pp. 118-120.

²¹ Distribution by: Content Film International, 2007, K. Kasander, Producer.

²² D. C. Meijer, *De Amsterdamische Schuttersstukken in en buiten het nieuwe Rijksmuseum*, Oud Holland 2/4,



Fig. 8 Master Rembrandt, *The Night Watch* (1642), original size
 Сл.8 Рембрант, *Нокната стража* (1642), автентични димензии

of the city, who wanted to be celebrated in a group portrait. The movie brilliantly discloses the deceitful

Amsterdam 1886, pp. 198-211; W. Scheiding, *Rembrandt's Drawings*, Boston 1965, pp. 25-29; R. Wallace, *The World of Rembrandt: 1606-1669*, New York 1968, pp. 108-109; J. E. Muller, *Rembrandt*, New York 1969, 65 et passim; C. Kenneth, *An Introduction to Rembrandt*, London 1978, pp. 80-91; Ch. Fowkes, *The Life of Rembrandt*, London, 1978, pp. 74-86; G. Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings: a new Biography*, London 1985, pp. 210-214; Dudok van Heel, *De galerij en schilderloods van Rembrandt of waar schilderde Rembrandt de Nachtwacht, Amstelodamum*, 1987; G. Boka, *Rembrandt's Night Watch: the Mystery Revealed*, Montreal 1994, pp. 21-44; E. H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art*, London 1995, pp. 309-320; S. Schama, *Rembrandt's Eyes*, London, 1999, pp. 488, 495, 637; E. van der Wetering, *Rembrandt: the Painter at Work*, Amsterdam 2000; G. Schwartz, *The Night Watch*, Amsterdam 2002; A. Clifford, *Rembrandt's Journey: painter, Drawstman, Etcher*, Boston 2004; A. Bomford, *Art in the making: Rembrandt*, New Haven 2006, pp. 240, 255; E. van de Wetering and M. Franken, *Rembrandt: Quest of a Genius*, Zwolle 2006, pp. 47, 108; G. Schwartz, *The Rembrandt Book*, New York 2006, pp. 172-174; Idem, *Rembrandt Universe*, London 2006, pp. 170-175; Ch. & A. Türnpel, (Eds.), *Rembrandt: Images and Metaphors*, London 2006, pp. 123-144; T. Michael, *Rembrandt's Nose: of Flesh and Spirit in the Master's Portraits*, New York 2007; J. Bikker, *The Night Watch*, Amsterdam 2013; E. van der Wetering, *Rembrandt. The Painter Thinking*, Berkeley, 2016, pp. 28-30.

conspiracy to murder within the musketeer regiment of both Frans Banning Cocq and Willem van Ruytenburch, suggesting that the painter has practically immortalized an organized conspiracy employing sophisticated and highly elusive iconographic tools in his group portrait of Amsterdam's city guard. The movie also exposes events from Rembrandt's personal life, referring to some serious consequences suffered by the master painter in his later life resulting from the "subtle" accusation made by the metaphrastic application of iconographic "instruments" in his greatest artistic work. However, even before Greenway's film, scholars and art critics have been able to penetrate into the profound and masterly exposed visual plot of the picture and its luxuriantly elaborated emotional resonance.

The Golden girl - contempt /resentment

Amidst the eighteen male characters, out of the original twenty (**Fig. 8**) depicted as members of the military troop lead by the two main authorities – captain Banning Cocq and his second in command - van Ruytenburch, one can see a young female – a mysterious girl in a pre-teen age emerging from the darkness in the spatial setting between the musketeer adorned in red garment and the figure hidden behind the captain (**Fig. 9**). With fluffy blond hair, characteristic hair band and fanciful blue and yellow/gold dress, this young individual, who seems to be



Fig. 9 Master Rembrandt, *The Night Watch* (1642), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, detail
 Сл. 9 Рембрант, *Нокната стража* (1642), Кралски музеј во Амстердам, детаљ

escorted by another blond figure slightly visible and dressed in a light blue garment, draws considerable attention due to her incompatibility with the motif of the painting, namely – a group portrait of the city guard. Moreover, she becomes even more interesting due to the fact that she carries a little golden gunpowder bag and a large white chicken that hangs upside down from her waistband. About the significance of this iconographic detail much has been said in reference to the Kloveniers²³. However, it seems that the personification dimension given to the blond maiden is an underrated coordinate in relation to her true role in the picture, which, to our opinion, has more to do with Rembrandt's emotional analytics of the private life of the portrayed than to the guild of civic militia and its heraldic symbols, as well as his desire for remembrance of the late wife Saskia²⁴.

From the existing sources, we know that the great Master Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (1606-1669) has always approached his painterly motifs

analytically, i.e. investigating all aspects of the social life of his models in order to create the most appropriate depiction of his commissioners²⁵. Probably, in the case of the *Night Watch* he overacted in his investigations of the deeds of his clientele since that picture surely turned his career downwards for good²⁶. At present, almost all individuals encompassed by the *Night Watch* are identified by names thanks to the previously cited work of Dudok van Heel, who succeeded to complete the examination of the identity of the members of Amsterdam's Kloveniers' guild in the time around 1640, when Rembrandt finished the painting (**Fig. 10**). However, his examination refers only to the male characters, while the female figures remained in the "misty" zone of undisclosed personages. This was, most probably, due to the lack of any information on the girls in the archives of the *Kloveniersdoelen*^{27*} in Amsterdam. On the other hand, it seems that the painter has given a prominent place to these females, particularly to the one whose image is illuminated brightly, quite similarly to the

²³ C. Brenner & J. Riddel, *Painting in the Dutch Golden Age. A Profile of the Seventeenth Century*, Washington 2007, pp. 100-111.

²⁴ G. Boka, *Rembrandt's Night Watch: the Mystery Revealed*, Fig. 3.

²⁵ Ch. L. Mee Jr, *Rembrandt's Portrait: A Biography*, New York 1998, pp. 142-147.

²⁶ Ibidem, pp. 190-201.

²⁷ The headquarters of the Kloveniers.



Fig. 10 Peter Greenaway, *The Night Watch* in 3D
Сл. 10 Питер Гринавеј, *Нокната стража* во 3D

leaders of the guard, contrary to all the other characters emerging from the twilight. Although, there is a slight resemblance of the blond girl to some of Saskia's images (Fig. 11), the acceptance of the idea that the painter would have represented his dead wife as a ten year old maid would be puzzling and highly surprising.

In 2008, Peter Greenaway filmed another interesting work entitled *Rembrandt's J'Accuse*²⁸ as a follow up of the *Nightwatching* with a remarkably articulated story on the social background of the painting. Based on the investigation of Dudok van Heel, as well as some previously unknown information collected by Rembrandt in the course of his work on the painting, the avant-garde director managed to compose a fascinating story a portion of which is dedicated to the two girls "spotlighted" by painter's magnificent optical effects. In that regard, we can easily credit Greenaway for the final disclosure of the identity of the young maids, one of whom is dressed in a fashionable garment, the other carrying a hot pan with silvery waves of steam. It seems that the insightful Rembrandt was able to track down the information about the two illegitimate daughters of one J. Nachtclassen, overseer of the Kloveniers' guild, hidden from public eyes in a brothel, dressed up for their clients, one of whom ended up with a burnt face from a hot tea thrown at her by an unsatisfied visitor. That is why she is depicted hidden behind

her sister with a blurred image, yet, visible enough to be noticed by an attentive observer of the painting. In that manner, Rembrandt's revelation of just a piece of the "dirty laundry" of the Kloveniers was made irrevocably apparent, even more so since the "beautiful" girl "proudly" carries the symbols (white chicken, gunpowder bag) of the "respected" guild. Determined to spice up the group portrait of the civil guard of the city of Amsterdam with sparkles of contempt, Rembrandt must have been aware that this might turn his career as a leading portraitist in Nederland downwards; still, he was more prone to risk his artistic authority than to conceal the bitter resentment towards some of the "honourable" personages represented in the picture. With that purpose, he has put his "scorned self" in the background of the painting as a watchful eye (Fig. 12) of one who can make at least an allegoric distinction between eminence and hypocrisy.

***National Gallery of Art in Washington DC:
Number 1 (Lavender Mist) by Pollock***

*"One thing you can't hide - is when
you're crippled inside."* (John Lennon)

Contrary to the forensically precise method of sociological analysis of the characters depicted by Rembrandt, Jackson Pollock has created his artistic work out of pure emotional charge. Powerful in its visual exposition and with epic proportions of energetic amplitude, the action painting of the greatest American

²⁸ Distribution: Reinier van Brummelen Cinematography 2008, Bruno Felix and Femke Wolting Producers.

abstract master²⁹ has become mythical challenge, as well as inexhaustible inspiration for many generations of artists through the entire 20th century. His abstract arabesques, brutally expressive in their dynamic resonance of colours, yet delicately organized in terms of the author's personal mystic calligraphy of sentiments and thoughts, are lavishly permeated with a powerful psychological language of intrinsic messages that spring from the intimate world of deep emotional trauma. Although, his paintings are mostly of personal and individual



Fig. 11 Master Rembrandt, *Portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh as Flora* (1634), Hermitage Museum, Sankt Petersburg
Сл. 11 Рембрант, Портрет на Саскија како Флора (1634), Музеј Ермитаж во Санкт Петербург

²⁹ J. J. Sweeney, *Catalog Introduction - Pollock's First Exhibition*, New York, 1943; J. Pollock, *My Painting*, in *Pollock: Painting* (B. Rose Ed.), New York 1948, p. 65; M. Tapié, A. Ossorio, *Jackson Pollock*. Paris 1952; E. Cockcroft, *Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of the Cold War*, Artforum, vol. 12, New York 1974, pp. 43–54; B. Rose, *Krasner/Pollock: A Working Relationship*, New York 1981. p. 4; R. Hobbs, K. Lee, *New York*, New York 1993, p.7; B. H. Friedman, *Jackson Pollock : energy made visible*, New York 1995; K. Varnedoe, P. Karmel, Pepe, *Jackson Pollock: Essays, Chronology, and Bibliography*. Exhibition catalog. New York: 1998, pp. 315–329. B. Carter, *Jackson Pollock, Museum of Modern Art, November 1, 1998 to February 2, 1999*, London 1999; P. Karmel, *Jackson Pollock: Interviews, Articles, and Reviews*. In Conjunction with the Exhibition "Jackson Pollock", The Museum of Modern Art, New York, November 1, 1998 to February 2, 1999, New York 1999; D. Piper, *The Illustrated History of Art*. London 2000, pp. 460–461; D. Solomon, *Jackson Pollock: A Biography*. Lanham 2001, pp. 15–16, 21; R.P. Taylor, *Order in Pollock's Chaos*, Scientific American, vol. 287, New York 2002, pp. 116–121; L. Emmerling, *Jackson Pollock, 1912-1956*, Koln 2003; M. Gray, *Quote in Book One 'Breaking the Ice' of 'Jackson Pollock - Memories arrested in Space'*, Los Angeles 2003; H. H. Arnason, *History of Modern Art*, London 2004, pp. 414-418; R.P. Taylor et al, *Authenticating Pollock Paintings Using Fractal Geometry*, Pattern Recognition Letters, vol. 28, Amsterdam 2005, pp. 695–702; E. Landau, C. Cernuschi, *Pollock Matters*, Boston 2007, p. 19; S. Lee, S. Olsen and B. Gooch, *Simulating and Analyzing Jackson Pollock's Paintings* Journal of Mathematics and the Arts, vol.1, Abingdon 2007, pp. 73–83; J. Alvarez-Ramirez, C. Ibarra-Valdez, E. Rodriguez and L. Dagdug, *1/f-Noise Structure in Pollock's Drip Paintings*, Physica A, vol. 387, Amsterdam 2008, pp. 281–295; W. Cook, *Jackson Pollock's forgotten bleak masterpieces: The 30-year wait for 'black pourings' exhibition*, BBC — Arts, 2015; L. Shamar, *What Makes a Pollock Pollock: A Machine Vision Approach*, International Journal of Arts and Technology, vol. 8, Geneva 2015, pp. 1–10.

character, i.e. they are intuitively intimate products of his earnest artistic confession, Pollock has some visual coordinates in his work that reflect the notion of universal archetypes as fundamentals of collective consciousness and/or individual subconsciousness; most fascinating of them are, by all means, the shamanic fertility rituals of the Navajo Native Americans which greatly influenced the conception of his dripping painterly method. The inner tension of Pollock's energetic creative manner, as well as the spontaneity of his temperamental execution, are the two basic elements of his raging dialogue with the canvas; the anxious emotional outburst of feelings and sentiments can be observed in most of his paintings, yet, when one talks about the revolutionary experiment of Pollock's action mechanisms of creation, one usually thinks of his master-pieces executed in the mid-20th century. In that regard, Pollock's *Number 1* is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, one of the greatest paradigms of abstract art ever.



Fig. 12 Master Rembrandt, *The Night Watch* (1642), Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, detail
 Сл. 12 Рембрант, *Нокната стража* (1642), Кралски музеј во Амстердам, детаљ

Lavender Mist – anguish/distress

The anthological Number 1 (Lavender Mist) signifies the artistic development of Pollock in the period from 1947 to 1950, when he started to employ his revolutionary painterly technique of dripping and splashing paint on mural-size canvases laid on his studio floor (Fig. 13). This piece of art exemplifies the so called “gestural abstraction”, in which paint was energetically poured or scattered with extreme physical motion to reflect the artist’s inner physiological tension. The applied colors are intensive, expressive and saturated, while the painterly space of the canvas is configured of alternating layers and drips of opaque nuances, creating a textured surface permeated with dynamic energy. Using industrial paint, Pollock dripped, poured, and flung pigment from loaded brushes and sticks while walking around the canvas as a way of being in his own work, acting as a medium in the creative process of making a painting. The webs of black, white, russet, orange, silver and stone-blue shades, dispersed throughout the large dimensions of the canvas, create a magnificent vision of painterly expression entirely different from the former abstract painting tradition. For Pollock, who admired the sand paintings of the Native Americans, as well as their seasonal rituals, artistic execution was an actual performance of ritual. Emulating an ancient cave painter, he signed *Number 1* in the upper left and right corners with his own handprints. This work of master Pollock was displayed in 1950 at Betty Parsons New York gallery³⁰ and since then it is considered to be one of the most significant and influencing painterly products of the century.

Pulitzer prize winning biography *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* by S. Naitfeh and G. White Smith inspired Ed Harris to create the motion picture *Pollock* in 2000³¹. Harris received an Academy Award nomination for best actor for his portrayal of Pollock and, being so fascinated by the painter, Harris himself did all the painting seen in the movie. Besides the remarkably elaborated artistic technique and dripping method of Pollock, Harris, although quite attentively, dedicates impressive takes of the film to the delicate psychological profile of the painter and his inner struggle with social and intimate issues. Also, this film, which is a creative result of the emotional experience of Ed Harris of Pollock’s life and artistic career, gives some hints about the characteristic and metaphorically structured titles of his works, out of which fifteen are entitled only by numbers. However, only two of the numbered art works of Pollock have additional titles: *Number 11* from 1952 (Fig. 14) named *Blue Poles*³² and *Number 1- Lavender Mist*. However, contrary to *Number 11*, which displays ravaging net of confusion and distress, as well as nervous rhythm of dissrhythmic agony, *Number 1* (later named *Lavender Mist* by Greenberg) reveals the much more delicate side of Pollock’s artistic temper.

Lavender Mist – a devastating emotional landscape composed of colors, contrasts, texture, emphasis and chromatic variety is, probably, the most autobiographic of all Pollock’s art works. The saturated shades, the bold impasto, the imposing white spatters, the dark undertones and the cold, black arabesques are playing their *dance macabre* in an aston-

³⁰ L. Hall, *Betty Parsons: artist, dealer, collector*. New York 1991.

³¹ Distribution by: Sony Pictures Classics 2000, Peter M. Brant Producer.

³² D. Phillips, *Understanding Jackson Pollock and Blue Poles*, *Australian Quarterly* 46/4, Sidney 1974, pp. 91–96.



Fig. 13 Master Pollock, *Number 1 (Lavender Mist)*, 1950, National Gallery Washington DC
Сл. 13 Полок, *Број 1 (Измаглица од лаванда)*, 1950, Национална галерија во Вашингтон

ishing mastery of inter-motion of colours and strokes, structuring a miraculous constellation of sensational “harmony of destruction”. A volcano of untouched emotions channelized in an expressive visual architectonics of poured gestures and chromatic outbursts of passion – *Lavender Mist* represents the life itself spilled out from years of anguish and abuse, lost ambitions and emotional turnovers, exhausted prospects and failed expectations. If one has in mind the psychological significance of colour lavender which is mentally associated to tranquility, purity, calmness and meditative imagination³³, one becomes aware why this colour is missing from the picture and it is only connotative to the sentimental title of the picture. On the other hand, the same colour is closely linked to intuition and mystery, introversion and pessimism – most probably the fundamental personal features of Pollock and his psychological character, loudly and irrationally manifested in countless episodes of public anguish and abusive agony. Thus, his inquisitive psychedelic nature, as well as his extreme psychological insecurity, have been given a powerful

³³ A. Elliot, M. Maier, *Color psychology: effects of perceiving color on psychological functioning in humans*. Annual Review of Psychology, vol. 65, Palo Alto 2014, pp. 95–120.

visual manifesto in the bold gestural improvisation of the *Number 1*, an untamable yell for his intimate concern with individual freedom and personal expression³⁴. However, it is his radical individualism and uncompromising denial of illusion and perspective that act as advocates of one’s desire for consolation and emotional support in Pollock’s epochal accomplishment, sheltered in the mist of his own anguish and depression.

Standing overwhelmed by powerful emotions in front of Rembrandt’s *Night Watch* in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam when I was 19, I have been completely unaware of the complex iconography of the painting permeated with sparkles of social significance. Five years later, seeing Pollock’s *Lavender Mist* in the National Gallery in Washington DC, I was able to detect the traces of an anxious temper transformed into a constellation of emotional fractals dispersed throughout the picture. Not even then, much less now do I think that these master-pieces are but a creative mimicry and/or a visual reflection of loosely defined processes witnessed by their authors. The

³⁴ B. Oard, *Beauty and Terror: Essays on the Power of Painting*, Kindle 2012, p. 263.



Fig. 14 Master Pollock, *Number 11 (Blue Poles)*, 1952, National Gallery of Australia in Sydney
Сл. 14 Полок, *Број 11 (Тажни полови)*, 1952, Национална галерија на Австралија во Сиднеј

frescoes of Marko's monastery – highly appropriate to the dramatically nuanced historical heroism of King Marko's reign, as well as the mosaic pavements of Heraclea Lyncestis - filled with a refined spectrum of religious messages transmitted through the medium of visual creation, are, also, works of art that go beyond the rational sphere of expressive ideas channeled into impressive spectacles. Looking at the colossal composition at Heraclea, gazing at the spectacular fresco panorama in King Marko's monastery,

trembling in the hall of Rembrandt's master-piece or meditating in front of Pollock's picture, I have been communicating with art not as much as intellectually, rather emotionally. Since, what is not created out of emotions, cannot create emotions by others; if emotion is energy in motion, than meta-emotion³⁵ is the very distinctive dynamic principle that transforms the energy from motion to unforgettable visual notion for times immemorial.

³⁵ P. Noy, D. Noy-Sharav, *Art and Emotions*, International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies. 10/2, Hoboken, 2013, pp. 100–107.

Елизабета ДИМИТРОВА

МОЌТА НА УМЕТНОСТА
ИЛИ
КАКО ГО КОНЗУМИРАМЕ МЕТАФРАЗИЧНИОТ КОНТЕКСТ
НА НЕОТКРИЕНАТА ЕМОЦИОНАЛНОСТ ВО УМЕТНОСТА

Резиме

Наспроти идеите на современата филозофија која настојува на уметничкото творештво да му даде димензија на квази-емоционално доживување, создавањето на *естетски продукти* е повеќе од мимикрија на реалноста и го надминува когнитивното ниво на чувствата, кое го преферираат модерните антрополози. Оттука, трудот упатува на еден многу поширок хоризонт на уметничката *практика*, втемелен врз деликатни сензации, длабоки доживувања, искрени сентименти и интимни искуства. За таа цел избрани се четири тематски и хронолошки сосема различни уметнички дела, изведени во различни ликовни техники и фундирани врз различни идеолошки принципи, кои ја рефлектираат емоционалната констелација на нивното создавање во четири психолошки категории: страв, тага, презир и тегобност. Во нивната метрафразична анализа, не се земени предвид естетските начела на нивната визуелна манифестација, туку начинот на кој емоционалниот набој на ликовната идеја е трансформиран во слика или детаљ од слика/претстава со цел да се создаде соодветна реакција при интер-релацијата на делото со неговите *конзументи*. Во тој контекст, детаљот со *гепардот кој растргнува антилопа* на мозаикот изведен како симболична слика на христијанската Црква во

нартексот на Епископската базилика во Хераклеја Линкестис упатува на стравот од смртта како емоција со длабок и сеопфатен интензитет. *Мајката Рахела која плаче за своите сурово заклани новороденчиња* во фрескодекорацијата на Марковиот манастир во Сушица, претставува амблематски симбол на тагата и се вбројува меѓу најжалобните визуелни експликации на родителско страдање во историјата на византиското монументално сликарство. Рембрантовата *Нокна стража* во Кралскиот музеј во Амстердам, покрај фасцинантните оптички ефекти и илузионистичката тридимензионалност на формите, содржи неповторливи алузии на уметниковиот презир кон лицемерието на неговите клиенти, додека *Измаглицата од лаванда* на Полок (Национална галерија, Вашингтон) претставува нераскинлива фузија од тегобни сентименти, амалагамирани во гестикуларната импровизација на неговото *дрипинг* мајсторство. Оттука, ако емоцијата е енергија во движење, тогаш мета-емоцијата, која зборува со јазикот на чувствената естетика, го претставува сосема карактеристичниот принцип на динамички *spiritus movens* што ја трансформира енергијата од движење кон незаборавна визуелна идеја и екстатично доживување во делата на големите мајстори на ликовната креација.