

Response to « interesting? » Submitted by Arash_Yavari on Wed, 2008-04-16 05:00.

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I am shocked that you say Leonardo, Mandelbrot and Feynman (and Bui) are "trivial history". I start from Leonardo. Today I have no time to go on with Mandelbrot, Feynman, and Bui. But I promise later I will.

Maybe you should consider that Leonardo did not publish anything. You may well see most of the 500 years of "history of mechanics" already contained in his codes!

Leonardo da Vinci (b April 15, 1452 in Vinci, Florence, in present-day Italy, and d. May 2, 1519 aged 67 in Amboise, Indre-et-Loire, in present-day France).

It may seem surprising the reference to this man, dead already almost 500 years ago, in a site which attempts to classify science by papers. Leonardo doesn't have citations! But did you forget Leonardo was ahead of his time 500 years at least? Who between the Timoshenko medallist is 500 years ahead of his time?

Probably agrees with me also one of the richest and most innovative man of our times, Bill Gates, if he bought one of Leonardo's Codex Leicester in 1994 for \$30.8 million, making it the most expensive book ever. I don't know if he ever read ANY of the Timoshenko medallist papers, not even for free!

At more recent prices, and considering there are other 9 codes¹, we can imagine that the order of magnitude of their "market value" is close to a \$1 billion. And this is only the codes!

That the value of these old books with machines and drawings certainly today not state-of-the-art in technology is surprising. There are probably a string of reasons is the span of Leonardo's interests: mathematics to geometry, astronomy, botany, zoology, military arts, architecture and religious themes, self-education in literature and other fields, mechanics of flight, as well as to air resistance, winds and currents, pictorial studies, military art, optics, geometry, the flight of birds, hydraulics and the movement of water, geology and astronomy, anatomy and geography, horse studies, drawings, caricatures and a series of maps. For the latest discovered manuscript (The Madrid Codices, found in 1966), more studies of mechanics and geometry have emerged. We know also of the achievements in art, his Gioconda portrait is probably the most well known painting in history, and responsible to large part of the success of Louvre museum and tourism income of Paris! Hence, even limiting the measure Leonardo's influence with economical means, it becomes easily out-of-control.

I suggest you read the web links below. They may be of interest to iMechanicians.

<http://www.macchinedileonardo.com/index.htm>

<http://www.mostredileonardo.com>

<http://www.leonardo3.net/leonardo/machines.htm#001>

<http://www.vigevano.org/leonardoavigevano/>

¹Codex Arundel, Codex Atlanticus, Codex Trivulzianus, Codex 'On the Flight of Birds', Codex Ashburnham, Codices of the Institut de France, Codex Forster, Windsor folios, The Madrid Codices