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## Three paintings by Albert-Charles Lebourg and philosophical foundations of Impressionism of the last third of the XIX – first third of the XX centuries

**Abstract.** Subject of research in this article is an artistic work of the great French artist Albert-Charles Lebourg. Paintings by Albert-Charles Lebourg belong to the artistic direction of French Impressionism. The authors make the philosophical and art historical analysis of the works of Albert-Charles Lebourg: 1) "Snow in Auvergne" (the original title "The Bridge over the Allier in Pont du Chateau in Winter") (1886); 2) "The Banks of the Seine", 1889; 3) "The Two Boats in the Rays of the Rouen Sun", circa 1900. Research Methodology has philosophical and art historical analysis, which was developed by Russian philosophers and art historians: Danneel Pivovarov, Vladimir Zhukovsky, Natalia Koptseva. The article describing the method of art history work of art. The authors use the method of conceptual analysis to uncover the philosophical origins of French Impressionism. The hypothesis was proposed that for the first time in European artistic and intellectual practices Impressionism showed a new paradigm, connected with overcoming the difference between a person's internal and external reality, with the discovery of artistic form for expressing primary and universal integrity, given in direct experience and divided in psychic reality into external and internal dimensions. The critical artistic analysis of the three paintings by the great French Impressionist Albert -Charles Lebourg was made: "Snow in Auvergne", "The banks of the Seine", "The two boats in the rays of Rouen sun", the main artistic ideas of these paintings were revealed. A deep conceptual link of the three paintings by Albert -Charles Lebourg was found, on the one hand, both artistic Buddhism and artistic psychologism (as cult (popular) conceptions of European intellectual life before the First World War). It was shown that Impressionist landscapes of this painter create and convey strongest visual impressions, modeling not only visual reality, but integral psychophysical reality, including the process of immediate flow of visual sensations, that has created and is supporting this strongest impression.

**Keywords:** art studies, cultural studies, impressionism, painting, Albert Charles Lebourg, landscape, philosophy of Art, Ernst Mach, Buddhism, visual thinking.

### Introduction into the problem

"The works of Albert Lebourg are greatly affected by his life. He lived for his art. Besides personal affections, which were the great part of his life, because there was no Heart more loving, nor friend more loyal, the love for his art was, as any love, the joy and torture of his life", – such was the definition given by a French art critic Leony Benedite<sup>1</sup> to the inner outlook of Albert-Charles Lebourg (1849–1928), a great artist,

representative and head of the Rouen school of Impressionism, the acclaimed master of impressionist landscape. The paintings of A. Lebourg were studied by such French art critics as Leonsu Benedite, Roger Marx<sup>2</sup>, Samuel Frere<sup>3</sup>, Francous Lespinasse<sup>4</sup>. There are no monographs written by Russian art critics which

<sup>1</sup> Leony Benedite. Biographie du peintre Albert Lebourg. URL: <http://www.albert-lebourg.org/albert-lebourg-biographie.html>

<sup>2</sup> Albert Lebourg. URL: <http://www.albert-lebourg.org/albert-lebourg-par-roger-marx.html>

<sup>3</sup> Albert Lebourg. URL: <http://www.albert-lebourg.org/-samuel-frere-albert-lebourg-.html>

<sup>4</sup> Albert Lebourg. URL: <http://lesamisdelecolederouen.over-blog.com/article-interview-de-fran-ois-lespinasse-69332795.html>

are entirely devoted to his works. We can name the collective monograph "World art. Impressionism"<sup>5</sup> in which there are several pages dedicated to the paintings of Albert Lebourg. The present article is aimed not only at giving more details to Russian readers and lovers of Impressionist paintings, but also at understanding the change in the paradigm of creative thinking, which takes place with the appearance of artistic movement, artistic style of "Impressionism". Impressionism appeared in France and very quickly Impressionism came from the sphere of art into music, literature, sculpture. Nowadays Impressionism is a living art style used not only by the painters of Europe and Russia, but also those of the United States, Latin America, Canada, the countries of Asian-Pacific region and Australia. Basing on the idea of unity of art, religion and philosophy, which are in their essence different manifestations of the quintessence of the epoch, which have sensual (art), or psychological (religion), or else logic-notional (philosophy) forms, we should admit the following. The paradigm of collective thinking, which appeared in the second half of the XIX century caused by the appearance of the French Impressionism in painting, dominates in the present time, too. And, therefore, the analysis of the philosophical (ideological) principles of visual space of paintings will make it possible for us to see the new shades, facets, aspects of this universal paradigm.

The paintings of Albert Lebourg started the so called "Rouen" (as opposed to "Paris") school of French Impressionism. Although Albert Lebourg himself was greatly impressed by the discoveries in painting, made by Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, Alfred Sisley, his own creative life was spent in constant wanderings and travelling. He did not become the permanent resident of Paris; nevertheless, he took part in several exhibitions of the group "the Independent". He painted landscapes of Paris, the river Seine, in the interval from Paris to Auvergne; Rouen, Normandy. He travelled a lot in Europe, lived in Switzerland and the Netherlands. He regularly exhibited his pictures; annual exhibitions of Lebourg's paintings took place in Paris from 1891 to 1914. In 1903 he was awarded the Legion of Honor award. The most important exhibition of his works during Lebourg's lifetime took place in the gallery of George Petit in 1918. Since 1923 Albert Lebourg was seriously ill, this serious disease led to termination of his work and caused his death in 1928.

<sup>5</sup> The world art. Impressionism / Comp. by I. G. Mosin., 2006. St. Petersburg: OOO "SZKEO Crystal", pp: 69–74.

At the present time people's interest to Albert Lebourg's works is constantly growing. The exhibition of his works called "Travelling around Normandy" which took place in 2009–2010 was a real success. The success was so great that there were already two exhibitions of his works in 2013: "The Seine" and a separate exposition inside the exhibition "The Impressionists of Normandy".

Serious extensive artistic research of the works of Albert Lebourg is still to be conducted. The present article we will study a problem of philosophical and conceptual content of Impressionism, manifested in the works of the greatest representative of this movement, the landscape painter Albert Lebourg. In this connection it is necessary to describe several of his paintings which can be representative of 1) the whole of the works of Albert Lebourg; 2) French Impressionism of the end of the XIX–the first half of the XX centuries; 3) Impressionism in painting; 4) Impressionism in general. The preliminary analysis of the works of the paintings of Albert Lebourg allowed to choose three paintings of Albert Lebourg, which, in the opinion of the authors of this article, can be such complex representatives: 1) "Snow in Auvergne" (the original title "The Bridge over the Allier in Pont du Chateau in Winter") (1886); 2) "The Banks of the Seine", 1889; 3) "The Two Boats in the Rays of the Rouen Sun", circa 1900.

### Analysis and description of the three paintings by Albert-Charle Lebourg

The analysis and description of the paintings by Albert-Charle Lebourg was conducted with the help of the method known as philosophical and art analysis. This method was developed and tested by a number of scientists – V. I. Zhukovskiy<sup>6</sup>, D. V. Pivovarov<sup>7</sup>, N. P. Koptzeva.

<sup>6</sup> Zhukovskiy, V. I., 2008. The Visual Content in Representative Paintings of Andrei Pozdeev. Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences, 1(1):124–148; Zhukovskiy, V. I., 2010. Theory of fine art. St. Petersburg: Aleteia, pp: 412; Zhukovskiy, V. I.; Pivovarov, D. V., 2008. The Nature of Visual Thinking. Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences, 1(1): 149–158; Koptzeva, N. P.; Zhukovskiy, V. I., 2008. The Artistic Image as a Process and Result of Game Relations between a Work of Visual Art as an Object and its Spectator. Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences, 1 (2): 226–244.

<sup>7</sup> Pivovarov, D. V., 2008. Objective and Subjective Religiousness. Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities, 1 (2): 250–252; Pivovarov, D. V., 2009. Problem of Synthesis of the Main Definitions of Culture. Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences, 2 (1): 17–22.

seva<sup>8</sup>, M. V. Tarasova<sup>9</sup> A. A. Sitnikova<sup>10</sup>, N. N. Pimenova<sup>11</sup>, A. V. Kistova<sup>12</sup>, N. N. Seredkina<sup>13</sup>, N. M. Libakova<sup>14</sup>, Y. S. Zamaraeva<sup>15</sup>, E. A. Sertakova<sup>16</sup> and other researchers<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Koptseva, N. P., 2008. The Creation Problem in Fundamental Ontology of Martin Heidegger and Modern Theory of Fine Arts. *Journal of Siberian Federal University Humanities & Social Sciences*, 1(3): 338–346; Koptseva, N. P., 2008. A.P. Chekhov as a Philosopher: «Game» Phenomenon and «Existence in the Face of Death» in his Dramas. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 1 (1): 22–38; Koptseva, N. P., Zhukovskiy, V. I., 2008. The Artistic Image as a Process and Result of Game Relations between a Work of Visual Art as an Object and its Spectator. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 1 (2): 226–244.

<sup>9</sup> Tarasova, M.V., Grigorieva, T. Yu., 2011. The Architecture of Krasnoyarsk as a Space of Social Identification. Correlation of Cosmocentric and Sociocentric Ideals. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 4 (12): 1705–1718.

<sup>10</sup> Semenova, A. A.; Koptzeva, N. P., 2009. Truth as a Form of Modeling of Integrity at Social Being Level. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 2(1): 31–55; Semenova, A.A., Soshenko, M. V., 2011. Image of Siberia in Artist Aleksander Surikov's Works. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 4 (12): 1743–1766.

<sup>11</sup> Pimenova, N. N., Marysheva, A. V., 2011. Wooden Zodchestvo of Krasnoyarsk City as the Space for Forming Territorial and Ethno-Cultural Identity. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 4 (12): 1784–1793.

<sup>12</sup> Kistova, A. V., 2010. Children's Art Education in Krasnoyarsk. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 3: 581–592; Klykova, A. V., 2009. Iconographic Research of Paul Gauguin's Masterpiece «Caricature of Tahiti Governor Lacascade». *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 2 (4): 560–579.

<sup>13</sup> Nevolko, N. N., 2011. The Visualization of Ethnic Theme in the Khakass Artists Paintings and Graphic Works of Art. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 4 (8): 1109–1126.

<sup>14</sup> Libakova, N. M., 2009. Specific Nature and Applied Methodology of Gender Theory in Cultural Studies. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 2 (4): 580–586.

<sup>15</sup> Bezgodova, Ju. S., 2008. The Transition of an Artistic Image from Material to Index Status: a Pictorial Portrait of Artistic Work. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 1 (3): 423–435.

<sup>16</sup> Sertakova, E. A., Gerasimova, A. A., 2011. Formation of the Russian Siberian Identity in the Wood Engravings of the Krasnoyarsk Craftsmen. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 4 (12): 1719–1726.

<sup>17</sup> Karlova, O. A., 2009. Integrality of Gogol's Works and «Screaming Contradictions» in Understanding Him. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 2 (4): 533–537; Parfentjev, N. P., 2009. About Activity of Feodor Krest'janin – the Master of Musical-Written Art of XVI – the Beginning XVII Centuries. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*. 2 (3): 403–414; Parfentjeva, N. V., 2009. Principles of Author's Art Creativity in Ancient-Russian

It has been successfully applied for 20 years for conceptual analysis of works of art, architecture, literature, music, decorative and applied art, cinema. Further there will be presented the result of application of this method to the analysis of the paintings by Albert-Charles Lebourg.

**1. “Snow in Auvergne” (the original title “The Bridge over the Allier in Pont du Chateau in winter”) (1886); 43,6 x 77,7 cm, oil on canvas; private collection**

Painted on the horizontal canvas there is a winter night landscape. In the foreground there is a river, which occupies approximately one third of the vertical space. Diagonally, the river is crossed by a massive stone bridge, coming out of the lower left corner. Behind the river there is depicted a rather steep bank, turning into hills. Over the hill there is a dark sky with dark clouds and the moon, which is vague because of the mist. On the bank, near the water and not far from the bridge there is a two-storey house with a gable roof, whose façade faces the river. Snow and ice are one of the most important images of this painting: frosty haze covers the sky, making the moon, which is also surrounded by snow clouds, indistinct; the river bank and the hills are covered by snow; the water in the river is in some places icebound; there is thick layer of snow on the roof of a cart listing to the left, which is moving over the bridge towards the house on the river bank, and there is also snow lying on the bridge itself, slowing down the movement of the cart.

In general, it can be said that there is practically no movement in the painting: the cart is moving slowly because of the snow; the river is icebound at some places; the snow clouds are surrounding the moon, which limits its visible movement. But if in relation to the moon and the river we can talk about temporary restriction of movement: the moon will appear from behind the clouds; the ice will melt in spring and the river will become alive again, – it is impossible to make such a conclusion with absolute certainty about the cart. The cart is obviously moving toward the house on the river bank, but we cannot see the further road, leading from the house. That is the cart is slowly moving to the house to stay in it. It should be noted that such a conclusion contradicts the diagonal composition. First of all, the di-

Church Musical-Written Chanting of the XVI-XVII Centuries. *Journal of Siberian Federal University, Humanities & Social Sciences*. 2 (2): 184–199; Khomushku, O. M., 2010. Shamanism as a Worldview Basis of Ethnocultural Traditions of the Peoples of the Sayan-Altai in Present-Day Society. *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences*, 3 (1): 94–100.

agonal composition is designed (meant) to give motion, dynamics. In the studied canvas, though, the diagonal dynamics is contradicted by the rickety cart pulled by the downcast horses, and the general almost motionless surrounding space. Secondly, the diagonal, running from the viewer into the depth of the picture, from the lower left corner into the upper right corner, is called “the diagonal of victory”, which is also in contradiction with the trudging horses and the dimensions scale of the building, where the “winners” are heading. Listing the discrepancies, present on the canvas, we cannot but mention the contrast between the very massive bridge, whose supports are depicted in the form of towers with conical tops, and the relatively small house on the river bank. The bridge and the house look disproportionate. Such a bridge is supposed to lead to a fortress, a castle, but not to a squat house with eight windows.

The discovered inconsistencies, disproportions cause us to use the additional material, for example it can be the original title of the picture: “The Bridge over Allier in Pont du Chateau in winter”. The name of the settlement Pont du Chateau can be translated as the Castle Bridge. And the appearance of the bridge corresponds to this name. But there is no castle. There is only a two-storey house. The expectations contradict the reality. The carriage, moving along the bridge, representing “the diagonal of victory”, does not meet the expectations either. It is just the cart listing to the left, pulled by the downcast trudging horses. The past grandeur is all gone. The castle is gone. There is only the bridge left. The last movements (moving of the moon over the sky, of the carriage over the bridge, of the water in the river) are coming to a standstill. The decline of the former grandeur is becoming apparent.

Actually, first of all, **the discrepancy between the expectations and the reality**; secondly, **the decline of the former grandeur**; thirdly, **fading of the last movements** can be considered some of the main characteristics of the studied painting.

## 2. “The Banks of the Seine”, 1889; oil on canvas; Museum of contemporary art of Strasbourg

On the horizontal canvas there is a cityscape of Paris, executed in brown colours.

In the foreground, represented diagonally, stretching from the lower left corner—there is an embankment, there are people resting on the parapet. A horse is walking slowly along the embankment in the direction away from the viewer into the depth of the picture. In the second ground there is the bright smooth surface of water with the smoking steamer on it, moving in the direction away from the viewer into the depth of the

picture. In the third ground (from left to right): there are urban buildings, taking up more than a third of the space; a bridge, tall trees, probably a park, occupying almost as much space as the urban buildings on the left. In the fourth ground there is an indistinct shape of the Eiffel tower in the left part of the canvas, and also there is a silhouette of one more building, perhaps a cathedral, slightly to the right from the central line of the picture. The sky is overcast by dense smog through which the setting sun can hardly be seen.

The space of the picture is divided into two parts by the part of the diagonal parapet of the embankment of the Seine. In each of them there is a transport artery: closer to the viewer there is a road along which there is a lawn with green grass, farther from the viewer—there is a navigable river.

We can dwell on each of the mention parts in more detail. The lower selvedge of the canvas crosses the road and the lawn situated to its right. In fact this is the only opportunity for the viewer to “enter” the painting. The direction of movement of the viewer is supported by the movement of the horse walking slowly along the road. This part of the picture can be characterized by such notions as **idleness** (people sitting on the parapet), slowness (a walking horse). It is in this part that the objects, differing in color from the general brown range (gamut) of colors, are represented. They are the lawn with green grass and a tiny red spot—an umbrella in the hands of a person sitting on the parapet.

The amount of the green is clearly not enough; the percentage of this color spot is very small in comparison to the total area of the picture. The umbrella is placed not horizontally, but diagonally; considering the main function of an umbrella to be protection, here we can see it used not for protection from the elements, but rather from the influence of the world, depicted behind the parapet of the embankment. The road and the lawn are continued into the trees, whose silhouettes are represented in the background (it should be noted that the silhouettes of the trees turn to be higher than the main bulk of the buildings, situated in the same ground as the trees, but in the left part of the picture).

What is depicted on the other side of the parapet of the embankment? It is the steamer, moving in the same direction as the horse, the smoke from its funnel is being carried in the direction of the Eiffel tower and is merging with the smog in the sky. The smog in the vicinity of the tower is almost of the same density as the tower itself. Besides that, the Eiffel tower can be guessed by its silhouette, tall and thin, like a chimney. It seems that the tower is functioning as a chimney, that it is the tower that has issued so much smog that the sky



cannot be seen because of it. On the river bank behind the Seine there is a virtually monolithic group of urban buildings. All this part of the painting is executed in the shades of brown. This world can be characterized by the notions of **“technologization”**: the steamer, moving along the river is an invention of the beginning of the XIX century; the Eiffel tower is either being finished or has just been finished (because the years of its construction are 1887–1889), – and **“speed”**: the fact that the walking horse and the steamer are placed on practically the same level allows us to make comparison of their speed, which is in favor of the latter.

Comparing the two parts which were examined separately, we can characterize them as two different presents: closer to the viewer there is an **outgoing present (“past present”)**, behind the other side of the parapet of the embankment–there is a **coming present (“future present”)**. The fact that it is the outgoing present that is represented in the foreground of the picture is represented by the horse, moving away from the viewer, which can be interpreted as a symbol of the outgoing time – animal drawn transport which is being replaced by steam and petrol one. The outgoing present is unhurried, haste less, leisurely (people sitting on the parapet). It is this present that is characterized by, although to a small degree, but still **heterogeneity**, which is expressed for example in the color scheme: there are two colour spots which are different from the general brown: the green lawn and the red umbrella.

The coming present is **homogeneous**–the urban buildings are painted as a monolith, the Eiffel tower has no structure, it is represented as a solid monolith silhouette; there is no separation of color. If we accept technologization as the main characteristic of this world, we cannot but notice that it has covered almost the entire world: it is the same coloring, with only two different spots; it is the smog covered sky hanging over the entire town. The fact that it is the coming present that is depicted behind the parapet is first of all indicated by the depiction of the steamer (steam vehicles are being more and more widely spread), but the main thing is the silhouette of the Eiffel tower. It was constructed for the World exhibition in honour of the centennial anniversary of seizure of Bastille. At this exhibition different countries presented their latest achievements, the Eiffel tower was one of them, being at the same time the beacon, indicating the accumulation of progress, the island of the future.

If we accept that the world represented in the foreground is the outgoing future, and the world behind the parapet–is the coming future, then the figures of people sitting on the parapet can be interpreted as

trying **to hide from the new technologized** world: they are turning away from the river and the opposite bank, they are turning their backs on it; the umbrella is protecting its owner not from the atmospheric phenomena but rather from the impeding world. On the whole, the **coming present does not evoke enthusiasm** and positive emotions, among other things, this is also connected with the depicted time of the day: the sun is declining, it is the sunset, which correlates more with the outgoing present, and the more appropriate setting for the coming present would be sunrise (dawn). Consequently, the changes, that are taking place, are more likely to be regarded by the author in the negative light, the habitual way of life is going away, declining, despite the attempts of some people to protect themselves from the coming technologization, the smog of the future.

What place does the author propose the viewer to take? The wide road and the lawn, cut off by the lower selvedge of the painting, are a comfortable way to enter the picture. A lonely horse walking along the town’s road is a kind of invitation to take place beside her, to guide her, lead her to the tall trees, the last stronghold of the outgoing habitual life. But there is another mode of behavior, mode of attitude to the ongoing change of the times. It is represented by the third and fourth grounds: it is a bridge over the river, behind which there is a silhouette of some architectural construction. This part of the painting is prominent not only because of its central place on the canvas, but also because of the fact that the sun is shining neither on the outgoing present nor on the coming one, but on the central part, linking them. It should be considered in more detail. Near the bridge, in front of it, there is a small steamer, over which there is a white spot of smoke. Behind the bridge there is a silhouette of a building, probably a cathedral, judging by the two tall towers, which are traditionally the entrance towers. The bridge, is, therefore, not only the element, which is mechanically linking the technologies bank with the bank, which is the last stronghold of the habitual way of life; but it is also the demonstration of the fact, that **an organic combination of the new and the foregone, the future and the past is possible.**

### 3. “The Two Boats in the Rays of the Rouen Sun”, circa 1900

There is a sunny summer landscape depicted on the horizontal canvas. In the lower left corner there is depicted a sloping bank of the river with trees. In the right lower corner there is a river, depicted diagonally from the central part of the painting to its lower right corner. Behind the river there is a hilly bank, there are

trees and one-storey houses on it. In the background, behind the hill, there are tall towers of the cathedral.

The first thing that draws the viewer's attention is a big black steam boat, moving along the river towards the viewer. The river is depicted diagonally, in accordance with "the diagonal of defeat". Bringing together the separate parts of the artistic image of the painting (the steaming boat, "the diagonal of defeat", the sunny day) and turning to the analysis of the painting "Snow in Auvergne" and "The banks of the River Seine", we can make a conclusion that the habitual way of life has given way to technologization, which was perceived before as the future, as only coming present. In the paintings, which we analyzed before, there was depicted either sunset or nighttime. In this painting it is a bright new day, which has replaced the situation of uncertainty presented on the paintings "Snow in Auvergne" and "The Banks of the Seine". The uncertainty on these paintings is expressed for example in the fact that it is sunset that is depicted on "The banks of the Seine", which is a time of transition, when it is still not clear what kind of a new day will follow; in "The snow in Auvergne" the night landscape is represented, but, firstly, the position of the moon in the sky does not indicate clearly whether it is the end or the beginning of the night; secondly, the moonlight is so bright that it at times seems that it is not a night landscape, but rather a day landscape. Instability, evasion, looseness could be the indicators of the fact that the future in the shape, in which it is presented in the painting, is just one of the possible ways of development, that it is still possible to try and change it.

In "The Two Boats in the Rays of the Rouen sun" the expected, anticipated future has already come in all its definiteness; "the diagonal of victory" has given place to "the diagonal of defeat"; there is no longer "the diagonal of entrance", only "the diagonal of exit", along which a symbol of the technologies future, that has already come – a big black steam boat, is coming implacably approaching the viewer. The tall funnel of the boat resembles the towers of the cathedral. The same cathedral, that less than a decade earlier was glorified by Claude Monet. In practice, the vertical towers of the cathedral are replaced by the vertical of the steaming funnel: in fact, the cathedral is just silhouetted, it is ephemeral, the entrance towers are merging with the sky, desolidifying, while the boat's funnel is depicted very clearly, graphically, and, in addition to that, the smoke, coming out of the funnel of the boat is drifting towards the cathedral; the smoke is merging with the clouds, dissolving the outlines of the cathedral towers. The boat is replacing the cathedral. As it is perhaps becoming clear, using the comparison of the

cathedral, the temple with an ark, a rescue ship. In this case both objects will become the objects of the same level, and, consequently, it can be said that the ark has become different, it has mutated. Now it carries cargo, it has become small, it can provide salvation not for everybody, but only for the selected few; by the way, is it really salvation it is offering? Rather, it is provision of material prosperity in this life, but not work for achieving the Kingdom of God in the future. The ideals, values have changed.

At the first approximation it can seem that the author of the analysed painting does not suggest any way out, but only states the fact of the arrival of the future, which is dissolving the old ideals and values. But the question arises, causing us to once more turn to the canvas: the title of the painting is "**The two boats** in the rays of the Rouen sun", so where is the second boat? It is depicted in front of the big steaming boat, in its way. The dimensions of the boat with the funnel are many times bigger than those of the smaller boat. It seems odd to give the same name to these two such difficult vehicles. The small boat is in the big boat's way, in dangerous proximity to it. The image of the big boat is zoomorphic: one can distinguish two eyes-portholes, a sharp nose. That is the big boat does not only threaten the small one with the collision and the collapse of the latter, but also the big boat is like a living creature, able to eat, swallow the small boat, leaving only splinters. The small boat's fate is lamentable, it can be interpreted as a symbol of the outgoing past, as a refuge of the old values and ideals (which is also pointed at by the fact that the smaller boat is depicted in the area where the cathedral is reflected in the water). It feels like if the viewer looked for the second boat a second longer, it could no longer be found. But despite this, it is the moment of the dangerous proximity that is depicted, rather than the wrecking of the smaller boat from the collision with the bigger one. That is, however tiny it is, there still a chance for salvation.

Further careful studying of the smaller boat leads to noticing the fact, that there are no people in the smaller boat, it is not occupied, it is abandoned to its fate and the current, to the will of the bigger boat. At the same time the closest object to the viewer is a dark figure of a man, moving along the bank away from the water. The viewer can easily identify with this figure. So that he becomes not just an impassionate witness of the collapse of the old values, but he is trying to flee from the inevitable, not to see it. But the author offers the viewer an alternative way – he can try and take the place of the helmsman of the small boat and avoid the collision, which will result in a disaster for it. To encourage the viewer, who has

made the difficult choice in favour of the active struggle against the exceeding forces of the enemy, the author also gives the proof that this way is effective. It is **the third** boat which is not even mentioned in the title. There are two people in this boat. This boat is located behind the big steaming boat, for it the danger has already past, the boat is in the light, brighter area of calm water, behind it on the bank there are only slender trees, no danger can be seen on either side of it. The fact that the third boat is not mentioned in the title and also the similarity of the boats – the closest and the farthest from the viewer (both in type and in location in space), may indicate that the two of them are in essence one and the same boat, depicted in two different time points: before the collision with danger and after the wonderful salvation. But the farther boat is not immediately visible, so that the man, running along the bank away from the water will not see it, he will not see the way out, proposed by the author. Only having chosen the difficult, dangerous way, one can see that it is considered to be the right one in this painting.

Having analyzed the three works of Albert-Charles Lebourg we can say that they constitute a kind of series, whose main idea is the collision of the habitual world with its established ideals and values with the new technologies world. In each of these paintings the author presents the development of his views on this idea, from stating the decline of the old grandeur, discrepancy between the expectations and the reality and fading of the last movement; by comparing two ages, two ways of life, as if balancing them on the two sides of the bridge, on the one side of which there is technologization and urbanization, on the other – there is a slow-moving old life; to the realization of the imminence/in-evitability of the change of the ages. And still he leaves a man a chance for overcoming the danger, the chance to survive the destruction of the times and preserve the true ideals and values, as demonstrated in the painting “The Two Boats in the Rays of the Rouen Sun”.

### Philosophical concepts of Impressionism

The famous Russian art critic M. Alpatov starts the tradition of studying the philosophical foundations of Impressionism<sup>18</sup>. V.I. Zhukovskiy<sup>19</sup> reveals the philosophical aspects of Impressionism in the context of the theory

of the artistic image. In the modern Russian theory and history of Impressionism the philosophical foundations of Impressionism were studied by such researchers as Yu. A. Griber<sup>20</sup>, T.N. Martyshkina<sup>21</sup>, Kuznetsova E.A.<sup>22</sup>, O. Yu. Astakhov<sup>23</sup>, L.V. Kuznetsova<sup>24</sup>, M. G. Dyakova<sup>25</sup>, E. S. Cherepanova, L.V. Nizjeva<sup>26</sup> and other scientists.

At the present time certain stages of intellectual practices of “speaking about the philosophy of Impressionism” can be distinguished. Till the end of the 1990s the Russian researches of the philosophical conceptions, expressed in the art of Impressionism, regarded its appearance as a reaction to positivism. While some researches claimed that the Impressionists’ paintings are a vivid manifestation of positivism, because the painters seriously studied the peculiarities of visual perception and scientific conceptions of visual reception, the others claimed that the phenomenon of Impressionism is related to the philosophy of F. Nietzsche and other representatives of “the philosophy of life” and that Impressionism is “anti-positivism” and “anti-rationalism”. Since the late of the 1990s, the intellectual practices of Russian researchers have become more complicated, the analysis of the philosophical foundation of Impressionism is accompanied by the serious study of the related practices of foreign scientists. Taking these practices into consideration, the initial settings of research of “the philosophy of Impressionism” become more complicated and precise. For example, in their article E. S. Cherepanova

<sup>20</sup> Griber, Yu. A., 2004 Epistemological foundations of artistic creativity (On the material of mythology of Impressionism). M.S. thesis, (09.00.01). Smolensk.

<sup>21</sup> Martyshkina, T.N., 2010. Impressionism: from artistic vision to world outlook. Bulletin of Tomsk State University. № 304: 73–77;

<sup>22</sup> Kuznetsova, E.A., 2000. Aesthetics of Impressionism. Bulletin of Moscow University. Ser. 7: Philosophy. № 2: 83–90.

<sup>23</sup> Astakhov, O.Yu., 2001. Impressionism in the context of cultural and historical methodology of P. Sorokin. Sociocultural dynamics: theoretical, methodological and historical aspects: Proceedings of III interregional. Scientific-practical. Seminar (Kemerovo, 2–3 December . 1999) / Dep of Culture of Russian Federation, Russian. Inst for Cultural Studies, Kemer . State. Acad. Of Culture and Arts. Editorial Board: G. N. Minenko (Ed. . ) And others. Kemerovo, pp: 34–41.

<sup>24</sup> Kuznetsova, L.V., 2012. “Philosophy” of Impressionist paintings. Bulletin of Tyumen State University. Philosophy, 10.

<sup>25</sup> Dyakova, M.G. 1998. Impressionism: philosophical concept and being in culture. M.S. thesis, (24.00.01) .Saransk.

<sup>26</sup> Cherepanova, L.S., Nizjeva, L. V. Phenomenon of philosophy of Impressionism in Austria at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. Electronic resource. URL:<http://elar.ufrfu.ru/bitstream/10995/19404/1/iuro-2013-112-04.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Alpatov, M., 1972. Poetics of Impressionism. French painting of the sec. half. XIX century and its contemporary art culture. In the Proceedings of the 1971 Scholars conference. Moscow: Soviet Artist. pp: 88–104.

<sup>19</sup> Zhukovskiy, V.I., 1971 Theory of fine art. St. Petersburg. Aletheia, pp: 412.

and L.V. Nizjeva understand the philosophy of Impressionism as the conception of the Austrian philosopher Ernst Mach, making well-grounded conclusions that the art of Impressionism is an art form of the philosophical movement of “psychologism”, characteristic of European thought of the end of the XIX beginning of the XX centuries. In her turn, L.V. Kuznetsova brings forward weighty arguments for understanding the impact of the philosophy and religion of Buddhism (including Zen Buddhism) on the paintings of the Impressionists.

A fairly complex, multidimensional analysis of the philosophical epistemological practices, manifested in the art of the Impressionists is made by Yu. A. Griber, who studies the rehabilitation of the mythological worldview, characteristic of European intellectuals of the end of the XIX – beginning of the XX centuries. (in this context we can mention the activity of a group of intellectuals called “Eranos”, including M. Eliade, K. –G. Young, R. Otto and many others). Yu. A. Griber traces the appearance of this special intellectual “mythologism” in the activity of the Impressionists, who, in her opinion, by means of artistic language, artistic means create the “individual mythology of an artist” and establish the artistic canon in the new form, moving it into the space of psychological dimension.

In some research there might be found a completely opposite understanding of Impressionism, connected with the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, the development of which was associated with the criticism of “psychologism” and with pointing out some “permanent” basis of existence and thinking, which can be found in the psychological, phenomenological and transcendental reduction.

All these points of view seem to be extremely interesting. The hypothesis which is proposed in this scientific article is that the art of Impressionism in general, including Impressionist painting is a sensual phenomenon of the new worldview paradigm, which is dominant in our time. Perhaps the French painting “proposed” the form for the first appearance of the concepts of the new paradigm, perhaps the Impressionist painter were the first to find sensual expression for this concepts, infectious and recognizable. It seems that Impressionism “granted the flesh” not only to the concepts themselves, but also to artistic, intellectual and other psychological practices for working with these concepts, for their creation (recreation) and for ensuring its presence among people. This hypothesis can be verified by means of relating the works of Albert-Charles Lebourg to the philosophy of Impressionism.

### **The three paintings by Albert-Charles Lebourg and the philosophy of Impressionism: artistic Buddhism and artistic psychology**

#### **A. Artistic Buddhism.**

A lot of research has been made concerning reception of Buddhism and Zen Buddhism in European culture of the XIX –the first third of the XX centuries. Conceptual and artistic connection of Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist psychology with Impressionism and Post-Impressionism is expressed both in art critics and aesthetics, as well as in works of art where images, subjects, styles of Chinese, Korean and especially Japanese traditional painting are “quoted”. How true is it for the three pictures by Albert-Charles Lebourg, which were described earlier: 1) “Snow in Auvergne” (the original title is “The Bridge over the Allier at Pont du Chateau in Winter”) (1886); 2) “The Banks of the Seine”, 1889 ;3) “ The Two Boats in the Rays of the Rouen Sun”, circa 1900?

In the primary analysis of the picture “Snow in Auvergne” (“The Bridge over the Allier at Pont du Chateau in Winter”) the following artistic ideas were distinguished: 1) **the discrepancy between the expectations and thereality**; 2) **the decline of the former grandeur**; 3) **fading of the last movements**. Even a person familiar only with the basics of Buddhism will find these ideas to be exactly “Buddhist”.

Probably in the second half of XIX century – early XX century, when only the basic philosophical and religious texts of Buddhism, revealing only the most general and primary ideas, were translated into European languages (French, German, English), it can be said that European intellectuals actively studied these fundamental and primary doctrines as something exotic, different, new, causing wondering at the other than western-Christian wisdom of “the East”. “The discrepancy between the expectations and the reality” in the painting “Snow in Auvergne” is the artistic expression of the truths of Buddhism about sufferings as the foundation of existence of the Cosmos, Nature, all living creatures. In the first sermon, Buddha Gautama Siddhartha proclaims four truths that dissatisfaction rules psychocosmos. It is not easy to discover it. The person who managed to do it, to fixate his dissatisfaction is already a wise man. The truth is that neither joy nor sorrow, neither past nor present or future, neither wealth nor poverty, neither beauty nor ugliness, neither stupidity nor cleverness, –that is “nothing that exists” gives peace, satisfaction and harmony to a living creature. It is **the discrepancy between the expectations and reality** which is the cause of sufferings of all living



creatures, understanding of this cause is the beginning of the way to inner harmony and peace.

From the point of view of Buddhist philosophy and psychology, to see the inevitability of suffering, eternal dissatisfaction, to see how illusory any “greatness” is – is to make an important step to finding the psychological state of peace and harmony. Albert-Charles Lebourg shows Buddhist philosophy of suffering, of illusiveness, transient nature of existence in the painting “Snow in the Auvergne”. This is suggested not only by the artistic philosophy of the painting, but by its subject itself. Primary acquaintance with traditional Japanese culture, taking place in Europe at his time, reveals the universal image of the moon, the night sky as the symbol of unity of temporal and eternal. The image of the moon is canonical to Chinese and Japanese Buddhist art. It is the image which has canonical associations, decoding of which is an important psychological intellectual practice in the traditional culture of China and Japan. We can assume that Albert-Charles Lebourg, supporting the new artistic and intellectual practices, which were being formed in Europe at this time, is doing it by introducing “exotic” topics, signs, symbols, images into the established artistic language, decoding of which will demand certain cognitive efforts from the viewer – recipient, viewer- thinker. In this context the “exotics” of the philosophy and psychology of Buddhism is a revolutionary practice for artistic thinking of European intellectuals.

The second picture by Albert-Charles Lebourg “The Banks of the Seine” was earlier interpreted as an artistic manifestation of the idea of possibility of organic connection of the new with the old, the future and the past. Can we see the reception of Buddhism in this idea, as well as in the picture “Snow in Auvergne”? We certainly can. The traditional Buddhist culture (be it China or Japan) treats the concept of time differently from the classical rational European philosophy. On the one hand, the historical past is idealized in this culture. “The Golden Age” in the traditional culture of Buddhist countries is not in the future, but in the past. It already happened. That is why striving for the better forms of social being – is striving not for the future, but for the past. On the other hand, the traditional Buddhist cultures are based on the idea of “permanent returning” of matrix forms of social being. Distinguishing various cosmic and natural cycles, eastern thinkers build the model of historic time and historical space corresponding to it as a model of cycles, returns – in 12 years, 60 years, 720 years etc. Not only **can** the past connect to the future. In eternal repetitions of one and the same historic characters, historic events, activities, decisions

social being takes place, in the centre of which there are Buddhist countries themselves.

Thus, the traditional Buddhist doctrine of historical time and social being, corresponding to eternal returning is concretized in artistic visual thinking of Albert-Charles Lebourg in his painting “the banks of the Seine” with help of the artistic language of French Impressionism, which was “revolutionary” for European culture of the XIX century.

Not only does the subject of the painting “The Banks of the Seine”, connected with the flowing river, not contradict this interpretation, but it also strengthens its accuracy. The sign and symbol of a river is one of the canonical signs-symbols of Buddhist artistic and philosophic- psychological visual thinking.

The third picture “The Two Boats in the Rays of Rouen Sun” (1990) was “read” in the course of description and analysis as a visual manifestation of the idea of true and untrue path of human life. The concept of “true human existence” was discovered in European philosophy of modernity in the first third of the XX century. It is difficult to directly link it to the “primary” Buddhist ideas, which were being processed at this time by European intellectuals. But we can talk about the holistic conceptual influence of Buddhism on European artistic practices. The ideas of “pre-set” course of human life, “predetermination” by a river, a path in the forest, a village road will be elaborated in the phenomenological ontology of M. Heidegger a bit later, in 1927 in his cult work “Being and time”. The complex ing been existential dialectics of one’s own determination “to be” and “having been thrown” into the world will be developed in philosophical works between the First and the Second World Wars. But before it appeared in refined European philosophy, this existential dialectics was revealed by artistic visual thinking of the French Impressionist Albert-Charles Lebourg in his painting “The two boats in the rays of the Rouen sun” (1990).

### B. Artistic psychologism

Psychologism is a trend in European philosophy of the first third of the XX century, connected with the active development of psychological science, since the 1960s. Psychologism as a philosophical movement aroused fierce criticism and was partially “removed” in the phenomenological philosophy of Edmond Husserl and phenomenological ontology of Martin Heidegger. Psychologism was subjected to scrutiny in neo-Marxism and related philosophical movements. Nevertheless, this approach not only did not “disappear” , but it turned into powerful intellectual, scientific, philosophical, artistic , political, and social practices that

are characteristic of modernism and postmodernism. Psychologism spawned new anthropological, social, political, cultural, legal, linguistic and other research, the findings and discoveries of which are embodied in social existence with the help of social engineering, soft power, educational practices, etc.

Vivid representation of the philosophy of psychology is the philosophical works of Ernst Mach, an Austrian physicist who, according to his own words, philosophized as “a passer-by” or as “a Sunday hunter”<sup>27</sup>. In the history of modernist philosophy Ernst Mach is known as the author of the books “Analysis of sensations: relation of the physical to the psychic”<sup>28</sup>, “Cognition and delusion”<sup>29</sup>, and also by his lectures on philosophy of physics, epistemology. Together with the Swiss philosopher Richard Avenarius<sup>30</sup> he developed philosophical theory of empiriocriticism. R. Avenarius and E. Mach believe the foundation of being to be not matter as such or a transcendental subject, but experience (empire), the studying of which in their opinion – is the main objective of philosophy as science about nature. Empiriocriticism is a continuation of positivism, associated with rejection of metaphysics as a source delusion for scientists. Analysis of methods of scientific knowledge is necessary to check these methods for presence of metaphysical aspects and to eventually “clean out” these metaphysics assertions. The sphere of scientific knowledge is a continuous flow of sensations. Sensations are a third world, which is integral and exists before their division into “physical” world and “psychic” world. R. Avenarius and E. Mach believe that in criticism of experience there can be found the integrity before its division into “the external” and “the internal”. The main objective of philosophy is study of constructs of things as complexes of sensations and study of the process of scientific cognition as a flow of sensations. The doctrine of Ernst Mach about the elements that make up what we later fixate as “things”, “images”, “ideas” etc. is of great importance for understanding the philosophical basis of Impressionism. The second name of the theory of Ernst Mach is psychophysics. Nowadays, in connection with studies of

cognitive processes and artificial intelligence, the ideas and conceptions of Ernst Mach attract growing attention of both physicists and psychologists. Let us see if we can interpret the paintings of Albert-Charles Lebourg in the spirit of artistic psychologism.

Albert-Charles Lebourg and Ernst Mach were contemporaries. Psychophysics of Mach was extremely popular in Europe at the beginning of the XX century. There is no doubt that Albert -Charles Lebourg was familiar with the ideas of this thinker. You can pay attention to the fact that Lebourg lived some time in Switzerland, where E. Mach’s associate –Richard Avenarius worked, who was the second creator of psychophysics-empiriocriticism.

The ideologists of Impressionism were brothers Eugene and Jules de Goncourt. They write in their famous “Diaries”: “Perhaps nothing exists without any relation to other things, completely on its own. Nature, water, trees, landscape—all these is seen by a man, and all these appears to him to be different depending on his mood, his frame of mind. There are sunny days that seem to be gloomy, and there is the outcast sky, which you remember as the clearest in the world. Beauty of a woman depends on love, quality of wine depends on when and where you drink it, whether it is served at the beginning or at the end of dinner, after strawberries or after cheese”<sup>31</sup>. In the very name of “Impressionism” there is an indication to the fact that reality, created by an Impressionist artist, is bound to contain the I-dimension of the artist himself. With the help of the artistic language of Impressionism this I-dimension is fixated and proposed to the viewer-recipient in close connection with the “things” that became “home” for this dimension.

The elements of Ernst Mach in the artistic thinking of Albert -Charles Lebourg take the form of the artistic style of Impressionism with a special choice of subjects(which are able to create the strongest impression on both the painter and his viewer), with a special way of applying paint on the canvas(use of pure color and separate brush strokes, when optical connection of pure colors into a complex composition occurs in psychic reality of the viewer), with a special (meaningful) proportion of light and shade, etc.

Impressionists discovered the meaning of color itself, outside objects, depicted with the help of combination of different colors. The work of Albert -Charles Lebourg, his paintings—are a continuous creative ex-

<sup>27</sup> Cherepanova, L.S., Nizjeva, L. V. Phenomenon of philosophy of Impressionism in Austria at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. Electronic resource. URL:<http://elar.ufr.ru/bitstream/10995/19404/1/iuro-2013-112-04.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Mach, E., 2005. Analysis of sensations: relation of the physical to the mental. M.: University Library of Alexander Pogorelskiy, pp: 304.

<sup>29</sup> Mach, E., 1909. Knowledge and delusion. M.

<sup>30</sup> Avenarius, R., 1898. Introduction a critique of pure experience of Fr. Carstanjen (trans.by Lesevich) . St. Petersburg.

<sup>31</sup> Goncourt, Ed. and J., 1964. Diary. Notes on literary life. Selected pages. In 2 volumes. Vol.1. M.. Khudozhestvennaya literatura.

periment, in which the painter designs, creates a strong psychophysical impression, which expresses the essence of an event, fluent, unstable, transitory, which created this strong impression.

Artistic psychophysics of the above discussed three paintings of Albert -Charles Lebourg corresponds to all the artistic and intellectual discoveries of Impressionism. Artistic psychophysical construction of impression is made by this artist is so powerful that over time its importance is constantly increasing, which is indicated by the two exhibitions, held in 2013. In the context of new regionalism, the capability of the works of Albert -Charles Lebourg to construct and convey strongest emotions by artistic means, "has been taken possession of" by Normandy. This can be seen in the title of one of the exhibitions of 2013 – "Norman Impressionists".

### Findings (results)

The hypothesis was proposed that for the first time in European artistic and intellectual practices Impres-

sionism showed a new paradigm, connected with overcoming the difference between a person's internal and external reality, with the discovery of artistic form for expressing primary and universal integrity, given in direct experience and divided in psychic reality into external and internal dimensions.

The critical artistic analysis of the three paintings by the great French Impressionist Albert -Charles Lebourg was made: "Snow in Auvergne", "The banks of the Seine", "The two boats in the rays of Rouen sun", the main artistic ideas of these paintings were revealed.

A deep conceptual link of the three paintings by Albert -Charles Lebourg was found, on the one hand, both artistic Buddhism and artistic psychologism (as cult (popular) conceptions of European intellectual life before the First World War). It was shown that Impressionist landscapes of this painter create and convey strongest visual impressions, modeling not only visual reality, but integral psychophysical reality, including the process of immediate flow of visual sensations, that has created and is supporting this strongest impression.

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