



EXPLORING THE DESIGN LAWS OF ROCOCO AND HISTORICAL DECORATING TECHNIQUES

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Research purpose: In the context of cross subject integration we wanted to acquaint students with various historical technologies, design laws and various surface treatments.

Keywords: carving, fireplace clock, French pendula, gilding, imitation tortoise shell, *oro povero*, *polierweiss*, rococo, varnish

Research Methodology: Based on photographs of different versions of French pendule from the era of Louis XV the students each designed their own version of the object. According to the pedagogical objectives set, the most appropriate version was chosen, which the mentor further adapted to the capabilities of students, as most of them met with this type of theme for the first time. Also taking into account the limitations of students, the mentor carved the appropriate ornaments, which served as a template. In order of participation from every student in all stages of manufacturing and execution every student carved two or more pieces of ornaments by the template. In the end we chose the best products and merged them into a whole. On one clock students gilded previously carved wooden ornaments of glossy (watery) and matte (oil) gilding with 24 carat gold leafs and painted the casing with an egg temper which we repeatedly lacquered with a prepared alcoholic varnish, according to a recipe from the book: *A Treatise of Japaning and Varnishing* from authors Stalker and Parker from year 1686. The second clock was fully gloss silvered. With the technique of golden varnish (*oro povero*) the ornaments were imitated in gold, the rest of the frame was processed in the technique of imitated tortoise shell according to the procedure in the aforementioned book. The imitation of enamelled metal dial was made of wood and executed in *polierweiss* and the numbers were made over the stencil to the surface with a black bole.

Results / Findings: the students became acquainted and partially became familiar with the partly modified design characteristics of the French rococo. During planning they trained their drawing skills. When making the carpentry part of the clock case, they learned the basics of cabinet making. By carving ornaments, they gained experience using carving tools. During the surface processing of the clock they were acquainted with the historical gilding and painting materials and techniques. They can use gained experiences when making their own designed products.

Originality / Practical implications: It is a reinterpretation of a complexly designed product, which was not intended to create something original but served as a didactic tool for pairing and acquiring practical experienced students with historical furniture styles, materials and technologies. So it is not a design problem but a technological problem.



Picture 1. Carving wood ornaments
Author: Alenka Brlogar



Picture 2. Gilding
Author: Alenka Brlogar



Picture 3. Imitation tortoise shell
Author: Alenka Brlogar



Picture 4. Finished clocks