

The Life and Work of William Morris (1834–1896)

Līva Gailuma, Una Īle, *Latvia University of Agriculture*

Abstract. The study reflects the English designer's, artist's, writer's and socialist's William Morris's (1834–1896) biography and creative output, highlighting the designer and craftsman's lifetime contribution to the decorative and applied arts sector and his participation in the design movement known as "The Arts and Crafts Movement" in Britain in the second part of the 19th century. The article examines W. Morris's backgrounds and artistic oeuvre, emphasizing the contribution to the interior decoration industry. His creative activities, as a designer and artisan, included the development of individual design objects, such as stained glass, textiles, wallpaper, tiles and furniture elements, as well as the professional performance of interior decoration.

Key words: Arts and Crafts Movement, decorative arts, pattern-making, painting, textile design, wallpaper design.

Introduction

Arts and Crafts Movement was one of the most influential, fundamental and the most far-reaching design movements which began during the reign of the British Queen Victoria (1819–1901) around 1880 in the United Kingdom – the most industrialised country of that time. In 1887 a union was established of multi-profile confederates, workshops and producers, also known as the *Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society*, from which the following movement later borrowed its name [2; 8]. The motion can be characterized as a reaction against the impact and consequences of the industrial production and the unregulated market that affected the design industry, craft skills and people's everyday lives in general, and its philosophy is based on the improvement of the standard of decorative arts, preservation of the craft skills and the improvement of the quality of human habitat. The most prominent design movements have been represented by a theorist and art critic John Ruskin (1819–1900) and a designer, writer and activist W. Morris. J. Ruskin studied the relationship between art, society and employment, while W. Morris's applied the theoretical relationships in practice, emphasizing the value of work, satisfaction with the mastery of hand skills and the natural aesthetics of the raw material. Before the beginning of the 80's of the 19th century, W. Morris had already become an internationally recognised and commercially successful designer and manufacturer; the artist society of the newly established Guild, took over his ideas and established a common approach among the architects, painters, sculptors and designers, thus spreading the philosophical ideas of the design movement. The breeze of the new movement rapidly spread throughout the Europe and the United States [8].

Because of his outstanding skills and talents, the *pattern-making* can be considered the basis of W. Morris's artistry – the creation of brilliant designs for wallpaper, textiles and linoleum print, as well as the skillful stained glass print design, tapestry and embroidery works[9, 83].

Multiple other authors have conducted studies and biographical overviews of W. Morris's personal life, researches on his professional activity in the painting artistry and applied and decorative arts, his contributions to the design movement *Arts and Crafts* and literary arts, as well as reports of his public and political activities.

The aim of the study is to explore the W. Morris's biography and artistic creativity, emphasizing the contribution to the interior decoration industry. The assignment of the study is to research the biographical literature and visual material, to collect the most significant facts, to form a description of selected wallpaper and textile design work.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted during the period from July 2014 to September, it is based on literature review and research of the materials available from the archives in the William Morris Gallery, located in Lloyd Park, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 4PP, United Kingdom, as well as the authors' previous research experience.

W. Morris's stages of life – childhood, adolescence, youth years, and the adult years – were described based on the analysis of biographical literature, where, with the application of synthesis method, the emphasis is on the highlights of the interconnections in his artistic creativity; whereas, using the generalization method - through specific facts of individual's flow of life, were gathered



Fig. 1. William Morris [4]

specific personality traits and professional work characteristics. The use of historical method provides insight into the beginnings of Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain and W. Morris's participation in its development. Biographically historical method detects the links between W. Morris's personal life and his artistic creativity – how the environmental conditions formed his world view, which, in turn, affected his creative process. Through monographic or descriptive method, several interpretations were expressed regarding W. Morris's achievements in the decorative and applied arts over time: painting, stained glass art, textiles, wallpaper, tile and furniture design, calligraphy and prints. The conclusions on W. Morris's lifetime achievements in arts and crafts classes, and the impact he left on the art in the second half of the 19th century, in general, were developed on the basis of personal observation, after applying the induction and deduction methods.

Results and Discussion

William Morris was born on 25 March 1834, in Walthamstow area of London, in the family of William Morris's father of Welsh origin and mother Emma Shelton. He grew up in a respectable and prosperous large family with the older sisters Emma and Henrietta, and his younger siblings – Isabella, Alice, Hugh, Thomas, Arthur, and Edgar [6].

Literary interest and artistic abilities emerged at an early age, and his childhood provided every opportunity for their development. W. Morris was

inquisitive reader, who was mostly fascinated by tales of knighthood and romance. By the age of seven, he had read all the *Waverly* edition novels (1814) by the Scottish novelist Walter Scott (1771–1832), and the impact of his favorite English writer Clara Reeve's (1729–1807) Gothic fiction work *The Old English Baron* (1778), runs through life and largely affects his artistic oeuvre. The Epping Forest, where in early boyhood he liked to spend time, theatrically reproducing the scenes of the medieval knighthood, wearing corresponding garment, and the presence of the Queen Elizabeth's I of England and Ireland – (1533–1603) hunting house, home garden, and the English botanist *John Gerard's* (1545–1612) book *The Herbal or General History of Plants* (1597), had instilled in him practical knowledge and devotion to nature, which was later portrayed in his creative performance by incorporating motives of flowers, foliage, fruit, sky and birds. As an eight-year-old, he expressed profound interest in architecture. Together with his father, he visited the Romanesque-Gothic Cathedral of Canterbury (1070–1834), which left a strong impression on him [5, 20].

During the period from 1848 to 1850, W. Morris studied at The Marlborough School, where, through self-study, he learned about the archaeological and sacred architectural industries, and where he enthusiastically spent time alone, exploring the surrounding landscape and architecture - Savernake Forest, Silbury Hill, Avebury big-stones and cairn of the megalithic age [5, 20; 22-23]. From 1851 to 1852, he was tutored privately, and from 1852 to 1855 he continued studies at Exeter College, Oxford with the intention of becoming a clergyman [4]. The study period was significant for both the artistic growth and the acquisition of new like-minded people. The acquired contact with the artist and designer Edward Burne – Jones (1833–1898) evolved into a close friendship and artistic collaboration throughout the lifetime. During the study period, the personal vision of the future of life was strongly influenced by the literary oeuvre of John Ruskin, as well as the writer William Shakespeare (1564–1616) and the poet Geoffrey Chaucer (1343–1400) [5, 25; 28]. The rural environment of the Oxford City continued to develop his interest towards flowers and plants; his favorite flowers - daisies, fritillaries, and wild tulips – are themes common in his design work. The time spent visiting the French cities of Chartres, Rouen, Beauvais and Amiens greatly impressed him with their aesthetics of the early Gothic cathedrals and the masterpieces of painters Jan van Eyck (1390–1441) and Hans Memling (1430–1494). From the domestic artists, he was mostly impressed by the artwork of painters from the *The English Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* artists' association [5, 29].



Fig. 2. A detail from the *If I Can* wall hanging, designed and worked by W. Morris, 1857 [5, 36]



Fig. 3. *The Red House*, designed and worked by author group, 1859 [5, 46]



Fig. 4. *George and Dragon* cabinet, designed by P. S. Webb, painted by W. Morris, 1861 [3]



Fig. 5. *Trellis* wallpaper, designed by W. Morris, 1864 [6]

After theology studies in Oxford, W. Morris decided to devote his career to art. Because of his strong interest in architecture, in 1856 he, as a trainee, joined the English architect George Edmund Street's (1824–1881) office in Oxford, but did not complete the whole internship time. While working those nine months, he felt limited and frustrated with his daily tasks; nevertheless, the time spent together with G.E. Street was substantial in the further expansion of designer's artistic vision; thus, raising the interest in the architecture. W. Morris always believed that architects are the highest-rank masters and that the decorative and applied art acquires meaning only in relation to architecture. During the internship, he got acquainted with the English architect Philip Speakman Webb (1831–1915), with whom he developed a close friendship and professionally collaborated in many projects. Later that same year, a poet, painter, and founder of *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* association, Dante Gabriel Rossetti became his friend and mentor (1828–1882) [5, 32-34].

Another important field W. Morris researched in *The British Museum* in London, were the illuminated manuscripts. The artist's creative motifs derived from the observed *illuminated miniatures* and the decorative borders of pages; DG Rossetti characterized W. Morris's manuscript works as "quite unrivalled by anything modern that I know" [5, 38].

W. Morris's guideline for creative action was consistent with the view „that the designer should be totally familiar in practical terms with the techniques of his chosen medium, and should never design anything that he could not produce with his own hands". In 1857 he created a wall hanging *If I Can*, and its linen cloth backing is covered with wool thread embroidery, and because of the texture density, appears similar to a tapestry [5, 37]. The base of the textile is a symmetrical lining composition with a light-toned homogenous structure background and central themes – fruit tree, bird, and the title of the work – as nuanced accents.

In 1857 he met the English art model and muse Jane Burden (1839–1914), and they got married on 26 April 1859 in Oxford and had a family of two daughters – Alice Jane (1861 to 1935) and Mary (1862–1938) [4; 5, 45].

W. Morris was convinced that aesthetic living and working space is essential to create an outstanding work [5, 45]. The artist loved all of his homes, but his dream house was a private house in London – *The Red House* (1859). In its creation process he worked as a designer together with the architect P.S. Webb. The designs of the furniture and interior decorations were developed with the help of his family and friends [5, 45; 47]. The interior concept reflects the effects of medieval stylistics, the thoroughness of natural materials, and the game of texture contrasts.



Fig. 6. *Daisy* wallpaper, designed by W. Morris, 1864 [10]



Fig. 7. *Fruit (or Pomegranate)* wallpaper, designed by W. Morris, 1866 [6]



Fig. 8. *Daisy* tile, designed by W. Morris, about 1862 [6].

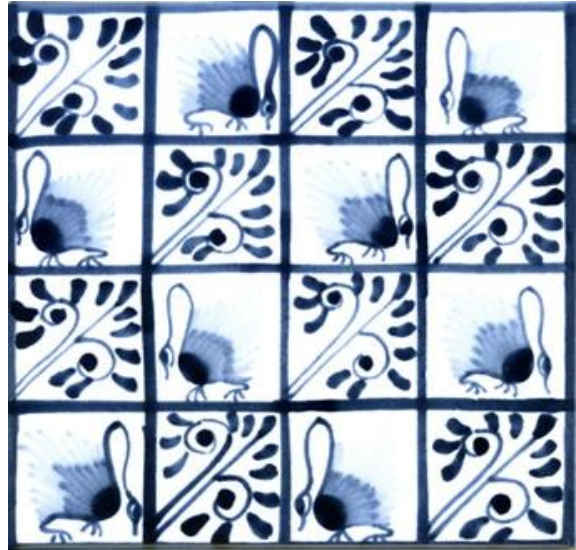


Fig. 9. *Swan* tile, designed by W. Morris, 1860s [6]

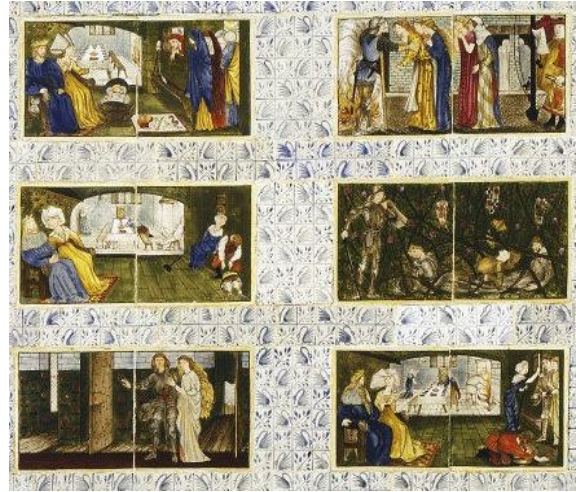


Fig. 10. *The Sleeping Beauty* tile panel, designed by E. Burne-Jones for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co., 1862–1865 [Source: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O8053/tile-panel-burne-jones-edward/>]



Fig. 11. *Morris* chair, designed by P. S. Webb, fabric by W. Morris, about 1866 [5, 66]



Fig. 12. The Green Dining-Room at the South Kensington Museum, designed and worked by Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co., 1866 [5, 74]

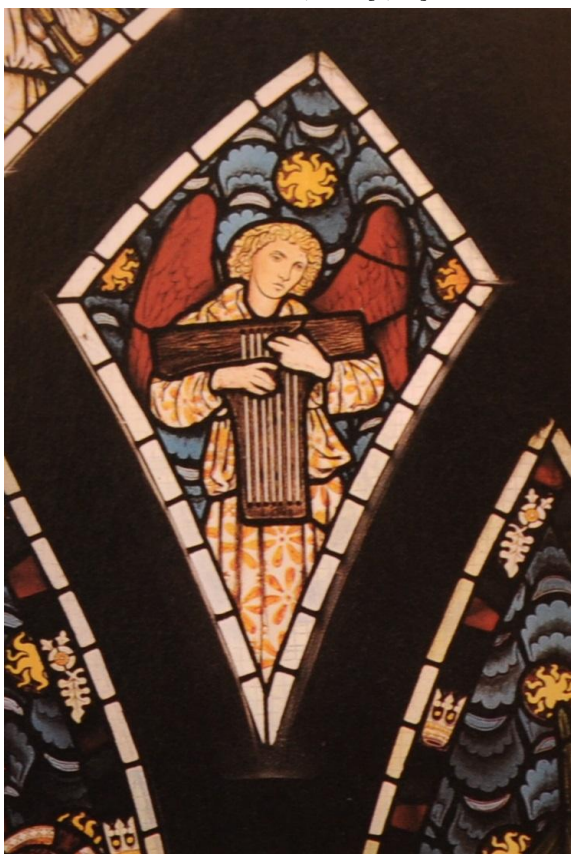


Fig. 13. Tracery light for St Michael's Tilehurst, designed by W. Morris, 1869 [5, 56]



Fig. 14. Rossetti chair, designed by D. G. Rossetti for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co., 1870–1890 [6]

After the collaborative work invested in the creation of cottage, the idea was born to continue their artistic collaboration and in 1861, together with like-minded colleagues, a company was founded - *Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co*; the aim of which was to create a hand-crafted design artwork in limited quantity. Artists' association was created by: designer and craftsman W. Morris, engineer Peter Paul Marshall (1830–1900), painter Ford Madox Brown (1821–1893), professor Charles Joseph Faulkner (1833–1892), artist and designer E. Burne – Jones, poet and painter D.G. Rossetti, and architect P.S. Webb. The essence of the business was fully consistent with W. Morris's professional calling, by offering decorative wall finishing, carving, stained glass, metal, and furniture design services [6].

As a painter, W. Morris was best able to express himself through creating decorative furniture and paintings on the ceilings [5, 44]. One of the artist's accomplishments is a decorative painting for P.S. Webb's designed cabinet *George and the Dragon* (1861), made of mahogany, pine and oak, and supplemented with copper metal fittings. The composition includes scenes from Roman legend of St. George and the Dragon, as well as the artist himself with his wife [3].

The inspiration for wallpaper design was borrowed from the late medieval art, and is closely linked with the interest toward the naturalistic ornamentation. First Trellis wallpaper was created in 1862 and printed only in 1864. The print motif *rose-trellis* was inspired by the garden at home in Bexleyheath, Kent [10]. The composition is made of vertically organised lining motif with a dynamic downstream, with a evenly spaced grid and highlighted central element – permeates rosewood strings with birds as accents – in the background.

The first printed wallpaper *Daisy* (1864) became one of the most popular of the century [5, 71]. It portrays a meadow in naive style, forming a composition of horizontally arranged rows of flowers and a light toned background.

In 1866 was printed the wallpaper *Fruit*, also known as *Pomegranate* [5, 68; 10]. The tree foliage with fruits arranged in an even diagonal composition with an alternating repeated motifs.

During his career, he created stained glass for more than 400 buildings in the UK, 41 types of wallpapers with mostly flowers, leaves, birds and fruit motifs, and 5 types of ceiling wallpapers [5, 62–70]. One of his favorite motifs – *Daisy* – frequently appeared on wallpaper, tiles and embroidery design.

In 1865, after years of happy living in *The Red House*, W. Morris and his family moved to a new residence building, on 26 Queen Square, London, where used to be the company's office,

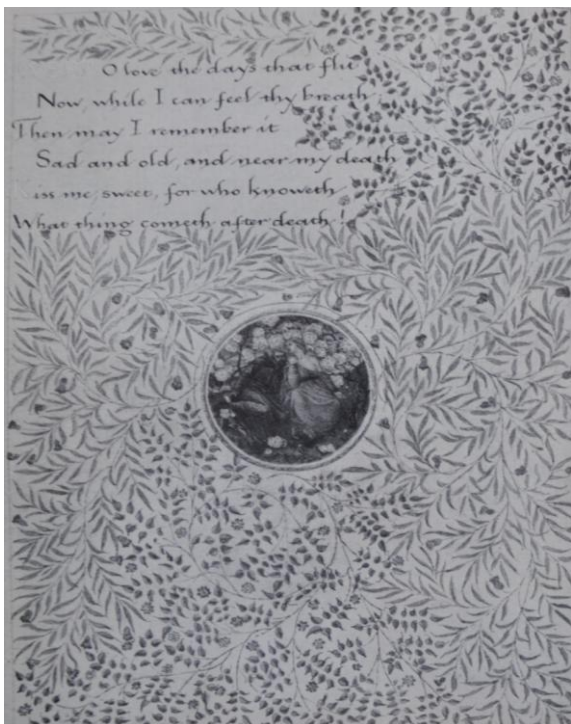


Fig. 15. Page from *A Book of Verse*, handwritten and decorated by W. Morris, 1870 [9, 144]



Fig. 18. Acanthus wallpaper, designed by W. Morris, 1875 [5, 72]



Fig. 16. Design for *Jasmine* wallpaper by W. Morris, 1872 [5, 71]

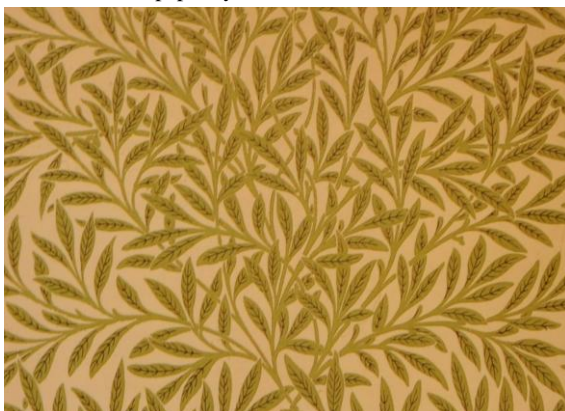


Fig. 17. *Willow* wallpaper, designed by W. Morris, 1874 [5, 73]



Fig. 19. *Columbine/ Bluebell* chintz, designed by W. Morris, 1876 [5, 15]



Fig. 20. African Marigold chintz, designed by W. Morris, 1876 [5, 90]

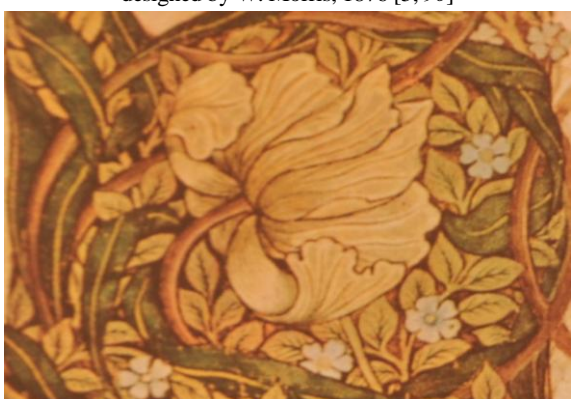


Fig. 21. Design for Pimpernel wallpaper by W. Morris, 1876 [5, 84]

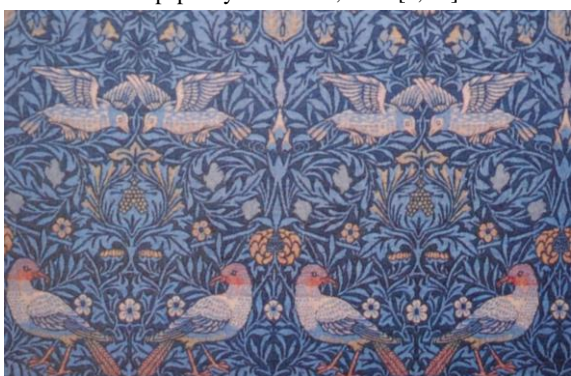


Fig. 22. Bird wall hanging, designed by W. Morris, 1878 [5, 10]

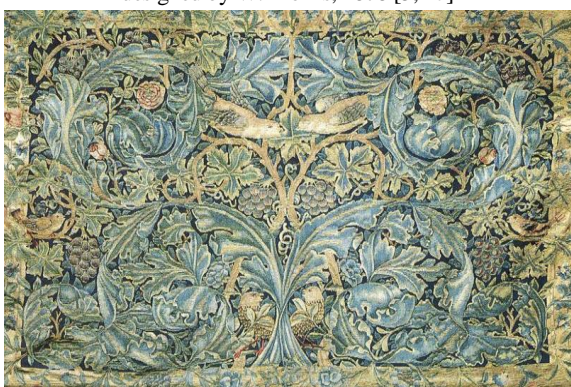


Fig. 23. Vine and Acanthus tapestry, designed by W. Morris, 1879 [5, 78]

design studio, workshop and a jeweler's shop [5, 54]. The company had already acquired a reputation very early because of the outstanding quality of their service. The strongest work areas were: stained glass, hand-painted tiles, furniture design [6].

In the following years their range of services expanded to the creation of unified architecture and interior design projects [6].

The poem *The Life and Death of Jason* was published in 1867, in 1868 – *The Earthly Paradise* [4; 5, 76]. During the period from 1868 until 1869, he studied and researched the Icelandic language; together with Icelandic scientists Eiríkr Magnússon (1833–1913) published the Norse sagas *The Saga of Gunnlaug Worm-tongue* and *The Story of Grettir the Strong*, in 1870 – the English translation of prose *Volsunga Saga* [4].

From 1871 until the year 1873 W. Morris and his family rented a place of residence together with D.G.Rossetti in the Kelmscott Manor, located in the Cotswold village, Gloucestershire; from 1874, in the rural rest house lived only his family. From 1872 until 1882, the family residence in London was the Horrington House, from 1878 – Kelmscott House [5, 76–77; 6].

In the period up to the year 1870, the only active members of the company were W. Morris, E. Burne – Jones and P.S.Webb. In the community W.Morris had established the reputation of an outstanding designer. The company for him was an important source of income, and a form of generating creative confidence and artwork marketing [6].

In 1875 the company was reorganized, renaming it the *Morris and Co*, and W. Morris became the sole owner. One of the most important steps was the acquisition of new retail space - the establishment of the showroom on 449 Oxford Street, London, maintaining the current working space, where the first experiments in weaving, textile dyeing and printing were performed [6].

Hand-printed chintzes became one of the designer's most recognizable creative achievements. In total, almost 40 different design textiles were created with a distinctive and crisp vertical turnover structure and a diagonal arrangement with motifs, borrowed from nature: flowers, trees, leaves, fruits, birds, rivers. The vertically organized pattern derived from the medieval Spanish and Sicilian textiles weaving technique, whereas, the emphasis of diagonal orientation was inspired by the 15th-century Italian cut velvet fabric. In 1875 began the first production of Tulip fabric for mass retailing. The printed cotton, unlike the woven, embroidered, tapestried and hand-tufted rug textiles, have been available for purchase for people with average income – for pillow cases, small furniture upholstery, and wall decor [5, 87–92].



Fig. 24. *Flower Garden* woven silk, designed by W. Morris, 1879 [5, 95]



Fig. 27. *St James* woven silk damask, designed by W. Morris, 1881 [5, 96]



Fig. 25. *Sunflower* wallpaper, designed by W. Morris, 1879 [5, 94]



Fig. 28. *Brother Rabbit* chintz, designed by W. Morris, 1882 [5, 90]



Fig. 26. South Kensington Museum interior, decorated by Morris and Co., 1880 [9, 75]



Fig. 29. *Eyebright* printed cotton, designed by W. Morris, 1883 [5, 93]



Fig. 30. *Kennet* printed cotton, designed by W. Morris, 1883 [5, 89]



Fig. 31. *Honeysuckle* wallpaper,
designed by W. Morris, 1883 [5, 15]



Fig. 32. *Wandle* chintz,
designed by W. Morris, 1884 [5, 91]



Fig. 33. *Granada* woven silk velvet brocaded with gilt thread,
designed by W. Morris, 1884 [5, 97]

Similar trends can be observed in the wallpaper design, which reflects the artist's natural ability to sort the elements in the symmetric upward-winding compositions [5, 94–95].

Weaving technique was one of the first craft industries that suffered as a result of mass-industrialization. Hand weaving art had been particularly close to W. Morris – it is reflected in the lecture *The Lesser Arts of Life*, published in 1882. The designer mastered the weaving technique by self-studying from the pre-Revolution period French engineering school *Arts et Métiers's* handbook, considering that a designer should be able to weave on his own. W. Morris's woven textiles were made

of silk, wool and a combination of these two threads, which ensured that the woven woolen cloth was considerably more practical and durable, therefore, more suitable for curtains, wall decor and furniture upholstery. The woven wool fabric *Bird*, created in 1878, was extremely popular among the customers and by the designer himself [5, 95–99]. The composition of vertically directed print textiles is composed of mirrored symmetry; the background is characterized by a smooth arrangement of leaves and flowers, highlighting the central theme – birds.

Within the company, W. Morris, in collaboration with his colleagues E. Burne – Jones, P. Webb, a British textile and stained glass artist John Henry Dearle (1859–1932), co-created tapestries. W. Morris considered tapestry techniques to be the most exalted of all weaving techniques. Designer admired medieval tapestry art and greatly disliked the tapestry work of the French factory *La Manufacture des Gobelins*. W. Morris's original embroidery structure was very similar to the tapestry fabric. The large-scale textile *Vine and Acanthus* (1879) was the first woven tapestry made of wool and cotton warp [5, 98–101]. In the textile's central mirrored symmetry composition, between the densely grouped vines, is the discretely incorporated bird motif.

In 1881, due to the limited space, the work space was moved from London 26 Queen Square to the factory at Merton Abbey. The first decade of the designer's business career had been the most productive and fruitful, with more than 600 kinds of wallpaper, chintzes, woven fabrics, damasks, carpets, tapestries, rugs, stained glass and embroidery [6].

W. Morris was a socialist sympathizer, who, during the period from 1884 to 1890, published an article *Art and Socialism* and the book *A Summary of the Principles of Socialism*. He was the founder of the Socialist League and actively engaged in the political processes, and has been arrested in connection with the free speech demonstrations [6].

W. Morris's studies and practical experiments, using natural dyes, were ones of his particularly important achievements – he developed formulae of natural dyes, which were described in detail in his essay *Of Dyeing as an Art* (1889): blue from indigo and Woad; red from the Kermes and Cochineal insects and the madder plant; yellow from weld, poplar, osier, birch, broom and quercitron; brown from walnut tree roots. The produced colors were used to dye textiles [5, 82; 85].

In the essay *Textiles*, published in 1893, he described textile fabrication and decorating options – advisable nuances that were necessary to create excellent quality woven fabric, using tapestry, handmade and mechanical printing, painting and

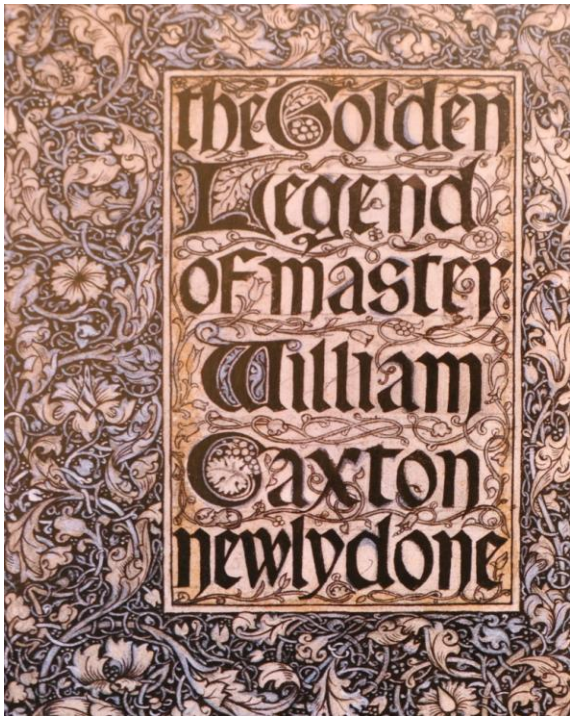


Fig. 34. *The Golden Legend* titlepage, designed by W. Morris, 1892 [5, 118]

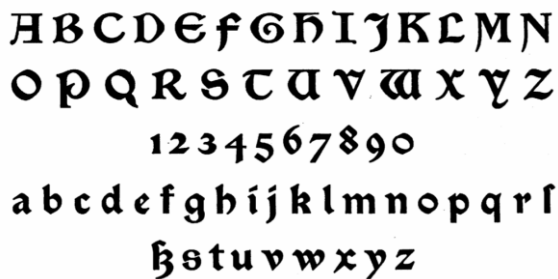


Fig. 35. *Troy* typeface, designed by W. Morris, 1892 [5, 119]

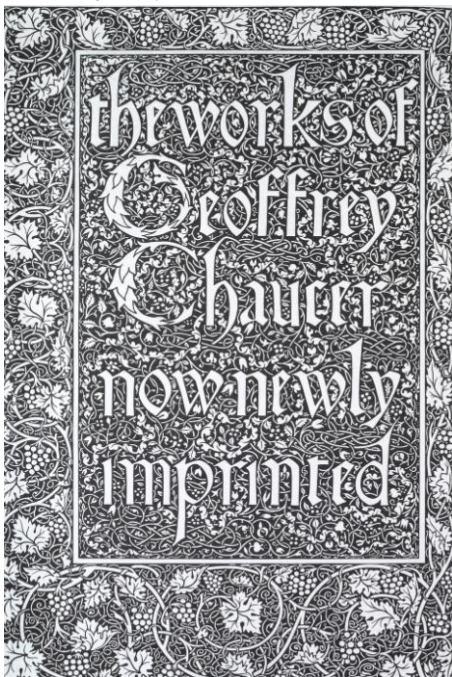


Fig. 36. *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* titlepage, designed by W. Morris, illustrated by E. Burne-Jones, 1896 [5, 120]

stitching techniques. W. Morris stressed that it is always crucial to assess the characteristics and processing capabilities of the raw material, maintaining its natural aesthetics and characteristics: „The special limitations of the material should be a pleasure to you, not a hindrance: a designer, therefore, should always thoroughly understand the processes of the special manufacture he is dealing with, or the result will be a mere tour de force. On the other hand, it is the pleasure in understanding the capabilities of a special material, and using them for suggesting (not imitating) natural beauty and incident, that gives the *raison d'être* of decorative art” [7].

He learned embroidery techniques through home study. Embroidery for sacred purpose use and for everyday, as well as individual orders, were a significant source of revenue for the business. Popular products among customers were the wall hangings, cushion covers, fire screens, drapes, portières, business bags, evening bags, gloves, nightdress cases, bell pulls, tea cosies, book covers, photograph frames, tablecloths, billiard table covers [5, 103–104].

Carpet crafting is another field of art that W. Morris worked diligently at, in order to preserve it, and expressed his artistic credo: „... the art of Carpet-making, in common with the rather special arts of the East, is either dead or dying fast... we people of the West must make our own hand-made Carpets... and these, while they should equal the Eastern ones as nearly as may be in materials and durability, should by no means imitate them in design, but show themselves obviously to be the outcome of modern and Western ideas, guided by those principles that underlie all architectural art in common”. The artist felt that the design of the carpet should be fairly simple in form, with moderately unobtrusive motifs of nature – tree foliage, flowers, birds and animals, developed in opposite colours [5, 107–108].

The founding of an independent private publishing company – Kelmscott Press – in 1891, London, was the next logical step in the process of expressing his interests in medieval illuminated manuscripts. According to W. Morris, printing had been one of the sectors that degraded during the commercialization process, and his goal was to restore the type-designing, fine printing, and book production. W. Morris had not only been a collector of illuminated manuscripts, but also a brilliant calligrapher and illuminator [5, 116].

W. Morris, inspired by 15th-century letter art, developed a Gothic Typeface *Troy*, with more than 600 design sets of initials, borders, title pages, inscriptions, and printers' marks [5, 120–121].

During the period from 1894 to 1896, he published his fiction novel *The Wood Beyond the*

World and *The Well at the World's End*, as well as started working on the book *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, taking part as a designer in its development, and invited E. Burne – Jones as an illustrator [4].

W. Morris died in Kelmscott House on October 3, 1896 [6]. The company Morris and Co. continued their business until 1940, when, under the influence of The Second World War, it was voluntarily liquidated [5, 80]. The British fabric and wallpaper manufacturer *Arthur Sanderson and Sons Limited* bought the company with the showroom, equipment and materials [1]. The company under the name of Morris and Co. operates today, continuing the tradition prophesied by W. Morris and maintaining the uniqueness of the design.

Conclusion

W. Morris's professional activity is characterized by the harmony between the theory and practice – the results from researches and practical experiments have allowed developing the artistic oeuvre that is based on the philosophy of creating an excellent quality design work, preserving and developing the traditional craftsmanship, and highlighting the importance of manual labor. The self-education had a significant impact on the enhancement of his creative performance; Through self-study he acquired skills in architecture, stained glass artistry, textile, wallpaper and tile design, prints and calligraphy.

W. Morris is considered one of the most remarkable personalities involved in the development of the *Arts and Crafts* design movement. Because of

the hard work and the continuous development of his professional skills during life, he gained a respectable status in the society both in the UK and overseas. His artistic beliefs and perception of quality in human habitats had reached understanding among wide audience, through participation in local and international exhibitions.

The uniqueness of his artistic creativity is primarily based on a thorough research of nature, as a source of inspiration, and the observation of medieval art stylistics. Through linking the performance with the general activity of the *Arts and Crafts* design movement, W. Morris especially succeeded in developing the approach for the improvement of the craft quality standard in the textile and wallpaper design fields, thus, gaining popularity until the present day. The designer and artisan's contribution to the art of interior decorating can be considered a substantial resource for research and can be a useful source of information for developing modern living environment projects. W. Morris's textile and wallpaper printing oeuvre can be considered an indispensable contribution with an existing value in the applied and decorative arts industry.

The provided insight on W. Morris, as a designer and craftsman, should be continued also in other studies and linked with the interior design field – the research of arts and crafts traditions and development of authentic or eclectic styles for interior design projects.

References

1. *A Full History* [online 01.07.2014.]. <http://www.william-morris.co.uk/a-full-history/>
2. *Arts and Crafts Movement in America* [online 10.07.2014.]. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/acam/hd_acam.htm
3. *Audio: St George Cabinet by William Morris* [online 17.07.2014.]. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/a/audio-st-george-cabinet-by-william-morris/>
4. *Biography of William Morris* [online 06.07.2014.]. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/b/biography-of-william-morris/>
5. **Dore, H.** *William Morris*. London: Hamlyn, 1996, p. 10 – 121.
6. Materials from *William Morris Gallery* Lloyd Park, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 4PP, United Kingdom.
7. *Textiles* [online 24.08.2014.]. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1893/textiles.htm>
8. *The Arts & Crafts Movement* [online 08.07.2014.]. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/the-arts-and-crafts-movement/>
9. **Thompson, P.** *The Work of William Morris*. London: Heinemann, 1967, 75., 83., 144. p.
10. *William Morris & Wallpaper Design* [online 15.07.2014.]. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/w/william-morris-and-wallpaper-design/>

INFORMATION ABOUT AUTHORS:

Līva Gailuma, BA Student at the Faculty of Engineering, Institute of Education and Home Economics of the Latvia University of Agriculture, 5 J. Cakstes bulvaris, Jelgava, Latvia, LV-3001. E-mail: liva.gailuma@windowslive.com

Una Īle, Dr. arch., Docent (since 2012) at the Faculty of Rural Engineers, Department of Architecture and Construction of the Latvia University of Agriculture, 19 Akademijas iela, Jelgava, Latvia, LV-3001. E-mail: una.ile@llu.lv

Kopsavilkums. Pētījums atspoguļo angļu dizainera, mākslinieka, rakstnieka, sociālista Viljama Morisa (1834–1896) dzīves gājumu un māksliniecisko daiļradi, uzsverot dizainera – amatnieka mūža ieguldījumu dekoratīvi lietišķās mākslas nozarē un līdzdalību 19. gs. 2. puses dizaina kustībā „*Arts and Crafts*” Lielbritānijā. Pētījuma mērķis ir izzināt V. Morisa dzīves gājumu un māksliniecisko daiļradi, akcentējot ieguldījumu interjera apdares nozarē.

„Arts and Crafts” bijusi viena no ietekmīgākajām, pamatīgākajām un tālejošākajām dizaina kustībām, kas aizsākusies britu karalienes Viktorijas (1819–1901) valdīšanas laikā ap 1880. gadu Lielbritānijā – tā laika visindustriālizētākajā valstī pasaulē. 1887. gadā dibināta plaša profila domubiedru, darbinīcu un ražotāju biedrība „Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society”, no kuras mākslas kustība aizguvusi savu nosaukumu. Kustības pamatnostādne raksturojama kā pretreakcija rūpnieciskās ražošanas ietekmei un neregulēta tirgus sekām attiecībā uz dizaina nozari, amatniecības prasmēm un cilvēka ikdienas kopumā, un tās filozofija balstīta uz dekoratīvās mākslas standarta pilnveidi, amatniecības prasmju saglabāšanu un cilvēka dzīvesvides kvalitātes uzlabošanu. Ievērojamākie dizaina kustības pārstāvji bijuši teorētiķis, mākslas kritiķis Džons Raskins (1819–1900) un dizainers, rakstnieks, aktīvists V. Moriss. D. Raskins pētījis attiecības starp mākslu, sabiedrību un nodarbinātību, savukārt, V. Moriss teorētiskās sakarības pielietojis praksē, uzsverot darbu kā vērtību, gandarījumu par roku meistarības prasmēm un izejmateriālu dabisko estētiku. Līdz 19. gadsimta 80. gadiem V. Moriss kļuvis starptautiski pazīstams, komerciāli veiksmīgs dizaineris un ražotājs; jaundibinātās tirgotāju gildes, mākslinieku sabiedrība pārņēmusi viņa idejas un atspoguļojusi vienotu pieeju arhitektu, gleznotāju, tēlnieku un dizaineru starpā, šādā veidā izplatot dizaina kustības fizoloģiskos ideālus. Virziena vēsmas strauji izplatījās Eiropā un Amerikas Savienotajās Valstīs.

V. Moriss dzimis 1834. gada 25. martā Valthamstovas rajonā Londonā, velsiešu izcelsmes tēva Viljama Morisa un mātes Emmas Šeltones ģimenē. Uzaudzis cienījamā un pārtikušā daudz bērnu ģimenē, kur vecākās māsas ir Emma un Henrieta, jaunākās māsas un brāļi – Izabella, Alise, Hjū, Tomass, Artūrs, Edgars. Literārā interese un mākslinieciskās spējas parādījušās ievērojami agrā vecumā, bērnības gados bijušas visas iespējas nodoties to attīstīšanā. Līdz septiņu gadu vecumam izlasījis visas skotu romantisma rakstnieka Valtera Skota (1771–1832) noveles izdevumā „Vāverlijs” (1814), un, iecienītākā angļu rakstnieces Klāras Rīvas (1729–1807) gotiskās literatūras darba „Vecais angļu barons” (1778) atstātais iespaids caurvijas dzīves garumā un lielā mērā iezīmē māksliniecisko daiļradi. Epingas mežs, kur bērnības gados paticis uzturēties un teatrali atveidot viduslaiku bruņinieka tēlu atbilstošā ģērbā, tajā esošais Anglijas un Īrijas karalienes Elizabetes I (1533–1603) medību nams, piemājas dārzs, angļu botāniķa Džons Džerarda (1545–1612) grāmata „Augi jeb vispārējā augu vēsture” (1597) ir devis praktiskas zināšanas un radījis pieķeršanos dabai, savā radošajā veikumā atspoguļojot ziedu, koku lapotnes, augļu, debesu un putnu motīvus. Astoņu gadu vecumā novērota izteikta interese par arhitektūru, kopā ar tēvu apmeklēja romānikas un gotikas stila Kenterberijas katedrāle (1070–1834), kas atstājusi spēcīgu iespaidu. No 1851. gada līdz 1852. gadam skolojies privāti, no 1852. gada līdz 1855. gadam studējis Ekseteras koledžā Oksfordā ar nodomu kļūt par garīdznieku. Studiju laiks bijis nozīmīgs gan mākslinieciskajā izaugsmē, gan jaunu domubiedru iegūšanā. Iepazīšanās ar mākslinieku un dizaineru Edvardu Bēru – Džonsu (1833–1898) pārtapusi par ciešu draudzību un māksliniecisko sadarbību mūža garumā. Studiju laikā un turpmākās dzīves personisko redzējumu spēcīgi ietekmējis D. Raskina, kā arī rakstnieka Viljama Šekspīra (1564–1616) un dzejnieka Džefrijs Čosera (1343–1400) literārā daiļrade. Pēc teoloģijas studijām Oksfordā, V. Moriss nolēmis veltīt savu karjeru mākslai. Balstoties uz padziļināto interesi par arhitektūru, 1856. gadā kā praktikants sācis strādāt angļu arhitekta Džordža Edmunda Strīta (1824–1881) birojā Oksfordā, taču neizgājis pilnu prakses laiku. Nostrādāto deviņu mēnešu garumā juties ierobežots un neapmierināts ar ikdienas pienākumiem, tomēr aizvadītais laiks kopā ar D. E. Strītu bijis lietderīgs – paplašinājis dizainera redzējumu un raisījis interesi par arhitektūru dzīves garumā. V. Moriss vienmēr uzskatījis, ka arhitekts ir augstākās pakāpes meistars un lietišķi dekoratīvā māksla iegūst nozīmi tikai saistībā ar arhitektūru.

V. Moriss bijis pārliecināts, ka estētiska apkārtēja dzīves un darba telpa ir būtiska, lai radītu izcilu darbu, profesionālo darbību raksturo teorijas un prakses saskaņa – pētījumu un praktisko eksperimentu rezultāti ļāvuši pilnveidot māksliniecisko daiļradi, kuras filozofija balstīta uz izcilas kvalitātes dizaina darbu radīšanu, saglabājot un attīstot tradicionālās amatniecības prasmes, uzsverot roku darba nozīmību. Pašizglītība ieņēmusi nozīmīgu vietu radošā veikuma pilnveidē, pašmācības ceļā apgūtas zināšanas arhitektūras jomā, iegūta kompetence vitrāžas, tekstiliju, tapešu un flīžu dizaina, iespiedgrafikas un kaligrāfijas nozarēs. Pateicoties apdāvinātībai un izkoptom talantam, grafiska apdruka uzskatāma par V. Morisa mākslas pamatu – radīti izcili tapešu dizaina paraugi, tekstiliju un linoleju apdruckas, raksta izstrāde atspoguļojas arī vitrāžas, izšuvumu un gobelēnu daiļradē. Mākslinieciskās daiļrades unikalitāte pamatā balstās uz pamatīgu dabas, kā iedvesmas avota, izpēti un viduslaiku mākslas stilistikas novērojumiem. Radošā darbība ietvērusi atsevišķu dizaina objektu izstrādi vitrāžas, tekstiliju, tapešu, flīžu un mēbeļu dizaina jomās, kā arī profesionālu veikumu interjera dekorēšanā. Sasaistot veikumu ar dizaina kustības „Arts and Crafts” virzību kopumā, V. Morisam īpaši izdevies realizēt nostādni par amatniecības kvalitātes standarta pilnveidi tekstiliju un tapešu dizaina sfērās, ar šo nopelni iegūstot atpazīstamību līdz mūsdienām. Dizainera – amatnieka ieguldījums interjera dekorēšanas mākslā ir raksturojams kā izpētes vērts resurss un informācijas avots mūsdienu dzīvesvides projektu izstrādē. V. Morisa tekstila un tapešu apdruckas daiļradi var uzskatīt par neaizstājamu ieguldījumu ar pastāvošas vērtības nozīmi lietišķi dekoratīvās mākslas nozarē.