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WHAT ARE EXHIBITS SILENT ABOUT

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New information about some items of the Collection of decorative and precious stones of the Fersman Mineralogical Museum RAS is presented in the article. 3 colour photos, 6 references.

Remarkable collections kept in the world museums reflect many aspects of human culture. Collections in whole and especially exhibitions give to visitors the idea about evolution of science, about views, tastes, and predilections of different generations and whole nations, about uniqueness and resemblance of disappeared civilizations, and about many other evidences of the past and present. All that is presented to audience in the form of series of material exhibits, illustrating some aspects of science or art.

Since material is usually selected under certain point of view and reflects the main idea of exhibition (or collection in whole) surplus data which do not concerned to it are inevitably lost. They can not be obtained directly from exhibits, but meanwhile a lot of their features represent considerable independent interest. Among such features are: information about previous owner, ways and methods of acquisition and treatment of an exhibit or whole collection, about historical events or events of private character, which accompanied acquisition or loss of an exhibit by owner, and also information about relations of different exhibit owners, their contacts with mining workers, masters — stone-cutters, artists, and etc. This is the invisible, intangible part of museum treasures, in absence of which the exhibit (even very valuable) becomes an object, which does not have its own place in cultural-historical or natural-historical heritage.

Unfortunately, it is often that well-known natural-historical or art collections both museum or private are not documented properly. This is concerned to many, still more it is characteristic for collections of natural-historical profile.

To find out the real history of museums items is on the main goals of museum research work.

What do we know about the Mineralogical Museum items, that is impossible to reflect in exhibitions and even in inventory books? In this article there are some new data on items kept in the Museum Collection of decorative and precious stones. Present day computer technique allows to add this information to standard exhibits characteristic in our database.

Unexpected connections

In the Mineralogical Museum there are two things made in Roman mosaic technique: one is entirely and the other is partly. These are: a magnificent clock and a modest plaquette, which were received by the Museum in 1926 from different sources. They have nothing to do with each other, differing both in value of used materials and in skills of authors. Nevertheless, it turned out, that there is some historical connection between the items which reveals itself in certain episodes of biographies of their authors.

The clock was given to the Mineralogical Museum by the State Hermitage. This is a real cutstone masterpiece, representing an antique triumphal arch with the clockwork in its wonderful upper part (Photo 1).

The arch is made from marble of different colour (white, red, motley); white details being decorated with insets of deep blue Badakhshan lazurite, gilt bronze, and two marvellous miniature mosaics of war trophies. The red arch vault is caissoned and decorated with bronze rosettes. Its entablature leans on four malachite columns with bronze bases and capitals. There are malachite pilasters on the arch walls behind them. Frieze is decorated with bronze ornament in the form of bukranion (bulls' skulls) connected by garlands. All this construction is based on the socle made of red and white marble. There is a plate of green porphyry in its basement. Labradorite insert in bronze frame is set into white marble.

Top of the clock is crowned by bronze trophies and a figurine of Glory. Before knight's armours there is a shield from reddish-brown agate in a tracery bronze frame and with bronze Gorgon's head in the centre. The remaining hole testifies that there were another shield there some other decoration, which did not survive. Traces of vanished features one can see in a spot symmetrical to Glorea's figurine and under the arch wall in the center of square inset made of fragments of thin banded fluorite (only a bronze dovel survived).

On the back wall of the arch there is following inscription: «Raffaelli Fece Milano 1814».

We have no information about clock location during 1814-1926.

History of appearance of this clock in Russia is forgotten. There is a verbal legend in the Museum that it was a gift of Josephine Beauharnais to Alexander I. Formerly there was a figurine of Napoleon under the arch, and the clock was made by Giacomo Raffaelli in honour of Napoleon. It is a mistake obviously, since analogous clock was made in Vatican workshop by the same master in 1804 and in the same year it was presented to Napoleon by Papa Pius (Gonzalez-Palacion Rottgen, 1982; Masinelli, 2000). It is known as «Napoleon's» clock and, apparently, this name was used as basis of mistaken version that under the arch of our clock there was bronze Napoleon.

«Napoleon's» clock, which are in the collection of Gilbert in Los-Angeles now, was more lucky than our's. It still has got symmetrically to figurine of Glory there is a figurine of trumpeting Victory, and under the arch there is a bronze figurine of Mars with a spear and a shield with Gorgon's head as has. Possibly, earlier our shield was not also fixed above, but there was undoubtedly some detail, fastened by two dowels and hid the bolts screw the armours. «Napoleon's» clock, unlike ours, has two figurines at the sides of Glory and Victory, a cock and a griffin; also a dog and a wolf are mentioned in literature (Gonzalez-Palacion Rottgen, 1982). Arch of Napoleon's clock is made from marble, agate, jasper, lazurite, amethyst, and labradorite; the latter is mentioned as very rare stone in that time. This gift of Papa to Napoleon, according to abundance of allegoric attributes, bronze and mosaic pictures of trophies, figurines of Mars, Glory, and Victory, was regarded as refined flattery to Napoleon, whom Pius VII was forced to crown. The clock was in Malmaison, where till 1814 Josephine lived, later it has appeared in the collection of Alexander Kleinwort. Further its fate is clearly traced, but where it was after Malmaison and till Kleinwort's collection, it is not clear. For this period of time there is only some versions (Rottgen, 1982; Masinelli, 2000).

An appearance of one more such clock in Russia (the arch, to be exact, since the clock was not preserved) made by Raffaelli in 1801 is enigmatic. In was recieved the State Hermitage in 1936 from a private collection. It is not known more about its fate. Red and white marble, labradorite, lazurite, malachite are used here; columns and pilasters are made from jasper-agate (Mavrodina, 1999).

As we can see, the similar plot was used in all three clocks of Raffaelli, and practically, the same set of decorative stones. The main distinc-

tion is in material of columns and pilasters: jasper-agate (1801), amethyst (1804), and malachite (1814).

What can we say about version, according to which the clock of the Mineralogical Museum was presented to Alexander I by the Empress Josephine? For this version it was necessary that this clock were in her possession. Whether it could be? To dissolve this question let's remind some facts of the history of Napoleon, his confidants, and J. Raffaelli.

Jacomo Raffaelli (1753-1836) was born in the family, which dealt with production of smalts in Vatican workshop for a long time. His artistic talent became apparent early, he studied painting, was a mosaic-artist, and he became an innovator in this business after he had invented a method of making of smalts with different form (by stretching at the fire); very small pieces (tessera) could be made by this method. He was recognized the head of the school of miniature mosaic (mosaico in piccolo); the similar insets between pilasters were made by this method in all three mentioned clocks.

Became the master, Raffaelli worked not only for papal court but also for foreign ones. He was well-known also in Russia and even was invited to Petersburg for organization the production of smalts and creation of mosaic workshop there. However, he did not come to Petersburg, since Alexander I considered the Raffaelli's terms on excessive (Mavrodina, 1999). These events took place were in 1802-1803. Almost in the same time (in 1804) the son of Josephine, Eugene Beauharnais, who was in Italy conquered by Napoleon and was appointed by Bonaparte in a year as a vice-king of this country, ordered to create in Milan a mosaic workshop analogous to papal one. J. Raffaelli headed it. Experienced master carried on a business successively, and together with other works, in 1814 made one more clock kept now in the Mineralogical Museum, the copy of «Napoleon's» clock in which he only changed some decorative stones by the others.

After Napoleon's dethrone (1815), Raffaelli returned to Rome. The interest of Russian court to the great mosaic-master did not cease, and he became an adviser of Alexander I. In 1812 Eugene Beauharnais was recalled by Napoleon from Italy and took command of 4th corps of a Large Army fought in Russia. He took part in many battles, including battle at Borodino, and acted as skilful commander and very brave person. In 1813 he came back to Italy and in 1814 left it forever and settled in Bavaria, got married to the daughter of the King, Amalia-Augusta. In 1815, on Vienna congress, where questions of

post-war arrangement of Europe were discussed, Eugene became close friends with Alexander I, who was favourable disposed toward entire Beauharnais family. By encouragement of Russian Emperor, he obtained lands in Bavaria and a title of the duke of Leuchtenberg and Eischtadt.

This brief excursus in biography of Eugene Beauharnais is necessary in connection with a version that the Museum clock came to Russia from Josephine Beauharnais. Possibly, her son when he left Italy took away together with many other treasures the clock like Emperor's one. And, possibly, it also was given to Josephine who presented it to Alexander I together with other things (as for example cameo Gonzago).

From the other hand, if the clock was took away from Milan by E. Beauharnais, he could present it to Russian Emperor, since their relationships were friendly and Alexander petitioned about him to Bavarian King. And Josephine might be mentioned in the legend about clock in connection with family name Beauharnais.

The following fact contradictory to these version: the clock was not included in the inventory of the Hermitage, it was on the list of unregistered things till delivery to the Mineralogical Museum. Although it might be in the private apartments of some members from tsar's family and it appeared in the Hermitage after nationalization of property of numerous emperor's relatives.

One more idea concerning the history of this clock in Russia arises in connection with marriage of son of Eugene Beauharnais, Maximilian (1817-1952), the duke of Leuchtenberg, with daughter of Nikolai I, grand princess Maria Nikolaevna. When he got married, he remained in Russia forever. Possibly, he brought the clock together with many other things .

The second mosaic thing, mentioned above is a small plaque (21x14 cm in size) with the image of a cross (Photo 2). It is indirectly connected with name of J. Raffaelli too.

After refusal of J. Raffaelli to come to Petersburg, the idea to create own mosaic workshop did not leave the Russian court. It was done already in the reign of Nikolai I.

They needed the workshops for smalt production badly since the grand Isaak Cathedral was being built and they decided to make the mosaic icons for the Cathedral. In 1848, for organization of smalt production, several

Vatican masters came to Petersburg by permission of Papa; there were J. Raffaelli Vincenzo and his nephew Pietro among them. They arrived in the Russian capital «for building of a hearth and a stove and for stove supervision» (Mavrodina, 1999, p. 233). The experienced mosaic-masters were necessary for a new workshop. There was nobody in Russia who could teach them. Therefore, in 1845, it was decided to teach Russian artist at Vatican mosaic workshop in Rome. In 1847 «model workshop of St. Nikolai» was founded «by pleasure of the Tsar Nikolai Pavlovich and by petition of the prince Grigory Petrovich Volkonsky».

Nikolai I chose gifted artists who were dispatched to study mosaic work in Rome. They were only four, and Vasily Egorovich Raev (1807-1870), famous landscape and historical painter was among them. I.S. Shapovalov, S.F. Fedorov, and E.G. Solntsev went in Rome together with him. V.E. Raev, being serf, was graduated to Arzamas Art School and, after freedom in 1839, was an external student of the Academy of Arts. In 1847-1848 Raev studied mosaic work in the workshop of St. Nikolai in Rome. His first students' work was the plaque kept in the Mineralogical Museum now (Photo 2). There is white cross on the black background in the frame of simple ornamental pattern on it. The work made of multicoloured marble in style of Roman mosaic. Artistic value of this thing is quite doubtful (both on subject and performance). But from the historical point of view, it is undoubtedly interesting, since there is an inscription made by V. Raev with the information mentioned above (Photo 2b) on its back side.

This is the first mosaic work made by Russian artist in Rome in 1847. In the inscription V.E. Raev mentioned only himself and I.S. Shapovalov, but it is known that in the same year, 1847, all four artists in Rome began to create a twice-diminished copy of mosaic floor found in 1870 during excavation of thermae of the Old Roman town Otriculum near Rome. The artists supplemented the antique original by mythic personages and flora. The mosaic was brought in Petersburg and set into the floor of the Pavilion hall in the Hermitage. The round table desk made by the same masters and representing multiple-diminished copy of the same mosaic is demonstrated in the same place. They were busy with this work in 1847-1851. Master M. Barbery, their Roman teacher, leaded the works.

^{*)} Being quite gifted person, Maximilian Leuchtenberg occupied many important positions in the state, including ones connected with mining. His son, Nikolai Maksimilianovich Romanovsky (this family name and Prince title were conferred by Nikolai I) was well-educated person, but especially he was interested in mineralogy. He described several minerals from the Urals, including leuchtenbergite named in honour of his father. Nikolo-Maksimilianovskaya mine in the Nazyam Mountains of the South Urals was named after him. Since 1865 he headed the Mineralogical Society of Russia



Fig. 1. Clock. Marble, labradorite, porphyrite, lazurite, gilt bronze. Mosaic-master J. Raffaelli, Milan, 1814. High 83 cm. Inv. # PDK-1712

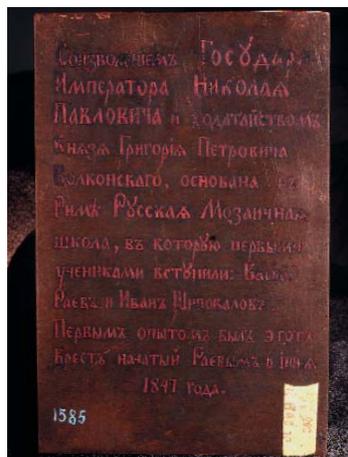


Fig. 2. Plaquette with the image of the cross. Marble. V.E. Raev, Rome, 1847. Size is 21x14 cm. Inv. # PDK-1585. a) front side; b) back side of the plaquette. Inscription was made by V.E. Raev



Fig. 3. Cups from treasure-house of the princes Radzivils in the Nesvij Castle:

- a) Size is 14.8x10.7 cm, high is 4.2 cm. Inv. # PDK-1639;
 b) Size is 18x14 cm, high is 7 cm. Inv. # PDK-1634;
 c) Size is 18.3x12 cm, high is 5.2 cm. Inv. # PDK-1643;
 d) Size is 13x11 cm, high is 3.8 cm. Inv. # PDK-1644;
 e) Size is 17x15 cm, high is 5.5 cm. Inv. # PDK-1645

After return to Petersburg, becoming the mosaic-master, V. Raev in 1851 and 1852 worked in Saint Petersburg mosaic workshop. It is known that he and three other mosaic-masters mentioned above took part in creation of grandiose mosaic icons in the Isaac Cathedral. In 1851 V.E. Raev became an academician. His pictorial works pictures are in the Russian Museum, State Tretyakov Gallery, Tropinin Museum.

In 1926 the Mineralogical Museum received V. Raev plaque from State Museum Fund among items being earlier in the store-rooms of the Gatchina and Stroganov's Palaces (archives of the State Hermitage. Fund IV, volume 2, op. 4, affair 192).

Radzivils' cups

In 1926 the State Hermitage gave a number of stone-cut items to the Mineralogical Museum. There were five cups of quartzite with different colour among them: red, light and dark grey (archives of the State Hermitage. Fond IV, op. I, affair 49). These things were never exhibited in the Museum, since both material and form of these items are unspectacular and do not stand up the comparison with other exhibits of the collection. However, from historical positions, they, obviously, are among the most interesting ones in our collection.

In tsar's treasure-house these cups came in 1813 from the famous Nesvij Castle (Byelorussia), which was for several centuries a property of one of three branches of the old Lithuanian princely family of Radzivils.

Radzivils were first mentioned in historical data about 1400th. In 1518 they obtained a title of princes of the Roman Imperia and for several centuries took up very high position in Rzeczpospolita. In fact, they were the apanage princes who not only had enormous treasures but also own considerable military forces. Many representatives of this family became famous in battles, and, thanks to congener connections with king family, authority of some of them was almost absolute. Polish-Lithuanian history was closely connected with Russia. And Radzivils were active figures of that time. So, Lithuanian marshal, Stanislav Radzivil (1559-1599), was one of the commanders of the forces of king Stephan Batory fought against Ivan the Terrible in Livonian War of 1579-1582. Historians, poets, writers, and outstanding church figures were among princes too.

Probably, Karl Stanislav Radzivil (1734-1790) was one of the most famous repre-

sentatives of the family, who was widely known as «pane kokhanku» (in this way he usually addressed companions). He was a favourite of gentry, the richest reveller, cheery fellow, and jester who did not yield to anybody. Contemporary of the Catherine II, he in no way wanted to submit authority of her protege, Polish king Stanislav August Poniatkovsky, and to adopt reforms, by which the Orthodox believers (dissidents) became equal in rights with Catholics.

Since 1767 opponents of Poniatkovsky periodically created numerous opposite parties (confederations) struggled for independence of Poland. Most of them were the small groups (178 of them were counted), which struggle with each other more often than with Russia, their general enemy. There were also large organizations. The centre of one of them was the town of Bar (Podolia). Karl Stanislav Radzivil headed it.

Separate and uncoordinated acting confederates could not resist the Russians. In 1768 the forces under the command of A.V. Suvorov were sent against Lordly Confederation by prince N.V. Repnin, plenipotentiary minister of Poland. Confederates were defeated, and their leaders either became reconciled with inevitability and were forgiven by Catherine, or escaped.

Karl Radzivil has also escaped. And during wanderings on different countries he met an extraordinary person. She was young, intelligent, beautiful, had incredible success. But the main: she pretended to the Russian throne. She named herself the princess Volodimirskaya, a daughter of Tsarina Elizabeth and Aleksei Razumovsky (in Russia she was known as princess Tarakanova). Radzivil could not miss such magnificent case. Would he reckon on success or only wanted to annoy to Catherine II, but he in every way supported this prominent adventuress, and together they wanted to obtain the help of Turkey, carrying war with Russia since 1769. However, their dreams did not come true. Russia and Turkey made peace (Kuchuk-Kainarji, 1774), the count Aleksei Orlov, commander of navy that defeated the Turks in the Chesmen bay, considerably promoted that. Interest of Radzivil to the princess faded, and the count Orlov captured her and brought to Petersburg. She soon died of consumption in the Petropavlovskaya fortress.

Karl Radzivil later was forgiven by Catherine and lived in Nesvij that was returned to him. He died in 1790, childless. Single successor of Nesvij line of Radzivil family was his nephew Dominick born in the same year, 1790, not long before Karl death.

⁷⁾ In the inventory the cups were attributed as feldspar ones

Young Dominick, as his uncle, led a dissolute life, was keen of gambling games, horses, became famous for scandalous divorce suit. He dreamed about military carrier. In 1805 he took the loyal oath to Alexander I.

At that time Napoleon shook Europe. Soon after wars of 1805-1807 he declared Polish lands conquered from Prussia the Warsaw duchy. Polish and Lithuanian gentry apprehended this step as restoration of independent Rzeczpospolita. Inspired Dominick Radzivil with his family left Nesvij and came to Warsaw under authority of Yuseph Ponyatkovsky, to fight for freedom of Poland. He invested enormous money (216 thousand zlotys) in Polish army and, although he did not have military education, became the uhlan colonel and battled in Napoleon's troops with Russia. During retreat of Napoleon's army, the regiment of Radzivil left Poland. A hope on independence of Rzeczpospolita disappeared.

Alexander I declared forgiveness to the Poles who battled on the Bonaparte's side, if they would lay down arms and would return to peace life. Dominick Radzivil rejected the suggestion and continued to carry war against Russia. On October 30, in battle at Hanau (Hessen, Germany) he was mortally wounded and died in several days. The line of Nesvij Radzivils faded with him. His possessions and treasures passed to Russian troops.

The treasures were fantastic. Material cultural values accumulated during several centuries: collections of arms, diverse artistic works, jewellery, precious services, medals, coins, spacious library, invaluable archives, etc. were collected here. All this attracted conquerors and robbers. Nesvij was repeatedly conquered both by the Swedes and the Russians. And in 1812 for participation of Dominick Radzivil in Napoleon's war against Russia, the Nesvij Castle was again taken by Russian troops, and its treasures were confiscated. It was the colonel Knoring who imprisoned the steward of castle Albreht Burgelsky and got the information where the hidings were. He took from the castle carpets, clocks, antique articles, musical instruments, and clothes. Then, with a corps of Moldavian army of admiral P.V. Chichagov, the major-general S. Tuchkov appeared in the castle and took out «different brilliants, silver and gold articles, and also other things». In 1812 P.V. Chichagov who pursued the receding Frenchmen seized eleven boxes with treasures. In report to Alexander I he wrote: « I found treasures here: pearls, brilliants, etc. I took out all that I could, and You can decide, what to do with it. I did not see, but it is said that there were things deserving museums. All is evaluated for more than a

million roubles». Lists of these things are kept («Vyartanne 6», Minsk, 1999, p. 208-217): pictures, arms, bronze statuettes, clocks, different gold articles, etc. Then S. Tuchkov again returned to the castle and interrogated A. Burgelsky under torture, and again he took out huge amount of valuables. In whole losses of the castle were estimated minimum in 10 million Polish zlotys. However, there is an opinion that more than two tons of treasures are in the castle hidings up to now (Col. of Byelorussian Culture Fund «Vyartanne 2», 1994; «Vyartanne 3», 1996; «Vyartanne 6», 1999).

Later some treasures were removed from the Nesvij too. But for us those treasures are important that were confiscated in 1812 and got to the Hermitage in 1813. There are many items from the castle there now. There were five modest cups of a plain inexpensive stone among very expensive highly artistic things. Later these cups were given to the Mineralogical Museum of the Academy of Sciences.

Here is there detailed description:

The first cup is oval, smooth, made of fine-grained light gray quartzite. Now on the even light background of stone a lot of black dots and strokes are observed. Through magnifier it is visible that this is just a surface grime in cracks and caverns. In fact the stone is monochromatic, without natural inclusions (Photo 3a).

The second cup of quartzite with alternating streaks of light and dark grey colour. Dark colour is caused by inclusions of small mica flakes. Cup is roughly oval. Its long sides are not rounded gradually but are parallel to each other. Places of joining of these parallel and rounded parts are marked on the outer side of the cup by four convex edges going from the cup top to its basis (Photo 3b).

The third cup is oblong octagonal. The edges well pronounced on roundish sides of cup go from corners on its top to the octagonal basis. The cup is cut of monochromatic yellow-grey quartzite, between translucent grains of which the rare small segregations of clayey matter with dark colour and flakes of light mica are observed (Photo 3c).

The fourth cup is analogous to previous one by form; it is made of red ferruginized quartzite; small grains of colourless quartz in it are rounded by segregations of dust-like red hematite (Photo 3d).

The fifth cup has complicated form, in which there are both angular and roundish details. On the outside surface of the cap the places of joint-

ing of different parts are also marked by edges. There are also grooves at transition from straight lines to roundish ones. It is made of ferruginized brownish-red turning to yellowish-brown quartzite. On the plain background the small lighter roundish and, rarely, bright dark brown spots are distinctly seen; they are caused by segregations of iron compounds (Photo 3e).

Quartzite is a widespread material; therefore, it is difficult to suppose which region this rock derived from. Since the middle of 18th century, remarkable red («crimson») quartzite was mined in Shoksha (Karelia); and it's locality is said to be unique. It is used for facing of buildings, for pedestals, *etc.*, and it is so good that Napoleon's tomb was made of it. Among our cups one is cut from material that is very similar to Shokshian one (PDK-1644). Stone of the cup PDK-1645 is quite similar to it. There is no idea about the occurrence of stone for three other cups. Compact high-grade quartzites occur at the Ukraine and in many other regions of Europe. It is set much as facing and building material, but not for stone-cut articles, especially for small plastic figures.

Judging by time of appearance of the cups in the Hermitage, they are dated not late than 18th century. Hard stone that is widespread in European articles of that time is quartz and its varieties, especially chalcedony (in all its diversity). By beauty, behaviour during processings, it excels quartzite in many times. Therefore, the usage of the later for even such not too complex articles as our cups seems quite strange. We would rather think that these cups are either from the places where beautiful decorative material was not accessible or these cups are quite old. Otherwise, how is it possible to explain their appearance among treasures of the most influential Polish-Lithuanian magnates? One only can suppose that they were appreciated by the owners not for beauty, but for something else. Possibly, these were trophies obtained in fight or they were connected with some other events, dear to owners, since they were kept together with great values. And it is possible... It is possible to conjecture infinitely... We hope that ultimately the researchers of history of the Nesvij Castle, and its collections, which are kept now in different museums, will be able to restore the history of these things with lost biography.

And in the meanwhile the exhibits keep silent.

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