

Summary

I discuss the ontological changes of the material paper in a thematic structure in my thesis in which extensive context that has not been done yet. As an artist, working with this material and exploring its meanings and the artistic opportunities it offers at symposiums, master courses, university programmes, exhibitions and at consultations with the attendants, I tackle its technological, cultural, historical, contemporary, philosophical and aesthetic relations on a syllabus of a medial approach, getting to several unique conclusions and statements.

In the history of the twentieth century, many mediums started to show some inward qualities which stayed hidden before because of carrying some messages or cultural memes. Many times artistic manifestations revealed their cultural historical figures. This phenomenon is very well detectable in the ontological changes of paper.

Present dissertation is analysing that paper, which got known in the western civilization as the bearer of cultural information, say from as the aspect of communication and art the meme carrier instrument of cultural selection (a "meme machine"), so with a traditional and symbolic matter and meaning of a carrier, how it found back to its material substance, how it got less and less transparent as a medium of art messages, in some cases how it became the message itself, the "subject of the aesthetic discourse" (Eco). We have discovered that paper has born at the Far East as a texture of fibres and it got used in many different roles in its incarnations. However, spreading to the West, for some functional, material and conceptual reasons it became a specific and exclusive instrument of communication. It gets known in Europe like this, and gets used in this role improved for centuries; only memetic needs define its functions and its ways of development. It embodies the immaterial meme in the material world, though itself, its material qualities get transparent in this carrier function. From the nineteenth century in the arts, paper changes from carrier to medium (fine art, music), in some artworks the medium starts to get seen as well or the carrier becomes a self carrier meme.

We have shown that in the early phase of papers technological development, fine art reacted on the changes with deploying a brand new genre (the aquarelle painting) and its whole range of expression and appliance. We were analysing the wide scale of papers different functions in arts and its different forms in modern and contemporary arts seeking the connection of these to its traditional roots and the materials immanent specialities in the relation of conception and the rate of transparency.

Finally, we tried to find the place of that art practice which uses the material of paper as medium and one state of paper as an instrument of expression in the complex of phenomena of contemporary arts. Because historical classifying systems prove themselves to be too rigid and anachronistic to categorise events starting from the sixties, first we took the more flexible question of genres under research. We could ascertain that the open and universal concept of genre offers opportunity to reckon paper art as a separate genre but the extraordinary diversity of the material and its processing makes this definition irrelevant in a constantly developing language. We analysed the dilemmas of medium based groupings as well which

approach some artworks problematically or not from the main point, these days in the age of intermedial and digital artworks.

At the end of our dissertation we could judge the categories above (genre, medium, techniques) to be helpful for us to get closer to the area of paper art but they are not able to answer all the questions of the subject. That is why we turned with confidence to the suggestions of the postmedia aesthetics of Manovich. It expands the concept of software to the territory of communication. According to this, papers cultural roles and its artistic applications are analysable as software. This theory handles the question of information, transmitter and receiver in a democratic way. It lets the transmitter (the artist) experiment new and new software he/she codes the message with in a way that he/she doesn't know the program entirely either with all its potentials. Neither the receiver uses the program in its optimal function. He/she doesn't receive the message exactly after its rules. So information is the complex which forms and comes over in this process.

That outlook stands also close to our view which we meet more and more often in the international art critics that approaches each artwork from the complex of visual culture, not categorizing them after classes, genres, mediums, etc. but analysing what they mean say what is their message (we didn't say "what is the message they bear" on purpose!). We met innumerable artworks, installations and projects at the most important international platforms for contemporary arts they act with the material or one of the cultural meanings or its traditional relations of paper, they take out paper objects from their everyday context getting them to a new meaning or effect in the context of fine art. The analyses, we have undertaken could be helpful to perambulate these meaning complexes, and we believe that similar analyses could be useful in the case of other materials which try to approach a material from as wide view as possible for the artist as for the public.