



By Amy McCondach

I am  
not a  
rose

by Amy McCondach

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# 1. Introduction

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If you are reading this dissertation with the intention that it is about 'a rose' then you are wrong. It is about the idea that something as insignificant as a rose could play a bigger part in someone's life than they could ever imagine, and that this ideology can be applied to any aspect or object of a person's life. In actual fact the rose has nothing to do with this dissertation. It is merely a chosen element that makes up a part of life. The question that I am planning on answering in this dissertation is how the history and etymology of roses has influenced British culture today.

"If you could've found out what Rosebud meant, I bet that would've explained everything. No, I don't think so; no. Mr. Kane was a man who got everything he wanted and then lost it. Maybe Rosebud was something he couldn't get, or something he lost. Anyway, it wouldn't have explained anything... I don't think any word can explain a man's life. No, I guess Rosebud is just a... piece in a jigsaw puzzle... a missing piece." Citizen Kane (1941)  
The idea in Orson Welles Citizen Kane (1941) is that the one element can explain everything is something of which I will explore.

"true learning must not be content with ideas, which are, in fact, signs, but must discover things in their individual truth." Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose* (1980) cited Jean, G. and Hawkes, S. (pg140)

Umberto Eco suggests that ideas (signs) are one thing, but to research the factual information makes the ideas (signs) factual information. These quotations are the ideologies that I intend to explore in this research piece.

## 2. Etymology and History of the Rose

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### *The roots of the rose*

The history of the rose obscures the etymology in different ways, and different meanings history, religion and colour representation. The word rose originated from what was thought to have been its country of origin Greece/Rome. "The name is derived from the Latin *rosa* and the Creek *rhodon*." (1997). The first known comment of a rose in writing was in a compiled glossary stating that the rose actually came from Iraq. "According to Canina Ellacombe, the 10th century ecclesiastic, Aelfric, included the word in a glossary that he compiled. At that time, the rose had already been cultivated by the Arabs for centuries and before this by the Greeks who, it seemed, coined the word." John Fisher (1986, pg166) Which also tied in with David Austin's comment "The earliest known representation of a rose was found in Crete dated somewhere between 1700 and 2000BC." old roses and English roses (1992, pg15)

In Greek mythology the rose is primarily associated with the goddess of love, Aphrodite (Venus). This factor is mentioned within religious context, directly reflecting the country of its suggested origin. "a red rose was an attribute of the love goddess Aphrodite (Venus) Its thorns representing the pang of love." David Fontana (2010, pg45) The new secret language of symbols, and stated in the compassion to roses "To the Greeks and the Romans of classical times, the rose symbolized the high life, joyous celebrations, dissipation - perhaps even decadence and it was the emblem of Venus, goddess of love." John Fisher (1986, pg188) But before the Greeks had begun to claim the origin of the rose as their own, a previous reference was within history in the country of Iraq, where the Sumerians wrote on tablets what appeared to be the very first mention of the rose. "The story of the rose begins some 5000 years ago when the Sumerians settled in the fertile area lying between the River Tigris and the former bed of the Euphrates, in what is now Iraq..." (1989, pg84)

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"in their strange cuneiform writing, their wedge-shaped characters..giving us what is thought to be the first written mention of the rose."(1989 pg84). Throughout various different histories, I have found, that the rose was brought to Greece via China, so? Does the origins of the rose lie in the country of China, or maybe in Iraq, or are variations of roses in both China and Iraq that grew, so to give no definitive answer as to where the rose came from. It could have been in the beginning the rose came from several different countries then spread to wider area's as growth in cultivation and trading inflated, there are many references throughout various countries histories where the rose is mentioned. "According to Herodotus, the rose was introduced to Greece by the mythical King Midas of Phrygia, who was supposed to have lived in Asia Minor about 300 B.C. Confucius wrote that during his life (551-479 B.C.), the Emperor of China already had in his library six hundred books concerning the culture of Roses."The rose (1997) Another mention of china and its roses suggest that Chinese roses were 'imported' to England, thus eliminating England's roses originating from Greece.

"This term is often taken to refer to the species and varieties imported to England from China in the late 18th to 19th century" Fisher .J(1986,p33) As well as China also having references to having roses at the time of 300B.C there are also references to the Egyptians as having native roses in the 5 century B.C. "Egyptian wall paintings and objects representing roses have been found in tombs dating from the fifth century B.C"(1997) It has come to my attention while researching there will never be a definite answer as to the origins, all information contradicts itself. So the only way to come to a definitive answer, is to say that the rose defined from different country, being the origin of several country's. The roses were eventually traded around the world. This goes without saying that through trading, different types of roses were then born, thus native to that country.

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But how does the origins of the rose influence our opinions of the rose today? I think that given the factors that the Greeks hold the key to the origins of the rose, and the many, many reference in books and on the internet I have found, talk about the goddess of love Venus, suggests that the rose is both a feminine flower, and an object to be associated with love. Using the idea that “goddess” alone suggests female and that the author John Gray called the title of his book “Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus” Gray. J (1992) referring to the mythological gods and goddess Mars and Venus, and a quote that is regularly used as referenced to.

The difference between men and women, clearly suggests that Venus was a woman, giving the rose feminine qualities. In the day that we live in now where men buy women roses, whatever the colour they are. ‘in contrast to the red, which stands for the passionate heart and sexual desire. a red rose was an attribute of the love-goddess Aphrodite (Venus) “(2010pg45) This suggests the specific meaning of love within the “feminine” aspect of Aphrodite with love. Although the question I ask myself now is would the meaning of the red rose be different if the goddess of love Aphrodite had a different colour rose (see colour) or were red roses common in Greece in the time in which Greek mythology began?

# 3. Religion

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Religion regarding the rose gives us an insight as to why the rose has grown to be such prominent flower in society.

It features different types of religions for different walks of life which help to mould our ideology of the rose today. David Austin states “with the rise of christianity the rose was first looked upon with disapproval due to its pagan past but attitude soon changed and we find the rose becoming entwined with the christian faith.”Austin.D(1988 pg15)

## *The Virgin Mary*

Firstly, I would like to start with the rose in reference to the Virgin Mary. It seems to prominent in history and the symbolism of the rose, to simply ignore and Exploring this aspect may bring a different perspective, and view to the origins of the rose that I have yet to explore “As a symbol,the rose was closely associated with the Virgin Mary” Fisher .J(1986p14) Another reference to the Virgin Mary states “the white rose is innocence purity, chastity, the Virgin Mary; the red rose is charity and martyrdom and grew from christs blood on calvary” Cooper J.C(pg142) there are also references to roses and the virgin mary within church and cathedrals in the 10th century. “the original model for the rose windows may have been Romanesque or even Gallo-Roman.”Fisher.J (1989 pg168) this relates back to how the style of these windows may have been influenced by the origins of the rose.

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### *The rosary*

The rosary is commented on with regards to bible teachings, and the way in which these symbolise specific aspects of christianity each quotations suggests a colour in which the rose symbolises (see colours). It is thought religion and colour is an important aspect in the symbolism for example, 'The rosary is simply the idea that 5 petals of rose represent the 5 wounds of christ' Austin.D(pg15) The comment that the "wounds of christ" represent the 5 petals of the rose, gives the idea that the rose is red because the wounds suggest blood, and blood is one of the main aspects of the colour red for example the term "blood red." Another aspect of the rosary gives the idea that colour was a main aspect of the way in which religion was influenced by the rose.

"By the late Middle Ages, the vox populi, the voice of the people, had replaced the name Psalter with Rosary, or rosarium in Latin, meaning a "crown of roses." One inspiration for the name was the idea of placing on the heads of Jesus and Mary garlands of 150 white roses and sixteen red roses, roses that never wilt or lose their beauty." Galitzin.M(2002). This idea suggests that the red roses are a representation of christ similar to the way in which "The five wounds of Christ" Austin.D (1988 pg15) giving the idea of "blood red" and in the same way in which "the white rose is innocence purity, chastity, the virgin mary" Cooper.J.C(pg142) suggests the white rose as being a representation of the the Virgin Mary. These aspects all point to the colour of the rose being a strong aspect to influence religion (see colour)

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### *The Mystic Rose*

The Virgin Mary is also referred to as the mystic rose. "The mystic rose, is the Virgin Mary, exempt, by her immaculate conception in the womb of her mother, from the effects of sins." Cooper.J.C(1979pg142) The mystic rose is also commented as being a representation of the holy trinity. "The mystic rose, symbolizes Mary's mystical participation in the Holy Trinity, as Heaven's Rose or Mystical Rose."(2011) The way in which the rose is depicted suggests that the colour of the rose is a key aspect in to the origins of where the rose symbolism in christianity comes from. The white rose (see Virgin Mary and colours) is depicted with innocence and purity. The mystic rose has symbolism of the virgin mary being exempt by her immaculate conception and also given references to the idea that the mystic rose refers to the holy trinity all of the examples given of the mystic rose suggests it is red, "In medieval times the mystic rose symbol was drawn with four petals on a stain glass background or on a multi-coloured background." (2011) The quotation suggests that the four petals are a representation of something. This could suggest the holy trinity, although the trinity suggests 3 not 4 elements and the rosary represents 5 elements (see rosary).

### *The Rose of Sharon*

In the Bible it is stated "I am the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valleys" (2:1 song of Solomon) this asks the question as to what is the Rose of Sharon? "Sharon" is a place in Palestine, considered a beautiful place where many flowers grow. "You will notice that Jesus is symbolically referred to as the rose of Sharon. Jesus is totally perfect in His nature and personality. He thus can be considered to be the actual rose of Sharon since He is totally perfect within His own nature - just like the rose is supposed to be the most perfect of all flowers." bible knowledge(2011). To suggest that the rose is "The most perfect of all flowers" perfection in this context suggests that this ideology comes from the origins of the rose, being that Aphrodite (Venus) is a symbolism of perfection, love and beauty. The Rose of Sharon can also be consider as meaning of the christian church.Cooper.J.C (pg142) The idea that Jesus is the christian church sums the rose up as being everything that also represents the love, beauty and perfection the same way that aphrodite is symbolised.

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The interpretation of the rose of sharon is varied from the idea's of Jesus being the Roses of Sharon, to the rose of sharon being a place, to the Rose of Sharon representing the church and to the rose of sharon representing a female. But despite all these different interpretations the outcomes all have similar meanings pointing to the influences of the origins of the rose.

On a slightly different note the ideas of perfection, purity and beauty that the Rose of Sharon gives, could also come from the symbolism of Rosary. "In a symbolic sense, an abode of spiritual beauty and purity" (see rosary) All these aspects could have influenced the meaning of the Rose of Sharon at the time it was written. But how have all these different aspects within Christianity influenced modern day society? Well in the aspects of Roman Catholic, I say Roman Catholic because these come from the history and etymology of the rose (see history)

"We're familiar with the images: the silently moving lips of the old woman fingering her beads; the oversized rosary hanging from the waist of the wimpled nun; more recently, the merely decorative rosary hanging from the rearview mirror." Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego, (2004). These elements are taken from the way in which the rose represents elements not to mention the meaning behind the rosary "The word rosary comes from Latin and means a garland of roses, the rose being one of the flowers used to symbolize the Virgin Mary." Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego, (2004) so the symbolism of the rose, be it white or red is represented within the rosary. As for the Virgin Mary and the rose is represented within the church, also being a strong symbol for purity and innocence which is traditional and still to this day used at weddings and red for the symbol of love this is determined from Jesus's love and the way in which Jesus died for our sins "The blood of Christ" Cooper J.C (pg142) these aspects are still used today within modern day weddings, throughout the Christian faith, be it Church of England or Roman Catholic.

# 4. Colour

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## *Roses are red Violets are blue*

Colours are a very important aspect of roses, the colours can influence different meanings of the roses, from being a traditional and romantic gesture. to somebody you love, to being an expectable gift to be given to your mother. The colour makes all the difference for example you wouldn't give red roses to your mother because the colour suggests a romantic gesture, as for pink, this could be associated with femininity that is ingrained to female sigma from a child as I'm sure we all know, but not necessarily a deep love in which the red roses suggest. I am going to explore the different aspects of colour and find how the history and etymology has determined these stereotypes within the different types of colours.

### *Red*

Red is one of the most commonly and widely used rose colours. A lot of the associations in Britain around the red rose originate from its country of origin, and influences with religion (see religion) and war (see war).

The first association with red roses associate is the origin. The origin of Greek's and Roman's first influenced the red rose with Aphrodite. "A red rose was an attribute of the love-goddess Aphrodite (Venus)" Fontana.D(2010, pg45) This gives the red rose an automatic association with femininity, love and romance. This influence was also passed on to religion. (see religion) Fontana also goes on to say "its thorns representing the pangs of love"(2010,pg45). This comment can give an example as to modern associations with the red rose, because of the date the book was published, which could be influenced by religion. The quotation could also be referring to Jesus and the thorns used when he died on the cross, the blood red associated with this but in a different kind of love.

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The rose represented Jesus and the love for mankind. But the association with red roses has not been as significantly altered by the War of the Roses or specifically, Lancashire.

Although this could be determined by the area of Britain at which you are currently situated, in which case a red rose would have a slightly different meaning than that of the rest of the country which associate the rose with love and affection, of that which has always stayed consistent in the eyes of the general public.

### *White*

White roses have strong associations with the Virgin Mary and the colour has a big part to play in that. "White roses represent perfection, purity and innocence the sinless Virgin Mary was the rose without thorns" Fontana, D (2010, pg44, pg45) Fontana also goes on to state that the Virgin Mary also has a strong relationship with the lily this concludes that the white aspect of the flower is what is associated with the Virgin Mary.

The white rose does not have any reference to its origins (although the origins are to be debated) (see history) but where the origins of the rose are suggested (with Aphrodite or Venus) the quotation only gives reference to the rose being red. Another reference to the idea that religion is the main association with the Virgin Mary states, "The white rose is innocence, purity, chastity, the Virgin Mary" Cooper, J.C (1979, pg142) (see religion). The way in which the rose (white roses specifically) is associated with the Virgin Mary is similar to the way in which the Aphrodite (Venus) is also associated with the rose, so ultimately mythology could be considered as a religious belief in the same way that the Virgin Mary is a religious figure in Christianity.

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Today the white rose still has strong religious roots. White roses are commonly used for weddings in Christianity, and so still have religious meanings. The white rose would have slightly different connotations if you lived in Yorkshire given the influences from The War of the Rose, (see war) but the main aspects of white roses still surround the virgin Mary, innocence and purity in religious context.

### *Black*

Black roses don't exist in the physical world, but are used within literature (The term black magic commonly being used in literature) and there is also a common usage in tattoos.

The black roses primarily symbolise death, this could be due to their close links with literature and the way black as a colour itself, is also commonly associated with death. "Sometimes the darkest red roses are called 'black roses' and while they do symbolize the death of an idea, or say farewell they can send a positive message of rebirth and new beginnings." Smith.K (2011). The messages the ideas of "rebirth" and new beginnings also associate with religion and Jesus's resurrection. In the same idea that black can play a big part in the ideas about black roses, Cooper.J.C states "roses were grown in Roman funerary gardens as a symbol of resurrection and eternal, spring, or roses were brought at the Rosalina festival and scattered on graves." (1979 pg142) These ideas from the origins of the rose could suggest the strong stigma between death and renewal that surround the black roses and roses in general today.

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. Golden

The golden rose is a religious symbol, as well as being a British association with Mothering Sunday. With the origins of the rose thought to be from Rome and Greek decent. It seems quite fitting that the rose is associated with the Pope. "The golden rose is traditionally blessed by the pope on laetare Sunday, the 4th sunday in lent, also known as the 'Sunday Roses' and in Britain as Mothering Sunday. Fisher.J(1989 pg77) This also links in with the Idea's of the Virgin Mary being associated with the rose, the rosary and the Pope. They are all interlinked to create a religious view point of the golden rose. To sum up the use of colours with roses, they are either related to a specific colour due to their origins, or religion, or to the symbolism that specific colour already has, or all of these. Religious beliefs hold the key to the associations today, ideas about the rose within colour, and are still current today, despite the object they are applied to.

This isn't always the case, for example the Virgin Mary is very much associated with white but association with colour as regard to male and female gender with the colours pink and blue are still current in today's society, the ideas of these aspects are psychologically imprinted on us from birth.

# 5. Logos

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Logos are an aspect of which I would like to explore, due to the importance to me as a designer. They represent today's modern day interpretations of past ideologies, of what an object or living thing can be, or at least this is my opinion and how I interpret it. The idea that we should use roses as a representation of love and romance had to come from somewhere. The idea that we should use a Tudor Rose as a representation of England had to come from somewhere.(see war)



Fig.1 The Quality Rose

## *War of the Roses and rivalry*

Firstly, there are a variety of different logos representing the ideas of the War of the Roses and the rivalry associated with this idea. The Enjoy England logo(see fig.1) features the Tudor logo. This idea was probably taken from the perspective that England, is represented in the rose being the unity of both the Yorkshire and Lancashire (see war), Another logo that has this linked idea is the the England rugby logo (see fig 2) sporting a red rose, indicating a rivalry aspect which is evident within the War of the Roses.



Fig.2 The Rugby Rose

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### *Relgion*

A logo that I discovered for a funeral company in Eltham, Well Hall road (Nashfunerals)(see fig 3) used a rose for their logo, perhaps the deep meaning behind this logo is similar to that of the Romans, an idea about rebirth and resurrection similar to that of the meaning of the black rose (see colours) “roses were grown in Roman funerary gardens, as a symbol of resurrection and eternal spring, or roses were brought at the Rosalina festival and scattered on graves.”(1979 pg142) This gives reasons as to why roses have a place within aspects of death and the original Roman ideas about resurrection.



Fig.3 Nash Funerals

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Fig.4 Tudor Barn

The use of the Roses logos within Britain normally represent the War of the Roses (mainly the tudor rose) (see fig 4 and 5), due to that aspect being the main culturally unique aspect with Britain. Other aspects of logos in Britain cannot be considered to be unique to Britain as the meanings of love and religion are generally universal.



Fig.5 Leeds metropolitan University

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# 6. Art

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## *The Artist and the rose*

In terms of roses being executed in art, a lot of different artists have used the rose, French and Italian artists have also used the Rose. A big part of how the rose can be perceived, is through art and imagery, the interesting aspect of using art with roses is seeing if the way the roses are portrayed, are similar to that of its history or origins. Whether the rose has been influenced in literature, in its art, or maybe even religion.

A few famous non British artists of the Rose are, the Italian painter Sandro Botticelli famously painting, 'The Birth of Venus' Fisher.J(1989 pg14)(see fig 6).With Pink roses falling from the sky. The Italian painter Bernardino Luini (fig 7)who painted the Virgin Mary surround by roses. With the same subject painted by the German painter Stephen Lochner. Fisher.J(1989 pg14)

These artists may well have had a big influence on British artists and the way in which the roses are perceived in British culture. Who's to say that in the art world these artist didn't mingle with one another, being a very popular thing to do at the time, of both poets and artists, also influencing the way we seen roses in literature as well. (see literature) although these artists have a big part to play in the link between over seas art and British art, the area in which I am paying attention to is British artist.

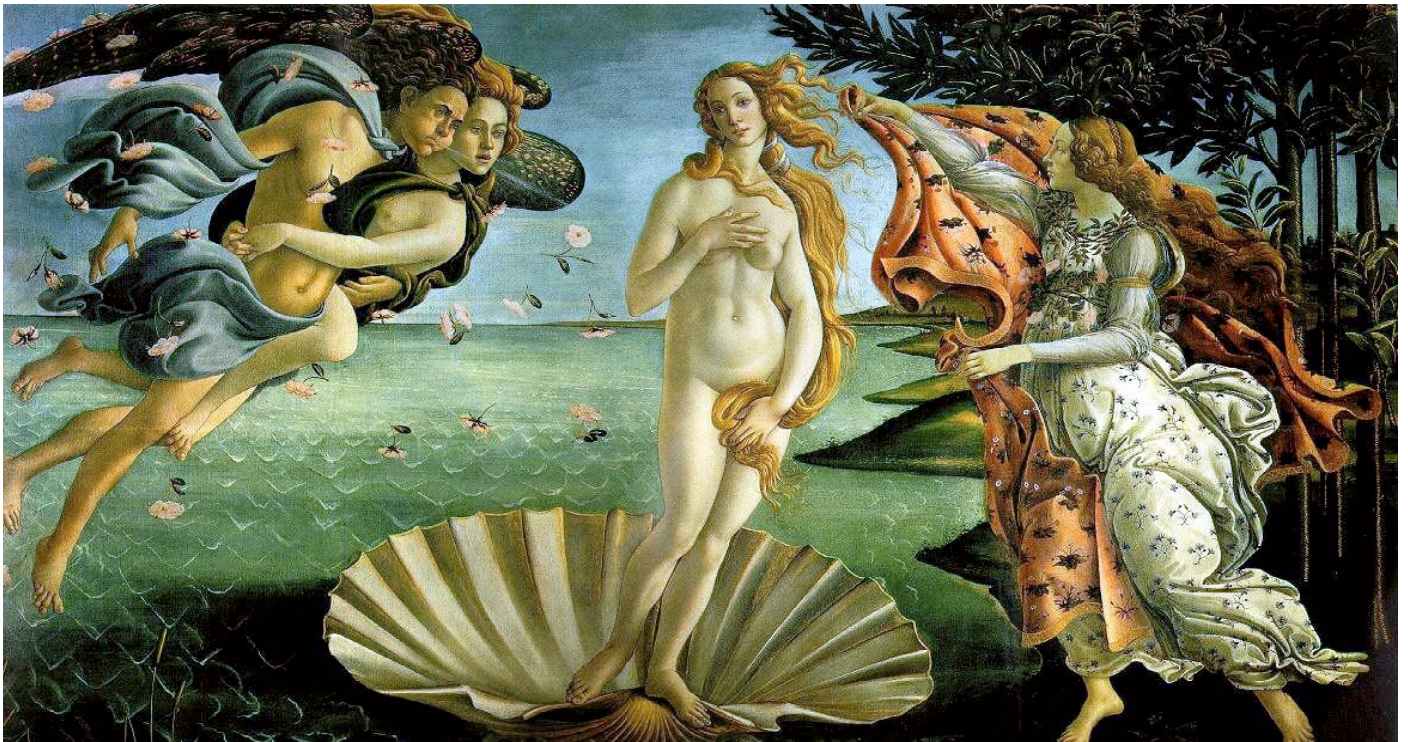


Fig.6 The Birth of Venus by Sandro Botticelli



Fig.7 Madonna in the Rose Garden by Bernardino Luini

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### *Pre Raphaelite*

Pre Raphaelite is a movement within the art world. "Secret society of young artists (and one writer) founded in London in 1848. Name Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood referred to their opposition to Royal Academy's promotion of Renaissance master Raphael as ideal artist. In revolt also against triviality of immensely popular genre painting of time. Principal members William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti" Tate gallery (2011)

### William Morris

One of the primary influences I have found in this movement is that of William Morris, who was an artist, a textile designer, and a writer.

William Morris's first piece of work included *Roses on a trellis*<sup>1</sup> (see fig 8) Fisher.J (1989) Morris work was highly influenced by his surroundings of tapestry and other such works. Sources from the V&A stated "His sources were plants themselves, observed in his gardens or on country walks, and also images of plants in 16th-century woodcuts (he owned copies of several 16th- and 17th-century herbals, including Gerard's famous *Herbal*), illuminated manuscripts, tapes-tries and other textiles incorporating floral imagery." "but similar flower forms can be seen in late medieval 'mille-fleurs' tapestries and in early printed herbals" V&A (2011)

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1 A wooden lattice which usual has creeping plants or vines growing up it.



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This could suggest William Morris was influenced by tapestry's with religious content, that of similar context to Stephen Lochner's depiction of the Virgin Mary surrounded by Roses. Of course the influence could also be seen as architectural, using these ideas in churches and cathedrals have Roman origins. "the original model for the rose windows may have been Romanesque or even Gallo-Roman."Fisher.J (1989 pg168)

William Morris has influenced today British culture, primarily in wallpaper design, although his floral ideas still live on in what can be considered both modern and traditional styles. The floral aspect has slowly evolved over time to create what can only be considered as, traditional geometric wallpaper patterns, which are still commonly used today, so you could say that William Morris influenced a whole style of wallpaper currently used today with this initial idea beginning with a rose.



Fig.8 Rose trellis by William Morris

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J.W. Waterhouse followed a second wave of later pre-Raphaelites, influenced by the same aspects of the previous era of pre-raphaelites. After the break up of the brotherhood he was highly influenced by, what I can only assume is by Alfred Lord Tennyson (see literature) with poems such as "The lady of Shallot (fig 10) and Maud" J.W Waterhouse used the similar style and aspects of that of Dante Rossetti.(2008) His painting "The soul of the rose."(see fig 9) shows a woman (presumably Maud) smelling the roses in a garden, his ideas of the rose are similar to that of Alfred Lord Tennyson's. In which he interpreted the poem as being feminine (see Art)it also gives the idea that the fragrance of the Rose is also very feminine. Holmes.P states "The fragrance feels very feminine and fluid:rose is a water goddess.Like Aphrodite."Holmes.P(1994 pg8)

So although the painting is based on Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem "Maud" it gives the same literary ideology that Tennyson could have been influenced by, which was ultimately artists in his life and english renaissance art. It seems that artists and literature come full circle with their influences ultimately being influenced by previous art and literature at the time.

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Fig.9 The Soul of the Rose by J.W.Waterhouse



Fig.10 The Lady of shallot by J.W.Waterhouse

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British Art has influenced the way in which we see the world, how we decode the art gives influence as to how we perceive the things around us. In this case we see a woman smell a rose and we automatically associate the rose with the woman and the femininity. The same can be said for Sandro Botticelli's painting "The Birth of Venus" as well as Bernardino Luini and Stephen Lochner who painted roses around the Virgin Mary. They all have a female figure as the main focal point of the art. Religion and Greek mythology (origins) feeding into forming an idea of how we see the Rose today.

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# 7. Politics

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## *The Working Rose*

Roses have been associated with politics since the Roman times or alternatively suggested origins of the rose as Fisher.J states. “The political life of the rose did not,of course,begin or end with the War of the Roses (see war).Even in Roman times, the rose bower or enclosed rose garden was a traditional place in which confidential matters were discussed”Fisher.J (1989 pg189)

Roses are used as the logo for the Labour party using the history stated on their labour history area of the website(see appendices C and D) “This was followed by changes to Labour’s image, headed by a new Campaigns and Communications directorate under Peter Mandelson. A visible sign of the changes afoot was the replacement of the party’s emblem - the red flag - by a red Rose at the 1986 conference.”



Fig.11 The labour party logo

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On the history of the website it is not specific as to why Peter Mandelson and Neil Kinnock chose to use the rose, it is unknown, although there are clues in Peter Mandelson's biography. "the red flag symbolised everything labour represented in the public mind: socialism, nationalism, state control. Everything that is, that voters now liked least and mistrusted most about us. The red rose wasn't a design change: it represented a transformation in how the party would present itself. It had real impact, reinforced by our now ubiquitous new strapline recognising the need to put people not the party first." Mandelson, P. (2010). So could it be that Peter Mandelson represented the rose as being "The people" therefore referring to England? "The idea came from Neil Kinnock, himself a rose grower, who admired the flower's use by Nordic socialist parties. The existing symbol of the red flag was seen as threatening and linked with "old style socialism", while the Rose was positive and patriotic. Designer Philip Sutton drew hundreds of different Roses before the final version was chosen."

. Was the Rose chosen as it was the nation's flower as well as being represented in sport with rivalry? taken from the war of the roses? being represented from what was originally the Tudor rose back from the era of King Henry VII or was it just the designer who came up with the idea of the rose being used? Having researched and researched on the designer who came up with the Labour design "Peter Sutton" who only has one reference online in association with the design of the Labour Party rose, how did Peter Sutton come up with the idea of the style of the rose in his design?

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Well, after finding information online suggesting Peter Sutton had designed the labour rose, getting in contact with the labour party they proved that this was not the case after searching for Peter Sutton for a long time I had finally a definitive answer. "The party market tested ideas from a number of designers and the chosen design, by Michael Wolff launched at the labour annual conference in October 1986" labour party (see appendix D) (2011) so the designer of the logo was Michael Wolff alternatively also known as one of the two founders of Wolff Ollins<sup>1</sup> For what is suggested symbolism of "the people" and "patriotic," everything that doesn't stand for socialism, nationalism and state control, but when it comes to the people of Britain what does the labour party actually stand for, even the word "labour" sends out a message. Work, job, production, task. It represents unity within England within the unite of the War of the Roses.

The colour of the rose is just a representation of the labour party as a whole and not as the house of Lancashire rose which this would suggest, The meaning of the rose has evolved through history so much that today's culture would only see the rose as an association of English heritage and quite possible the labour party. Personally I think the design of the rose was influenced somewhat by the war of the roses even if this wasn't the intention of Peter Madelson. I think the influence he saw in the rose was the English rose (Tudor) and in directly focused the War of the Roses, which affected a lot, if not all of the English population of the time.

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<sup>1</sup> Wolff Ollins is a brand consultancy their aim is to create better realities not just a nicer image. Wolff Ollins blog (2011)

# 8. The War of the Roses

## *The Rose and War*

When war is concerned the rose plays a big part of English heritage stemming from the uses of Roses within the house of York and the house of Lancaster in the middle ages “The white rose was a symbol of yorkist supporters who opposed the rival house of lancaster. Whose symbol was the red rose of Lancaster, the opposition of the two parties, symbolised by the red Rose and white roses gave the wars their name- the war of the roses. the Wars of the Roses ended with King Henry vii who started the tudor dynasty and symbolised united white and red roses to create the tudor rose” so both the Yorkshire and Lancashire roses came from both the Earl of Lancashire and Duke of Yorkshire “Edmund de Langley was born here in 1341..he became the first Duke of york. The three children of edmund and his wife isabel of castile spent many of their years at Kings Langley. The daughter Constance was known as the white rose of Langley”(1970)(see appendices A and B) the origins of the white rose of yorkshire came from the idea that the 1st Duke of Yorks daughter Constance’s nickname of the white rose of Langley and this was the origin.



fig 12. The Yorkshire Rose

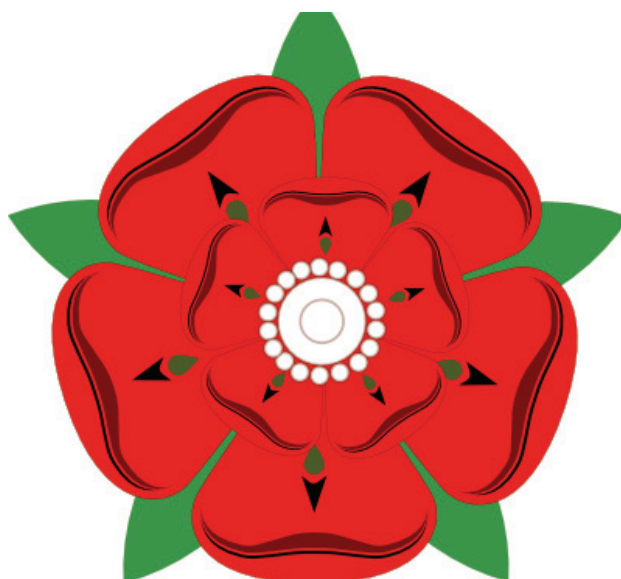


fig 13. The Lancashire Rose



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It is suggested that the red Rose of Lancashire (fig 13) was taken from the Yorkshire white rose (see fig 12) to make as their own. "the noble houses of York (whose badge was a white rose) and Lancaster (later associated with the red rose)" n/a(2008) interestingly the place Kings Langley origins are from Rome "Kings Langley, a village in Hertfordshire.. from its origins prior to Roman settlement and thriving doomsday community, though its royal palace in the 14th century"(1970). This means that the rose origin could have potentially come from Iraq, to Crete in Greece (where the Greeks were heavily influenced by Greek mythology at the time) to Rome to England this could potentially be a different strand of roses, because other evidence suggests that the roses we have in England are from China. "this term is often taken to refer to the species and varieties imported into England from China, in the late 18th to 19th century" Fisher.J(1986pg33) Which could be why the 1st Duke of York Edmund had the nickname his daughter Constance, who then went on to become the duchess of Gloucestershire, the white rose of Langley. (see appendices A and B)

With the rose being white it suggests that perhaps the Duke of York thought of his daughter "perfection purity and innocence" D. Fontana(2010,p45), "the white rose is innocence,purity,chastity,the Virgin Mary" Cooper.J.C(p142) As the white rose suggests.

But is this the way in which the Duke of York wanted Yorkshire to be perceived? or just chosen because he wanted something that he associated with his daughter to represent Yorkshire?

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In actual fact the 1st Duke of York Edmund didn't give the white rose to Yorkshire after his own daughter Constance, but it appeared that the white rose in the medieval period of the time signified the Virgin Mary (see religion) "The version I've seen is that Edmund chose the white rose as one of his symbols because it represented the Virgin Mary in the religious symbolism of the period - it was one of several symbols used by the Dukes of York in the medieval period, and didn't have any real connection with Yorkshire - the Dukes of York were southern landowners.

The connection with the county comes much later - the City of York seems to have adopted the white rose in the 19th century, and the wider county during the 20th century." Rickard.J ( Appendices A). Perhaps this is why Constance was called the white rose of Langley for her "perfection purity and innocence" D.Fontana(2010,p45) perhaps this also explains the factor that the white rose could have originated from Kings Langley. Something that also interests me is as to whether or not the Duke of York was influenced in anyway by the the flag of St George when deciding that the house of York would choose a white rose as their County.

From the argued dates that I have discovered throughout my research this the flag of St George was founded in 1277 "As the flag carried by early English explorers into the New World, the famous red cross on the St. George Cross can be traced back to 1277 in Britain." which came before the time of the War of the Roses "Wars of the Roses traditional name given to the intermittent struggle (1455-85) for the throne of England" n/a(2008) gives a more evident sign that after the Duke of York picked a Rose for the emblem of Yorkshire and a nickname for his daughter Constance may have been influenced by the flag of St George but it is more likely in my opinion that the house of Lancashire saw the white rose knew of the flag of St George and with this being England's national flag and decided that the red rose was the rose for Lancashire giving, the flag as reasoning and with their rival county's rose.

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But on a personal note I now think, how does origins of the war of the roses reflect today's culture. Evidently the rose is still used today in both Yorkshire and Lancashire cities as emblems of the Tudor rose was formed from the two roses when the war ended to

create the Tudor rose "King Henry VII who started the Tudor dynasty and symbolised united the white and red roses to create the Tudor rose." which is now used as the main emblem for England as well as sports teams for example rugby giving reference to "rivalry" as well as "unity" within England both the red and white roses are planted around the walls in York as symbolism to the Tudor rose and the War of the Roses. And as for the Yorkshire and Lancashire rivalry it is still very much alive as my boyfriend is from Yorkshire. It's still quite entertaining to see him arguing with a man from Lancaster on the train to Leeds, about how Yorkshire gave England Yorkshire puddings and what did Lancashire do? Needless to say I wanted to get off the train as soon as humanely possible.

not to mention the fact that as I entered Leeds I am greeted by lots of representations of the white rose in the city itself for example, the white rose shopping centre, the logo used for Leeds Metropolitan University, a lot of the doors of residents who live there have a white rose stained glass into their windows and finally even as leaving the station has a rose on the sign on the train track showing the evidence that the rose is still very much current. But not to just use only my own experiences as evidence to today's culture in Yorkshire and Lancashire rivalry, the popular British chef Jamie Oliver commented on how the rivalry still exists today with the controversy of mixing both a traditional Lancastrian recipe with a traditional Yorkshire recipe. "I've nicked a classic Lancashire dish with a bit of a Yorkshire smile controversial it may be in these Yorkshire dales and wars have been fought over less but the one rule I've learnt on this trip is there are no rules" Oliver, J. (2011) Jamie's Great Britain: Yorkshire so it seems to me that I am not the only one who thinks that these rivalries still exist.

# 9. Literature

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Literature and poetry from Greek mythology also gives reference to the rose suggesting that the origins of the rose reflect in Greek culture at that time although there is “little mention of specific types of roses, roses are mentioned within Greek literature such as stylized phrases in Homer as ‘the rosy-fingered dawn’, while Aphrodite is reported as embalming Hector’s body with rose compounds.” Millar Gault, S. and Synge, P. (1971, pg11) are novels containing literature influenced by etymological and historical meanings of the rose? I think that the way in which roses have been perceived in literature, is ultimately a result of authors being influenced by other authors and artists, in the way in which they interpret the rose, as throughout the research I have done so far represents strong links to each aspect I have researched.

There are many references to the roses within literature and poetry and one in particular that I wish to mention is the “The romance of the rose” translated into English may lose some of the meaning of the words but even with the title of the “The romance.” suggests a strong influence from Aphrodite and perhaps maybe a link with the Virgin Mary and love, and as Dahlberg states in the introduction of the book “since French was the official language of the English court for many years, it was nearly as important there as in France.” Dahlberg, C. (1971, pg1) which could suggest French influences in English ideology of the Rose.

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## *William Shakespeare*

Shakespeare's era is a very important aspect of the milestones in British literature and play writing, and is a world-wide acclaimed literary genius. In the same way, aspects of his time are reflected in the works that he created. For example, "thus the scene in Shakespeare's *Henry VI Part I* (ii, iv) in which the two sides chose their emblems during a quarrel in the Temple Gardens in London, has no historical foundation. No doubt if the Yorkists in the field wished to wear a white rose, they had to make do with *rosa arvensis*." Fisher, J. (1989, pg189) This suggests that it was written with influence to the War of the Roses but the aspect of the roses clearly inspired him to write something similar as to how the Roses came about in the War of the Roses. Ultimately, his surroundings and era influenced him as well as the roses. Another example of Shakespeare referring to the Rose as follows: "in the lines of Shakespeare's *Richard III* 'now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by the sun of York' this rose-in-sun symbol later appeared (1465) on a gold coin that bore the name 'rose noble'." Fisher, J. (1989, pg189) The way in which this is represented shows a strong link with the factors that Fisher, J. says

"from the days of the Crusades -1096 onward-when it became usual for each of the leaders of various private armies to have his own coat of arms the rose became involved in politics" This suggests that before the time of Shakespeare it was common for a leader to have their coat of arms with the emblems utilizing roses, which means that Shakespeare could have been influenced by this aspect. His comments about "the sun of York" referring to the Yorkist rose and the gold coin, coins and coats of arms are still used to this day. The 1982 twenty pence piece is still in circulation to this day featuring the Tudor rose and crown representing what I interpret to be the War of the Roses. The coat of arms can be individually designed for family names as well as noblemen. Shakespeare also references the rose in the famous play *Romeo and Juliet*: "That which we call a rose by any other name would still smell as sweet". Shakespeare, W. (Act 2, sc. 2- pg18) This gives the idea that Shakespeare was influenced by artists, similar to the way in which Oscar Wilde was influenced (see Oscar Wilde) which suggests that he was also influenced by artists as well as the War of the Roses.

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## *Oscar Wilde*

Oscar Wilde another well known writer and poet of Irish descent. "Oscar moved to London to live with his friend Frank Miles, a popular high society portrait painter. In 1881, he published his first collection of poetry. "Poems" received mixed reviews by critics, but helped to move Oscar's writing career along." Nicole Gately (2003) Oscar had a keen interest for English Renaissance art and alternatively by living with a painter he may have been influenced by the artist impressions of Frank Miles, not to mention that with having a keen interest in Renaissance art being a movement primarily led by Italian painters much of which executed paintings with roses (see Art) Oscar Wilde could have been influenced by all these aspects when writing he may have also been influenced by Shakespeare who was also inspired by roses (see William Shakespeare) the first line "She said she would with me if I brought her a red rose but in all my garden there are no roses" Wilde (1977, pg 292) (The Nightingale and the Rose) His idea of the rose clearly symbolises love, and romance with the main element of the quotation reflecting giving a favour to his beloved.

that of which the associate with ideas of Venus reflecting the origins of the rose which are depicted in Italian Renaissance for example "The Birth of Venus" (see art) to summarise Wilde was highly influenced by art in this instance whether or not he knew that at the time is unknown, he was also influenced in the same way William Shakespeare could have been influenced when he wrote the famous play "Romeo and Juliet" although Shakespeare was also influenced by current affairs which would have been at the time the War of the Roses and most predominantly also inspired by the Tudor Rose which was very popular at the time. The irony of the symbolism and influences that had effect Oscar Wilde writing I believed would be something that he would not necessarily agree with "You must not find symbols in everything you see. It makes life impossible." Wilde (1997, pg 735)

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*Alfred lord Tennyson*

Alfred lord Tennyson is a famous English poet one of his famous poems "Maud" also depicted in J.W.Waterhouse The Soul of the Rose(see art) which was the inspiration for his art stated in his poem "said to the rose, 'The brief night goes In babble and revel and wine. O young lord-lover, what sighs are those For one that will never be thine? But mine, but mine,' so I sware to the rose, 'For ever and ever, mine.'" Tennyson.A(i,xxii,pg142),The poem is strongly about love Alfred Lord Tennyson expresses his want for maud using the rose as an object to swear to as if the rose will keep the secret of wanting the lover forever more. Tennyson was influenced by medieval theme such as the famous poem "The Lady of Shallot" (also another painting by J.W.Waterhouse) as well as his surroundings and references to flowers. He clearly believed in the association with love and roses whether or not he was influenced by English renaissance art was another aspect I do not know. His influences could simply be that his observation of the rose he considered to be elegance ,grace, romance and femininity similar to that of the ideas of Venus (see history)

English literature and art interlinked, has influenced the way in which we see romance and romantic gestures today, the rose has ingrained the idea's due to the popularity of these writers today and the fact that their work is still being read and taught in school. The romantic ideas will forever be around, immortalized in these famous British authors pages not to mention that there ideas were primarily taken from the origins of rose by the executions of roses within art enforcing the romantic ideology around roses.

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# 10. Conclusion

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In conclusion the historical influences of today's opinion of the rose are evident using a precise area of culture to study, has given me a smaller aspect of something that has a bigger picture to it given all of the information, I have proved I have come to the conclusion, that the knowledge that the Greeks provided us with was then spread by word of mouth and religion with the rise of the Christian faith. The Virgin Mary took on a similar role as Aphrodite, the growth of the rose and cultivation added to the rose giving different cultural aspects throughout the world.

In Britain both art and literature both influencing each other on the symbolism of the rose not to mention the war of the roses having a profound effect on how the rose is perceived in Britain the war of the roses in my opinion is the main reason that England represents itself as a rose due to this being a unique aspect of something that took place in Britain. To summarise the rose today in Britain has both the means of love taken from Greek mythology past through the ages and British inspiration from other countries and war of the roses that fed our own ownership of the Rose.

The conclusion of my research, has given me a greater understanding of how something so simple and in a way insignificant can impact somebody in their life, In a sense the butterfly effect has a big part to play, because if Greek mythology never had existed, today would we see the rose as being something different? If religion is something that doesn't exist would that affect the way in which we see the rose? Would artists find different influences to their work? Would literary authors do the same and would the rose just be nothing more than a still life on a canvas?

The rose affects us today, in a sense where we now have a clear association with the rose influenced by every aspect in history, that has moulded together to paint a picture of how the rose should be in British culture. We were influenced by the origins by Christianity by the War of the Roses, by art movements. Primarily the rose in England has been that to associate with love, religion and war. (see logos) War being the historical aspect and love and religion, being the element of origins of the rose.

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Having written this dissertation, I have observed elements in my life of which are effected by the rose, as I go to university I pass a funeral company using the rose as a logo, which I see as an influence of religious idea's about Jesus the Virgin Mary (see logo's and virgin mary) and resurrection all of which the rose also represents. I see the tudor barn restaurant just past Eltham station which uses the Tudor rose as its emblem,clearly this shows an aspect of the War of the Roses. Ultimately, the research I have done, has given me a rich understanding of my own culture and the elements and people who have influenced how Britain is perceived today and all the elements that make up the things that the people of Britain take for granted for example the English monarchy,British artist,British literature.

As a designer the rose has given me a different perspective on the ideology of semiotics and if as they say a "picture is worth a thousand words then" Barnard.F.R(2011) then surely all the imagery surrounding religion,English monarchy and Renaissance art, show all that we need to know about the rose.

As a designer it has given me a better understanding of research within different cultures, For example now I know the British ideology associated with the rose, if I am to visit a different country their culture could effect the way in which a rose could be perceived there. Ultimately it has shown me that research is an aspect at which the designer can sometimes feel brought down, and the need to push on with designing part of the project because of the creativity involved, but it has given me a reason to step back and take in all of the aspects before continuing with me design.

Ultimately The rose affects 2,473m. Royal mint (2011) people in Britain who have a Tudor Rose 20 pence piece in their pocket obvious perhaps 10% of this amount are lost behind a sofa or down a drain somewhere, but for the majority in their purse, wallet or shop till, there are 20 pence pieces from 2008 showing the Tudor Rose and crown.

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# 12. Appendices

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[Appendix A]

The version I've seen is that Edmund chose the white rose as one of his symbols because it represented the Virgin Mary in the religious symbolism of the period - it was one of several symbols used by the Dukes of York in the medieval period, and didn't have any real connection with Yorkshire - the Dukes of York were southern landowners. The connection with the county comes much later - the City of York seems to have adopted the white rose in the 19th century, and the wider county during the 20th century.

John

-----Original Message-----

From: amy mccondach [mailto:amy\_mccondach@yahoo.co.uk]

Sent: 29 October 2011 16:37

To: john@historyofwar.org

Subject: war of the roses

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by amy mccondach (amy\_mccondach@yahoo.co.uk) on Saturday, October 29, 2011 at

16:36:38

-----  
email2: amy\_mccondach@yahoo.co.uk

message: hi,

I was wondering if you could help me im currently doing a dissertation on the origins of the rose and I was wondering if you knew why the first duke of york edmund used the white rose as the yorkshire emblem the only information I can find on this is that the duke of yok had a daughter called constance who's nickname was the white rose of langley. it would be great if you could shed any light on this for me.

Amy McCondach

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[Appendix B]  
Hello Amy

The White Rose appears to have been used in the Wars of the Roses, and during that time, 1455-1485, it was combined with the Red Rose to produce the Tudor Rose, showing the reconciliation between Yorkists and Lancastrians. I suggest you look at <http://www.the-tudors.org.uk/the-white-rose-york.htm>

The White Rose is associated with the House of York because Edward III gave his son Edmund of Langley the title of Duke of York. This seems to be because the king was fighting battles against the Scots in the north of England, and wanted to mark his success.

The story about Constance comes from a book *The White Rose of Langley*, by Emily Sarah Holt, published in 1875. There is no reason to think that Constance was called that in her lifetime or, indeed, prior to 1875.

Similarly, according to wikipedia, the term 'Wars of the Roses' is not thought to have been used during the time of the wars. Rather, it came into common use in the nineteenth century after the publication of *Anne of Geierstein* by Sir Walter Scott in 1829.

I hope this is of use to you. Please contact us again if we can offer further help.  
Best wishes  
Alan Penwarden, KLLH&MS Archivists Group.

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On 1 November 2011 09:07, Edmund deLangley <delangley5@gmail.com>  
wrote:

Hello Amy,

I will pass your enquiry to one of our archivists and they will let you know if they have any information on this. Please allow a little time as we are all volunteers and do not spend all our time on this work. We hope to be able to reply usually within 2 weeks depending on the enquiry.

Regards

Richard Garnett Harper  
Chairman

On 29 October 2011 16:44, amy mccondach <amy\_mccondach@yahoo.co.uk>  
wrote:

This message was sent from:

<http://www.kingslangley.org.uk/contact.html>

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Name of sender: amy mccondach

Email of sender: amy\_mccondach@yahoo.co.uk

----- COMMENTS -----

hi,

I was wondering if you could help me im currently doing a dissertation on the origins of the rose and I was wondering if you knew why the first duke of york edmund used the white rose as the yorkshire emblem the only information I can find on this is that the duke of york had a daughter called constance who's nickname was the white rose of langley. it would be great if you could shed any light on this for me. or give me any information as to why the daughter constance was called the white rose of langley

Amy McCondach

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## [Appendix C]

### The Labour Party: development of visual identity 1987 – 2007

#### The Labour and rose logo

In 2007, Labour launched a new red rose logo at its Annual Conference in October.

Despite a succession of party symbols since 1924<sup>1</sup>, and the use of the party's traditional colour, red, this was the first serious attempt to adopt a coherent visual identity.

As well as the rose logo, there were specific colours (Pantone Red 186, Green 948) for its reproduction, an official typeface ([Plantin](#)), and a planned 'rollout' to party members and to the media: in short, a corporate identity.

By the 1987 General Election, the red rose was well known as Labour's symbol, and has been closely associated with the party's presentation ever since.



#### Revisions to corporate identity, 1987 – 1994

The Labour and rose logo remained virtually unchanged during this period, although over the years the stalk was shortened to make the logo easier to use. In 1991 an a sans serif typeface, Franklin Gothic, was adopted for use in headlines and leaflets, with [Plantin](#) retained for policy documents and other text-dense publications.

#### The 'new Labour, new Britain' element

At Tony Blair's first Annual Conference after being elected Labour Party Leader in July 1994, he launched the concept of 'new Labour', and a slogan, 'new Labour, new Britain'. The word, 'new' was in Franklin Gothic Book, with 'Labour' and 'Britain' in Franklin Gothic Heavy.

This slogan rapidly gained currency and was used on all Labour visual materials from 1994, particularly during the General Election of 1997, which Labour won with a large majority.

At the Conference after this election victory, in October 1997, a secondary logo, in the form of a red square with the words, 'new Labour, new Britain' was adopted, and remained part of the Labour Party's corporate identity until 2007.

#### Updating of the Labour and rose logo

<sup>1</sup>See [Appendix B](#), 'The Labour logo: its history and development' for details.



In summer 2000, the party refreshed its corporate identity, retaining the rose logo with a shorter stalk, and changing the red from Pantone 186 to the brighter 485. The typeface for the word, 'Labour' was updated to Franklin Gothic Heavy, and a version including the Labour Party website address was introduced.



[Plantin](#) was now dropped entirely, with Franklin Gothic adopted for all publications.

#### New Leader, new logo

In September 2006, Tony Blair announced that he would stand down as Party Leader and Prime Minister within the year. He left office in June 2007 to be replaced by Gordon Brown, and a revised visual identity was introduced.



The familiar rose logo is framed in a rounded square, giving a fresh look while linking with Labour's traditional values, and connecting with social democratic parties worldwide, most of whom have a red rose or carnation as part of their logo.

Next to the rose is the word Labour in a new logotype ([Parabucant](#) Medium), hand-retouched for a clean, bold look. [Neo Sans](#) was adopted as the Labour Party's new typeface for all publications.

The 'new Labour' element remains prominent in the party's corporate identity, updated to, 'new Labour for Britain'.





## The Labour logo: its history and development



### The 'roundel' logo

Labour's original symbol, the torch, pen and spade roundel (affectionately known to members as the knife, fork and spoon), which bears the words *Labour Party* and *Liberty*, was adopted in 1924 following an open competition to design a Labour Party badge. The torch symbolised knowledge and the pen and spade represented the working "by hand or by brain" referred to in the original Clause IV, part IV of the party constitution. This

symbol appeared on official documents such as the annual report and later on badges and ties, although it was not widely used on campaign materials and there was no public recognition of it as Labour's corporate image as we would understand it today.

### New-style torch, pen and spade

During the 1970s a more stylised version of the logo was developed and was used on some publications and merchandise, but again did not have any currency outside party membership.



### The flag logo

Following the disastrous 1983 general election, Labour made its first serious attempt at a professional stage presentation at its party conference later that year. A new logo with the words *The Labour Party* in the shape of a red flag appeared on the conference platform and new leaflets and other campaign materials bore the logo. Artwork of the logo was distributed to constituency parties to use on local

printed materials. The party also made efforts to expand its merchandising and new products bearing the flag logo were promoted to members. The 1984 European elections made extensive use of the flag, but no market testing was carried out and although it became known to party supporters there was little public or media awareness of the logo.

### The rose logo

With the appointment of Peter Mandelson as Labour's new Director of Campaigns and Communications in 1985, the party began to realise the importance of presentation and corporate identity, and the need to broaden the party's appeal to a much wider section of the electorate. Part of this process was the development of a new corporate logo.

Most of our sister parties throughout the world use the red rose as their logo and this was felt appropriate here. The party market-tested ideas from a number of designers and the chosen design, by Michael Wolff, was launched at Labour's annual conference in October 1986. The new image was heavily promoted to the media and all party publications and merchandise carried the new corporate identity. Displays of fresh roses appeared on the conference platform and at all subsequent Labour press conferences and events, and the rose was closely identified with Labour during the 1987 general election.

Although we lost that election, Labour's campaign was considered one of the most successful ever in terms of presentation and the Labour rose logo is certainly the best known political symbol in Britain. Polling shows a far wider public recognition of the rose than that of the Conservatives' torch or the Liberal Democrats' bird.

