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# THE TRUST OF THE ALBANIAN YOUTH TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN UNION INSTITUTIONS

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## ABSTRACT

Albania appears to provoke a new problem. The desire of young people to leave the country, as well as the strong focus on EU membership of the country as the greatest answer for their future and that of the country, has drawn academics to the topic. According to studies, young Albanians' trust in national institutions has fallen significantly. Based on these findings, the purpose of this study is to examine the factors, such as: perceived political situation, trust in the national situation and EU education programme, that contribute to a high degree of trust in EU institutions. From a methodological standpoint, the paper is based on the quantity approach, and the survey is the technique of data gathering. The survey was established as part of this research, and the categories for the analyses were determined by the theoretical foundation. A total of 212 people responded to the survey. The analytical model of the paper is based on authors Fukuyama and Putnam. They define trust as an expectation that evolves in a community as a result of regular and societal changes in common norms. This declaration served as the foundation for the entire project. Following the examination and processing of the data, as well as running a multiple linear regression, it was determined that a negative perception of the political situation, low level of trust in national institutions and high level of trust in the EU education programme contribute to the high degree of trust towards EU institutions.

*Keywords: Albanian youth, trust, perceptions, institutions, EU*

## THE TRUST OF ALBANIAN YOUTH TOWARDS EU INSTITUTIONS

The concept of trust and changes in how it is understood has recently become one of the most hotly debated topics among academics working on trust issues at both the personal and institutional levels. Recent events in Europe have once again demonstrated that European citizens' trust in European authorities and institutions is eroding. The fall appears to be related to economic and political issues, and neither the Union's members nor its institutions have been able to adequately address the crisis' roots [1]. Trust is also perceived as the expectation that grows inside a community with regular, honest, and cooperative behaviour by other

members of this community, based on common norms [2] In contrast to EU member states, however, the crisis has had less of an impact on non-member but aspirant countries' trust in EU institutions. The same conclusions can be drawn in the situation of Albania, which is one of the countries that has been designated as a candidate country. On the other hand, trust levels appear to vary from nation to country [3], but Albania continues to have the greatest degree of trust in the EU thus far. This attitude is particularly evident among Albanian youth, who appears to be attempting to find solutions to EU membership through expressing faith in EU institutions [3].

Recent research on Albanian youth, on the other hand, do not appear to have been undertaken until 2015-2016. As a result, there has recently been a scarcity of data that can be used to build a clear framework for measuring or understanding if support has changed in recent years. Albanian youth are obviously pro-European, according to a study performed by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in 2015 [4]. According to their research, 87 percent of Albanian young people would vote in support of EU membership in the event of a referendum. While 62 percent of Albanian youth feel that integration will result in political and economic prosperity. Taking these studies into account, research in this area has mostly concentrated on identifying probable characteristics that influence the increase of trust in Albanian youth. The following are some of the probable variables linked to a significant measure of influence in this context: (i) internal political situation; (ii) level of trust at individual and national level; and (iii) EU youth development and integration projects, such as Erasmus programs.

The main aim of this study is to examine the features that influence Albanian youth's increased trust in EU institutions, as well as to develop an analytical and theoretical profile of Albanian youth. This issue was sparked by the commencement of discussions for Albania as a candidate country on March 24, 2020, and it intends to examine the elements that influence the increase of Albanian youth trust in the institutions of the European Union. Some influencing elements derived from the literature review will be examined in the context of this paper. The study focuses on three main areas to assess the elements that influence Albanian youth's trust in EU institutions: (i) The political situation in the country; (ii) Trust in Albanian institutions; (iii) European youth-focused programs.

According to Mathews and Roz, the core analysis of this study is based on a quantitative methodological approach that is founded on positivist epistemological views, according to which social reality is objectively measurable [5]. The factors used to establish this article are based on Putnam's thesis [6], which claims that communities with high levels of trust are better able to collaborate to solve social problems, making their governments more accountable and honest, as well as improving democratic institutional performance.

Based on Putnam's reasoning, this study examines whether internal political reasons, trust in national institutions, and the impact of Erasmus programs all

contribute to young Albanians' increased trust in EU institutions. The analysis of the paper focused on the analysis and interpretation of the data generated by the survey used in the context of this paper. The survey was distributed to Albanian youth between the ages of 19 and 40, both inside and outside the country. The survey was carried out using the snowball method. A total of 212 young Albanians from inside and outside Albania completed the survey. When accounting for (i) the political situation in the country; (ii) trust in Albanian institutions; and (iii) European youth-focused programs, multiple linear regression is used to estimate the likelihood that trust in EU institutions will increase, while controlling for the economic well-being (incomes) of the survey participants.

## **POLITICAL SITUATION IN ALBANIA**

Albania should align its legislation with that of the European Union in order to join the EU and ensure its efficient implementation. The EU-Albania Stabilization and Association Agreement [7], which was signed on June 12, 2006 and entered into force on April 1, 2009, requires the Republic of Albania to align its legislation with the EU acquis. Albania will seek to ensure that its present laws and future legislation gradually align with the EU acquis, according to Article 70 of the SAA. This transformation was planned to happen over the course of a 10-year transition period, separated into two phases. The approximation concentrated on the important elements of the internal market acquis during the first phase of the transitional period, which began with the entrance into effect of the SAA, while Albania would have to approximate the remaining portions of the acquis during the second phase.

The development of judicial reform, as well as the strengthening of the fight against corruption and organized crime with real achievements, has been emphasized by internationals and re-articulated by the German Bundestag in 2019. In response to these calls, the Albanian Parliament and the relevant institutions worked to establish a special prosecutor's office that is focusing on issues of corruption and organized crime. The Albanian Parliament has approved Law No. 95/2016 on the establishment and operation of institutions fighting corruption and organized crime, such as the Special Prosecutor's Office (SPAK). The prosecution of all of the aforementioned instances, including those involving MPs or judges, is at the heart of the SPAK's foundation. SPAK has begun the activity and is currently reviewing the first issues.

All of this hasn't convinced Albanians that the country's political situation is improving. This could be linked to the lack of interpersonal trust. Albanian inhabitants are wary of national institutions and have a low level of trust in them. As a result, trust has a direct impact on the attitude of (non) trustful institutions [8].

## **TRUST AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE ALBANIAN CONTEXT**

The scholars have addressed the notion of trust, highlighting some of its significance, as a mechanism to build healthy relationships between individuals with each other, but also individuals in relation to the state and institutions. This occurrence appears to be able to be explained by institutional theory. The origins of institutional theory can be traced back to James Coleman's Theory of Rational Choice [9]. By addressing how we understand procedures, theory borrows logical reasoning and contextualizes it. This method asserts and supports the notion that actors use utilization to optimize tire utilization [10]. In this approach, this theory presents theory as an entity that enables individuals and societies to comprehend the game rules that affect people's interactions. Institutions are established to examine the boundaries that society erects.

According to Mishler and Rose [11], political trust is perceived as the trust that citizens have in the effectiveness of public institutions believing that public administration policies will serve society. Trust in institutions implies the expectation that individuals have on the positive results of institutions [8]. Emphasizing the significant role of political trust towards the consolidation of institutions, it is essential to establish political trust between citizens and the political elite because under the presence of trust citizens can cooperate with the political elite [12]. In this context, it appears that institutional trust is a critical component in maintaining a strong link between the political elite and the general public. If this link is broken, it may have negative effects for democracy's health. This appears to have occurred in Albania, where national institutions have a low level of trust in Albanian residents, according to the Public Opinion Trust in Government measurement. Religious Institutions (76 percent), Armed Forces (63 percent), Public Education Institutions (63 percent), Civil Society Organizations (57 percent), Media (54 percent), Public Health Institutions (53 percent), and State Police (53 percent) are among the national institutions that receive more than half of respondents' trust in 2017 [13]. In contrast to this, citizens appear to have a high level of trust in EU institutions and other foreign organizations. In contrast to national institutions, international institutions/organizations such as the EU (85%), UN (85%), and NATO (84%) are regarded as the most trusted institutions for the fifth year in a row [13].

## **TRUST IN EU EDUCATION PROGRAMS - ERASMUS PROGRAMS**

Erasmus is a European Union program that promotes education, training, youth, and sport throughout Europe. Its budget seeks to provide approximately 4 million Europeans with the opportunity to study, train, and gain experience abroad. These initiatives have a significant impact on young people's consciousness by encouraging them to become more involved in numerous social concerns, civil society, and decision-making. On the other hand, the interaction

between different cultures in order to promote distinct values is the major goal of such programs.

According to EU regulations, the objectives of the Erasmus program will be as follows:

- Creating a unified sense and strengthening the spirit of European citizenship based on understanding and respect for human rights and democracy;
- Encouraging tolerance and respect for peoples and other cultural heritage;
- To cultivate understanding and solidarity among peoples;
- Finally, support knowledge building.

Education, youth work, and athletics are all important aspects of spreading European values. The ways in which this is immediately reflected in young people reveal themselves in a variety of ways. The well-known Erasmus Program (European Community Action Scheme for University Student Mobility) has heavily funded education in order to improve intercultural competencies and understanding across different cultures [14]. Students recreate their social circles overseas through these activities, based on perceived similarities and differences, which goes hand in hand with altering group borders [15].

## **ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This study aims to understand whether internal political reasons, trust in national institutions, and the impact of Erasmus programs all contribute to young Albanians' increased trust in EU institutions. Through multiple regression analysis our attempt is to test the above postulate.

**Table 1.** Regression Analysis estimating the effect of the political situation in the country, trust in Albanian institutions, and European youth-focused programs, on Trust toward EU institutions

Dependent variable:			
Trust in EU Institutions			
	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)
Pol. Situation	0.011 (0.054)	0.235* (0.131)	0.023 (0.050)
Alb. Institutions	-0.011 (0.012)	0.069 (0.043)	0.144*** (0.050)
EU Programmes	-0.012 (0.039)	-0.003 (0.038)	0.217** (0.083)
Incomes	-0.066 (0.053)	-0.052 (0.052)	-0.031 (0.051)
<b>INTERACTION TERMS</b>			
Pol.Sit:Alb.Ins		-0.026* (0.014)	
A.Ins:EUP			-0.039*** (0.013)
Constant	0.318 (0.283)	-0.322 (0.451)	-0.648 (0.418)
Observations	206	206	206
R2	0.072	0.126	0.206
Adjusted R2	-0.007	0.031	0.119
Residual Std. Error	0.367 (df = 54)	0.360 (df = 54)	0.340 (df = 51)
F Statistic	0.889 (df = 5; 54)	1.341 (df = 6; 54)	2.403** (df = 6; 53)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Source: own compilation

The table shows which model outperformed the others. Model 1 reveals that citizens' perceptions of Albania's political condition have no impact on their trust in EU institutions. Model 2 found a significant regression equation accounting for the interaction effect between the political situation in Albania and trust in national institutions (Predicted Trust in EU Institutions =  $-0.322 + 0.235$  (political situation in Albania) +  $0.069$  (trust in Albanian institutions) -  $0.052$  (income) -  $0.026$  (political situation\*trust in national institutions)).

The results show that the political situation has an effect on trust towards EU institutions when is associated with trust in national institutions. The significant interaction term means a better fit of the model to the data, and better predictions from the regression equation. However, it creates uncertainty about the relative importance of the main effects of the Political Situation. Especially because the relationships between the interaction effect of the political situation and trust in national institutions and the dependent variable it is negative.

Model 3 results are more nuanced. A significant regression equation was discovered (Predicted rise in Faith in EU Institutions =  $-0.648 + 0.023$  (political

situation) + 0.144 (trust in national institutions) + 0.217 (EU Education Programme) - 0.031 (Income) - 0.039 (trust in national institutions\*EU Education Programme). When it comes to EU education programs, the data suggest that trust in national institutions has an impact on trust in EU institutions. The significant interaction term indicates a better fit of the model to the data and better regression equation predictions. However, it raises questions about the relative relevance of the primary consequences of national institutions' trust. Especially when there is a negative link between the interaction impact of trust in national institutions and EU education programs and the dependent variable.

According to the findings, trust in EU institutions grows when people have a bad assessment of the current situation and have low trust in national institutions.

## CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to analyse the factors that affect the increase of trust of Albanian youth towards the EU Institutions. A quantitative methodological approach was used to achieve the purpose of the paper. Furthermore, based on the theoretical argument, a questionnaire was designed which aimed to test the main hypothesis and generate some important findings regarding the trust of Albanian youth. To sum up, this study identified the main variables affecting the increase of the Albanian youth towards EU institutions, that are (i) the political situation in the country; (ii) trust in Albanian institutions; and (iii) European youth-focused programs. In order to run the analysis, 3 models have been established, respectively: Model 1: the association between perceived political situation and trust towards EU institutions. The analysis showed that perception of the political situation has no effect on the trust of the Albanian youth towards EU institutions.

Model 2: the association between perceived political situation, trust in national institutions and trust towards EU institutions. Running model 2 a significant regression equation was found. The results show that the perceived political situation has an effect on trust towards EU institutions when is associated with trust in national institutions.

Model 3: the association between perceived political situation, trust in national institutions and EU education programmes and trust towards EU institutions. Model 3 generated a significant regression equation, too. The results show that trust in national institutions has an effect on trust towards EU institutions when is associated with the EU education programmes. According to the results of the multiple regression analysis, Trust towards EU institutions is more likely to increase, when citizens perceive a negative political situations, low levels of trust in national institutions and high levels of trust in EU education Programmes.

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# **VISUALIZATION OF EVERYDAY SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PRACTICES: VICTORIAN PAINTING AS A MIRROR OF THE ENGLISH TEA PARTY TRADITION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Throughout the second half of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, tea remained an expensive exotic drink for Britain that “preserved” its overseas nature. It was only in the Victorian era (1837-1903) that tea became the English national drink. The process attracts the attention of academics from various humanities. Despite an impressive amount of research in the UK, in Russia for a long time (in the Soviet years) the English tradition of tea drinking was considered a philistine curiosity unworthy of academic analysis. Accordingly, the English tea party in Russia has become a leader in the number of stereotypes. The issue became important for academics only at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Currently, we can observe significant growth of interest in this area in Russia and an expansion of research into tea drinking with regard to the history of society, philosophy and culture.

Despite this fact, there are still serious lacunas in the research of English tea parties in the Victorian era. One of them is related to the analysis of visualization of this practice in Victorian painting. It is a proven fact that tea parties are one of the most popular topics in English arts of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. No other art school in the world referred to the topic so frequently: painting formed the visual image of the English tea party, consolidated, propagandized and spread ideas of the national tea tradition. However, this aspect has been reflected neither in British nor Russian studies. Being descriptive and analytical, the present research refers to the principles of historicism, academic reliability and objectivity, helping to determine the principal trends and social and cultural features and models in Britain during the period.

The present research is based on the analysis of more than one hundred genre paintings by British artists of the period. The paintings reflect the process of creating a special “truly English” material and visual context of tea drinking, which displaced all “oriental allusions” from this ceremony, to create a specific entourage and etiquette of tea consumption, and set nationally determined patterns of behavior at the tea table. The analysis shows the presence of English traditions of tea drinking visualization. The canvases of British artists, unlike the Russian ones, never reflect social problems: tea parties take place against the background of either well-furnished interiors or beautiful landscapes, being a visual

embodiment of Great Britain as a “paradise of the prosperous bourgeoisie”, manifesting the bourgeois virtues. Special attention is paid to the role of the women in this ritual, the theme of the relationship between mothers and children. A unique English painting theme, which has not been manifested in any other art school in the world, is a children’s tea party. Victorian paintings reflect the processes of democratization of society: representatives of the lower classes appear on canvases. Paintings do not only reflect the norms and ideals that existed in the society, but also provide the set patterns for it.

***Keywords:** tea parties in Britain, British Victorian art, visual sources, social and cultural studies, national tradition*

## **INTRODUCTION**

These days, there are a great number of social and cultural practice classifications, both in a detailed and global sense. Tea drinking, of course, refers to everyday practices which present “an alternative line of metaphysical practices that turned out to be implemented in real life” [11], and are intricately intertwined with everyday and existential origin. One can consider tea parties as a tool for harmonizing life, the way to consolidate hierarchies of value and a form of reflection on cultural codes.

Usually, such interpenetration of everyday and existential principles becomes an obstacle to the adequate perception of national forms of tea parties by representatives of another culture, when, first and foremost, external forms of social and cultural practices, its everyday, sometimes random elements are perceived. This was precisely the way the concept of the English tea party was understood in Russia. For a long time the subject’s perception was stereotyped and marked with approximate examination through paying attention to external, insignificant features. Russian sociologists, experts in cultural studies and historians turned to the academic understanding of everyday culture, and at the same time to the study of national traditions of tea drinking, at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The situation has improved significantly today. The first monographs devoted to English tea drinking have been published [10], numerous articles have been written. The following issues are of interest for Russian academics: the history of the English tea party [7], [9]; national peculiarities of this social and cultural practice and its transformation over time [4], [8], [12]; a comparative study of tea drinking traditions in different cultures [13], [5]; a reflection of the cultural characteristics of tea drinking in language [15] and literature [14].

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Despite the significant expansion of the range of issues studied, it can be argued that there are significant lacunas in the study of English tea parties. One

of them is the lack of analysis of the visualization of these social and cultural practices in English painting (in the Victorian epoch in particular) which allows us to identify important trends and patterns characterizing various social phenomena and processes and based on the method of describing and analyzing works of art, using the principles of scientific reliability, historicism and objectivity.

The task of the present research is to fill the existing gap partially by considering English painting of the Victorian era (1837-1903) as a reflection and at the same time as a tool for constructing national traditions.

Perhaps nowhere else and never again in history has the tea party attracted such close attention from artists as in England during the Victorian era. This topic was addressed by famous and not so famous masters, metropolitan and provincial. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of tea-themed canvases. The study is based on the analysis of more than a hundred works of genre painting by British artists (among them there are famous works by George Goodwin Kilburn, Henry Sperton Tozer, Charles West Cope, Hilda Fearon, etc.).

## **RESULTS**

Before the Victorian era, tea in England was a luxurious foreign exotic drink. Along with tealeaves, expensive Chinese porcelain, accessories and furniture were imported into the country. As a result, the tea table was a field of extremely intense Chinese-English dialogue. It was during the sixty-four-year period of the reign of Queen Victoria that tea gained the status of a national drink. This is primarily due to a change in the scale of its consumption. In the second half of the nineteenth century, tea ceased to be an expensive aristocratic drink. Everyone gained the chance to enjoy it: members of the royal family, upper-middle class, workers etc.

However, to determine the significance of the drink in the structure of the gastronomic identity of the people, not only quantitative indicators of its consumption are important. The mechanisms of assimilation of tea included the creation of a special “truly English” material and a visual context of a tea party, which displaced any “oriental allusions” from this ceremony. It was already in the second half of the eighteenth century when locally manufactured porcelain appeared along with British tea furniture and silver tableware. The production of these goods increased on a massive scale in the following decades. In the Victorian era, there was a fashion for special tablecloths, napkins, even special dresses and suits for tea parties.

The change in the external entourage was accompanied by the formation of a specific English tea party etiquette. In the nineteenth century, books appeared regulating all aspects and details of the tea ceremony: how to make tea, how and where to serve it, who to invite to tea, what to talk about at the table. It is

significant that in the Victorian etiquette tradition, along with the norms of how to behave, the prohibitive rules were prescribed in great detail: you could not sip tea from a cup in which a teaspoon had been left; you could not look at others when you took a sip; you could not lower your little finger while holding a cup; ladies should not wipe their lips with a napkin; they should not put a napkin on the table when leaving the tea table (only on a chair), etc., etc. The nuance of such prohibitions was extremely important and vividly reflected English ideas about decency and, what worried the English even more, about indecency in behavior.

The transition from ritual to etiquette, to the creation of a whole set of nationally determined rules of behavior at the tea table marked a new stage of its implementation in English culture and society.

However, in addition to these, there was another mechanism for embedding tea into English culture: the creation of a stable visual formula for English tea drinking. National painting played a significant role in this process.

The first thing that catches your eye when you look at the numerous canvases depicting the tea ceremony is how cozy the world in which all this happens is. Cozy, furnished and bourgeois. There were only two types of surroundings for tea parties in Victorian works of art: either well-furnished interiors or beautiful landscapes. It would seem that there should be nothing unexpected in such representation, because tea is the drink that accompanies a person in the moments of domestic peace, and embodies the simple joys of life. However, in Russian painting of the same time, tea drinking was not only a narrative about a quiet home life. Very often, it became a form of a narrative about how the world is being destroyed, entire estates are disappearing due to the changes in the social and economic context of the era, or about how ruthless and indifferent a person can be towards his neighbor or people from a different social class. Using painting as covert social commentary, Russian artists often forced their characters to drink tea in the interiors of houses abandoned by the owners, against the background of dilapidated estates, on the road, in crowded foyers of uncomfortable hotels.

The world of Victorian painting did not know such a connotation. There were only two types of surroundings for tea drinking here: either well-furnished interiors or beautiful landscapes. In British art, there was no place in this tea party atmosphere for something bad, unfair, ugly or “indecent” and coming from outside the generally accepted norm. The tea plot in the interpretation of Victorian artists has never become a reason for social criticism (as it was, for example, in Russian painting of the second half of the nineteenth century). An only slight irony about the mores and habits of the inhabitants was permitted. The canvases literally exuded peace and contentment.

The picturesque scenes of tea drinking were a visual embodiment of Great Britain as a “paradise of the prosperous bourgeoisie”. So, in the paintings of George Goodwin Kilburn *Tea Time* the girls meet their father who has returned

home, receive a guest, the young wife serves tea for her husband. Everyone is friendly and caring. Everything here is exemplary, everything is correct, everything can serve as an example for the viewer. The man is sitting while the girls are fussing, the elderly man looks at the young creatures with paternal condescension, they look at him respectfully. Each character with all his individuality is the personification of a certain human type; each of them fits into the Victorian ideas of order and norms [1].

A similar order “reigns” in hundreds of English canvases from the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. An elderly lady is sitting by the fireplace with a cup of tea in Henry Tozer's painting *Tea Time*. The surrounding interior is full of touching details, it is simple and radiates an otherworldly charm: this is how sweet and kind grandmothers are described in children's literature, just like in a fairy tale. The depicted world is calm, bright and kind and does not contain a single disturbing note.

A quiet old age, a beautiful youth, nobility in relationships, respect for age, etc., etc.: the tea party plots of Victorian paintings seem to be taken from a kind of a catalog of bourgeois virtues, the one that can be compiled from the most sentimental novels. The sober English mind obeyed the emotional demands of the new “customer”. Bourgeois tastes of this era were broadcast not only by representatives of the middle class: they captured everyone involving Queen Victoria herself, who is often called the “bourgeois queen”.

The Victorian tea party is always an intimate activity usually taking place at home. Images of ceremonial receptions, spacious living rooms with a large number of guests were now in the past. In the new era, artists rarely gathered more than three or four people at the table: only family members or close friends. At the same time, the world of English tea canvases is a women's world. Ladies in a circle of friends, next to children, together with maids: there is almost never a male present in these scenes.

The hostess of the house “reigned” over the tea table. She brewed and poured tea (one should keep in mind that this was perceived not only as a privilege, but also as an important duty, a high mission), and, consequently, the woman turned out to be the center of the ritual, both due to her role and according to the visually perceived tea mise-en-scene. It was the woman who set the entire sequence of the ritual in motion monitoring its compliance with norms and decency.

As a result, the woman became the main actor in the English process of the “visual appropriation” of the tea party. Men supplied and sold tea. Women bought tea and served it. No matter how unequal these functions were, everything that a woman did was an obligatory part of everyday life, repeated daily, and in full view of everyone. The visual formula of the English tea party, first and foremost, involved an elegant English lady pouring her favorite drink gracefully and unhurriedly. This can be compared to a theater play when hundreds of people

prepare a performance behind the scenes but the success of the play depends on the actors who are in the foreground.

It is also important that this female role was easily visualized. During the second half of the nineteenth century, English artists created numerous female images at the tea table. General mise-en-scenes were developed, specific poses, head turns, hand movements were thought out. An English lady pours tea; an English lady hands the guest a cup; she is sitting thoughtfully and abstractedly with a cup in her hand. All these options were brought to the level of clichés, fixed in the subconscious of the viewer in the form of well-assimilated formulas.

It is noteworthy that British artists consistently bred two hypostases of a woman, her two main roles: she is either a caring mother or a faithful wife. Men and children depicted in the Victorian painting in the space of a house live separately and intersect extremely rarely. Such pictorial norms were formed only in the nineteenth century. In the previous era, there were many paintings of the genre, called “conversation pieces”, in which children participated in a tea party with their parents. There was no reality involved as children in English aristocratic and bourgeois families always drank tea separately with their governesses and nannies. The distance between father and children, mother and children throughout the eighteenth century was equally great. Gathering the whole family on the canvas, the artist pursued the tasks of portrait representation which had little bearing on reality.

As for Victorian painting, the desire to draw a different model of relations is obvious: leaving the distance between father and children insurmountable, the artists sharply reduced the distance between children and mother. The tea party was depicted as a time and place, justification and motivation for their rapprochement and communication. The canvas by Charles West Cope *Breakfast Time. Morning Games* depicts a mother and her two young daughters. Coming together to drink morning tea, they are distracted by playing games together. The little blonde girl is so sweet and touching, her mother is so elegant and at the same time caring that the picture is perceived as a kind of visualized example of the Victorian daughter-mother relationship, where all the participants seem to have descended from the pages of children's books about good children and friendly families.

In the painting by J. G. Kilburn *Tea in the Nursery*, a mother and her children are watching kittens. The mother's face shows almost no emotion; she hugs her youngest daughter making a gentle gesture, and this gesture emphasizes Kilburn's desire to show the warmth and closeness of their relationship. However, the girl's pose shows shyness, even stiffness, she is clearly not used to such close contact. Children standing apart from their mother feel much more natural.

The deliberate composition of these and dozens of similar plots becomes even more obvious when comparing them, for example, with Hilda Fearon's painting

*The Tea Party*, created a little later (in 1916) and already beyond the exact chronological framework of the Victorian era. Her heroine is just sitting at the tea table with two children, holding her son trustfully clinging to her on her lap. These poses reflect a high degree of closeness, a very common mood and habit of spending time together, which do not need to be deciphered and strengthened by inventing additional common activities for the heroes. Against the background of the painting by Hilda Fearon all previous works look like theatrical productions in which clichéd classes from the list “parents spend time with children” are “prescribed” for the actors.

Behind the ostentatiousness of the compositions is the real life of Victorian England: the main rule that children were taught from the cradle was that they should be visible, but not audible. Being under the supervision of a nanny all day, and later governesses or tutors, and spending most of their time in the nursery, they often saw mother and father only when they went into the living room to say good night [3; p.132]. It is significant, however, to emphasize the real desire of many authors to remove the distance between mother and children, to show the increased warmth and closeness of their relationship. This aspiration referred not to the norms that existed in society, but to the ideals that were being formed. The artists painted blissful scenes and praised the cult of the family and family virtues but “let slip” the Victorian distance between children and parents and the detached restraint of their relationship.

Very often, the desire to remove the cold note of relationships from the paintings turned into an increased sentimentality of the works. Such sweetness in the scenes depicted did not seem deliberate or excessive to British viewers. There is a feeling that it played a kind of compensatory role in a society where people were always extremely restrained in expressing their feelings.

However, these were the scenes of a children's tea party where Victorian sentimentality along with the desire to demonstrate pleasant and sweet aspects manifest themselves to such an extent. This theme in the English tea party painting tradition is unique. In other European art schools, it is represented by single works (in the Russian one it did not exist at all), while in the English school it was extremely widespread. Everyone admired the cute babies drinking tea, and the tone of these works of art, as it often happened, was set by Queen Victoria. Her favorite artist was Charles Burton Barber; more often the artist painted cute crumbs, mostly little blond girls drinking tea with their equally cute pets (*Prayer, Time for Tea*). The extreme degree of sentimentality combined with technical virtuosity literally fascinated the buyers of the canvases.

Besides Charles Burton Barber, Arthur John Elsley, Harry Brooker and many others specialized in such subjects. On their canvases, children either drink tea in the company of their peers or play with their dolls drinking tea with them; they share this ritual with pets. In any case, they diligently imitate the manners, movements and poses of adults. The prevalence of such plots is one of the most

convincing proofs of the deep penetration of the tea ritual into British life. It became an integral part of everyday life, which was assimilated as a completely natural one from childhood and did not involve special training, which is definitely implied in the case of foreign imported practices.

Both in children's and adult performances, the British tea party ritual imposed increased demands on the appearance of the participants. Tea drinking was by no means considered as a simple thirst-quenching exercise: it was an event even though it was repeated every day (or several times a day). Not a single artist caught their characters 'by surprise', nor did they paint them careless in their dress or with untidy hair. In the context of the Victorian era painting, it is impossible to imagine even a tea party in a bathrobe, quite common in the eighteenth century. Such transformations indicate the changes that took place not so long ago both in the tea party itself and in the guidelines of its representation. The image became a model and a kind of advertising picture visualizing the rules of decency, the norms of behavior of a true English gentleman or lady. These norms included the requirements to "be buttoned up" as a rule, and not to let anyone into your personal space or show others your true nature.

Victorian painting, of course, reflected the processes of democratization that affected tea consumption in the country. It was during this period that representatives from the lower classes appeared on the canvases depicting tea parties [6]. The artists carefully drew very modest or even poorly furnished houses: clay or wooden floors, rough furniture, dull interior colors. They depicted the simple clothes of the characters in detail and emphasized the absence of any jewelry. However, the tea table is always shown covered with a tablecloth; there are not just cups on the table but a porcelain set. Only an expert can tell that this porcelain is much cheaper than the one on the canvases dedicated to aristocratic tea drinking. The poses and gestures of the characters are only slightly less elegant and a little more restrained and simple. They do not have brittleness and affectation that some artists endowed their aristocratic characters with trying to emphasize their innate elegance. However, they reveal their importance, self-esteem and an understanding of the seriousness of the ritual being carried out.

There can be chickens walking in the depicted interior (as in Tom McEwan's painting *Tea Time*), vegetables lying on the floor of a rustic cottage, but the tea table is presented in perfect order with an obligatory white tablecloth, porcelain set with a milk jug, butter dish, cups and saucers. There is no negligence in people's clothes. Most of the characters on these canvases behave as if they are familiar with the basic rules of tea etiquette: no one puts their elbows on the table, everyone shows restraint and an unhurried significance in their movements.

Such interpretations, of course, demonstrate a tangible degree of didacticism, which characterizes English art of the Victorian era in general, and a desire to match the viewer's ideas about a perfect tea party. In any case, in relation to the second half of the nineteenth century, we can talk about the existence of an

English (and even British) concept of a tea party, which is independent of wealth or social status.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, since the Victorian era, the notion of the English tea party has become understandable and common and acquired a set semantic fullness. The English finally appropriated the imported drink, adapted and recoded the practices associated with it and painting became an important and valuable participant in this process. Rarely were English works of art devoted to the topic created by great artists; the painters were not famous or well known outside the country. But, while maintaining a fairly high level of skill and professionalism as well as a desire to trap a new social order and respond to it adequately, they were in great demand: one could see them in every bourgeois English house of the second half of the nineteenth century.

According to the Dictionary of English Artists [2], more than eleven thousand painters worked in the Victorian era, and most of them specialized in everyday genre. Hundreds of artists worked on the visualization of what was called the English tea party, helping to introduce the tea ritual as an integral part of British everyday life. Its connection with the national ideals of a prosperous, comfortable, unhurried, protected life is undeniable. The paintings not only reflected the ideals that existed in society, but also gave them stable patterns and promoted them in society. Having internalized the tea party so it became their own national idea and custom, the British were able to broadcast it to the whole world.

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