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Features of the event-geographical distribution of folk-art products in Russia

Abstract: Russian folk crafts are a form of folk art, in which Russian traditional customs, which originated many centuries ago, are clearly traced. Russian handicrafts combine the uniqueness of Russian traditional culture. Russian art painting has at least 28 geographical varieties, fabric products have at least 11 geographical varieties, metal products and bone carvings have six geographical varieties each, toys have at least 16 geographical varieties. All of them were distributed in various ways on the territory of both Russia and foreign countries. The object of the study was the processes of distribution of works of folk art in Russia. The subject of the study was the mechanisms of distribution of folk-art products in Russia. The purpose of the study was to comprehend the historical practice of the realisation of works of traditional folk-art crafts, characteristics of the role of small retailers (ofenias, peddlers, walkers), fairs, national and international exhibitions in this process. Historical, logical, and critical research methods were applied to achieve the tasks set. The research used scientific articles and monographs of famous Russian and Soviet researchers in traditional applied art of Russia. The author concludes that in the new millennium, the traditional applied art of Russia has entered into conditions when interest in its ancestral roots and folk art has already covered a considerable part of Russian society. However, certain difficulties for the traditional applied art of Russia arise due to weak and ineffective advertising, and the lack of a distribution system for artistic products. If the sale of antiques, as well as the so-called “modern art” rely on a wide network of relevant institutions and organisations, then the sale of Russian folk-art products is just beginning to acquire organised forms. It seems that over time, a network of sales and distribution of folk-art products should still develop. When creating such a network, the experience of the past may well be useful.

Keywords: ofenias, peddlers, fairs, exhibitions, kitsch.

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Особенности событийно-географического распространения изделий народного художественного промысла в России

Аннотация: Русские народные промыслы – это форма народного творчества, в которой отчётливо прослеживаются русские традиционные нравы, зародившиеся много веков назад. Изделия

русских промыслов сочетают в себе неповторимость русской традиционной культуры. Русская художественная роспись насчитывает минимум 28 географических разновидностей, изделия из тканей – не менее 11 географических разновидностей, изделия из металла и резьба по кости – по шесть географических разновидностей, игрушки – не менее 16 географических разновидностей. Все они распространялись различными путями по территории как России, так и зарубежных государств. Объектом исследования были процессы распространения произведений народного художественного промысла в России. Предметом исследования были механизмы распространения изделий народного художественного промысла в России. Целью исследования было осмысление исторической практики реализации произведений традиционных народных художественных промыслов, характеристики роли мелких розничных продавцов (офеней, коробейников, ходобциков), ярмарок, всероссийских и международных выставок в этом процессе. Для достижения поставленных задач были применены исторический, логический и критический методы исследования. В ходе исследования использовались научные статьи и монографии известных российских и советских исследователей в области традиционного прикладного искусства России. Автор делает вывод, что в новое тысячелетие традиционное прикладное искусство России вступило в условиях, когда интерес к своим исконным корням и народному искусству охватил уже немалую часть российского социума. Но определенные трудности для традиционного прикладного искусства России возникают в силу слабой и малоэффективной рекламы, и отсутствием системы распространения художественных изделий. Если продажа антиквариата, а также т.н. «современное искусство» опираются на широкую сеть соответствующих учреждений и организаций, то реализация изделий русского народного искусства еще только начинает приобретать организованные формы. Думается, со временем все же должна сложиться сеть продажи и распространения изделий народного искусства. При создании такой сети вполне может пригодиться опыт прошлого.

Ключевые слова: офени, коробейники, ярмарки, выставки, китч.

Introduction

Folk art craft is one of the forms of folk art, the activity of creating artistic products for utilitarian and decorative purposes, performed on the basis of collective development and continuous development of folk-art traditions in a certain area in the process of creative manual and mechanised labour of masters of folk-art crafts. Decorative and applied art can be created by one artist, often with academic knowledge. Crafts are necessarily based on the traditions of any locality. In the old days, people worked side by side in whole villages, exchanged ideas and passed on knowledge to children. Over time, the plots gained depth, and the skill became more and more refined. Artists united in artels; whole factories were opened. Many products have become symbols of their districts: their lines and colours reflect the philosophy of local residents, a collective understanding of beauty.

Russian folk crafts are a form of folk art, in which Russian traditional customs, which originated many centuries ago, are clearly traced. Russian handicrafts combine the uniqueness of Russian traditional culture. Russian art painting has at least 28 geographical varieties, fabric products have at least 11 geographical varieties, metal products and bone carvings have six geographical varieties each, toys have at least 16 geographical varieties. All of them were distributed in various ways on the territory of both Russia and neighbouring states.

The object of the study was the processes of distribution of works of folk art in Russia.

The subject of the study was the mechanisms of distribution of folk-art products in Russia.

The purpose of the study was to comprehend the historical practice of the realisation of works of traditional folk-art crafts, characteristics of the role of small retailers (ofenias, peddlers, walkers), fairs, national and international exhibitions in this process.

Based on the purpose of the study, the following tasks were developed:

- analyse the role of ofenias in the dissemination of works of traditional folk arts and crafts;
- explore the role of fair trade in traditional applied art products;
- investigate the role of All-Russian art and industrial exhibitions in the development of the market of sales of traditional applied art products;
- explore the role of international exhibitions in the dissemination of Russian traditional applied art;
- identify the influence of socialist realism on Russian folk art.

Historical, logical, and critical research methods were applied to achieve the tasks set.

The research used scientific articles and monographs of famous Russian and Soviet researchers in traditional applied art of Russia.

The role of ofenias in the dissemination of works of traditional folk arts and crafts

It is still not enough to produce a wonderful artistic product. It is necessary to deliver it to consumers. In Russia, until the beginning of the 20th century, there were entire categories of the population engaged in trade in traditional applied art products. They were called ofenias, peddlers. There were many local names for retailers. However, ofenias were the most famous of them.

Ofenias were wandering retailers selling manufactured goods, haberdashery, books, cheap jewelry, icons, etc. From the 17th to the 19th centuries, ofenias were the main, and sometimes the only distributors among the peasants of “urban” products. They also contributed to the spread of folk-art crafts among the masses. And only at the beginning of the 20th century, when a network of railways stretched across Russia, the ofenian craft began to decline, and in Soviet times, in the early 1930s, it completely disappeared. The heyday of the activity of the ofenias fell on the period immediately after the abolition of serfdom in the 1860s-80s. The liberation of the peasants immediately caused an increase in trade and facilitated movement in Russia. At that time, according to indirect estimates, the ofenian craft covered more than five million people of the peasant population, who were engaged in one way or another in trade in a variety of ways. This could include both seasonal trades, outside the time of peasant employment, and professionals who were engaged exclusively in trade.

The origin of the word “ofenia” is not clear. K. Tikhonravov most likely considered its origin from “Athenians”, as the wandering Greek merchants were called, of whom many appeared in Russia, especially in the second half of the 15th century (*Tikhonravov, 1857, p. 23*). It should note that Greek words were really present in the ofenian jargon. Over time, local merchants-walkers could assimilate the nickname “ofenia”.

Although ofenias offered peasants almost all products that could not be produced in the village, or village products of higher quality, but among them it is especially necessary to single out the ofenias who were icon makers. They mostly lived in the Vyaznikovsky district of the Vladimir province. The centers of yjem were the villages of Mstera, as well as Kholui and Palekh,

standing on important trade routes. The Vladimir province was distinguished by its abundance of deciduous forests, the presence of water trade routes (Oka, Klyazma, Teza, etc.), proximity to Moscow and at the same time to the cities of the Volga region, the poverty of local soils, which made it impossible to live only by agriculture, seasonality and unevenness of peasant labour itself. All this made it possible to develop iconographic and related crafts in the Vladimir region.

The scope of Vladimir ofenias activity was impressive. Only in the last quarter of the 19th century, when the level of ofenian trade began to decline, there were more than 150 ofenian villages. The vast territory to which the icon makers spread their craft can also be judged by the variety of nicknames with which they were awarded in various regions of Russia. In particular, they were called “Varangians” in Little Russia, “mayaks” in Belarus, “torgovans”, i.e., merchants, in the Russian North, “vyaznikovtsy” and “suzdals”, i.e., the Suzdal ofenias, in Siberia. They spread the geography of their craft so widely that the icons they carried could be found from Finland and Serbia to the Far East (*Dubrovsky & Dubrovsky, 2018*).

Suzdal icons began to fall even beyond the borders of the Russian Empire, and the first mentions of this date back at least to the beginning of the 18th century. In particular, in 1705, ten Palekh peasants, with the permission of their landowner Buturlin, applied to the Embassy Order with a request to issue them a letter of passage to the Volosh and Serbian lands “for the exchange” of icons. Considering the quantity of goods intended for sale and exchange (several thousand), it can be concluded that these were icons of mass production, i.e., “common”. Three years later, the Paleshans, i.e., people of Palekh, were there again though the Russian government sent a special decree to the Kiev governor to close the border for ofenias and prohibit them to trade holy images on the lands of the Turkish Empire. In 1754, the Suzdal Archpriest Anania Fedorov wrote that “many residents of Kholui and Palekh depart with holy icons to distant countries, that is, to Poland, Caesarea, Slovenia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and others, and they exchanged these holy icons there” (*Dubrovsky & Dubrovsky, 2018*).

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, ofenias continued to actively sell icons abroad. N.P. Kondakov noted that “southern and eastern Russia, formerly also Romania and the Balkan Peninsula” were the main collection points for icons of Palekh, Kholui, and Mstera (*Kondakov, 1901, p. 32*).

Old Believers were among the most active buyers of icons from ofenias. The trade in icons of the pre-Nikonian script was officially banned, but ofenias circumvented the prohibitions by distributing icons among Old Believers of various interpretations and consents. In fairness, it should note that ofenias were also famous for various deceptions and cheating, e.g., selling icons forged “for antiquity”. It is interesting that ofenias were called “Pharisees” in Moscow.

In addition to icons, ofenias also distributed splints and other literature among the people. Until Soviet times, it was ofenias who introduced the peasants to liturgical, popular, fiction literature, calendars and pictures. Finally, ofenias sold tea, sugar, metal, and later glass and even porcelain dishes in the villages.

Thus, Russian traditional applied art would hardly have been developed on a large scale without the activity of ofenias.

The role of fair trade in traditional applied art products

Fairs was one of the main traditional forms of Russian trade, the main source of distribution of all types of traditional applied art among the people. It was a place of periodic importation of goods and their purchase and sale. They existed in Russia since ancient times. In 1913, there were 18.5 thousand fairs in Russia, operating in seven thousand settlements. Their total turnover reached about 1.5 billion rubles. Rural fairs accounted for more than 80% of the total number of fairs.

The border between a fair and a regular market was rather arbitrary. It is believed that the market functions constantly, and the fair is quite seasonal. As a rule, fairs also differ in the specialisation of the goods sold – forest, horse, fur, etc.

In Russia, the largest fair was in Nizhny Novgorod. It was universal, almost all products that could be found in the world were sold and bought there. In 1913, 2,919 trading firms and 13,654 nonresident and foreign merchants took part in it. Its trade turnover reached almost 200 million rubles in 1912.

Among the works of traditional applied art there were:

- icons, crosses and other items of religious significance;
- red goods (clothing, fabrics with artistic embroidery, lace, calico, cloth, calico, velvet, brocade, yarn, etc.);
- iron and metal products, including samovars;
- small things useful in the household (salt shakers, thimbles, boxes of various purposes, spoons, splint literature, etc.);
- the rarest and most expensive – jewelry, mirrors, watches.

Some fairs had a kind of “specialisation” on icons, e.g., Tikhvin fairs in Kholui supplied small icons to the vast territory of several provinces (*Lebedev, 2018, p. 684*).

The role of All-Russian art and industrial exhibitions in the development of the market of sales of traditional applied art products

All-Russian art and industrial exhibitions rather regularly held nationwide exhibitions of the latest achievements of industry, science, arts and crafts. In Russia, back in 1807, the Minister of Commerce, Count Nikolai Rumyantsev, proposed to arrange a general exhibition of products of Russian industry. At the same time, there was start of a project for its implementation. Famous architects V. Stasov and Charles Cameron developed original projects of architectural decoration of exhibitions, which were not realised at that time. The wars with Napoleon and the financial difficulties caused by them postponed the implementation of the project for a long time.

The first All-Russian Exhibition of Manufactured Products was held in St. Petersburg on May 9, 1829. This was the beginning of such exhibitions in Russia for a whole century. *The Rules on the Arrangement of Exhibitions of Russian Manufactured Products in St. Petersburg* were put into effect by a Senate decree dated October 22, 1828. In 1849, special exhibition legislation was developed (Article 211 of the Code of Laws). In 1913, a new corresponding law was introduced.

For 85 years, the following All-Russian exhibitions were organised and held:

1829 – St. Petersburg,

1831 – Moscow,

1833 – St. Petersburg,
1835 – Moscow,
1839 – St. Petersburg,
1841 – Warsaw,
1843 – Moscow,
1845 – Warsaw,
1849 – St. Petersburg,
1853 – Moscow,
1857 – Warsaw,
1861 – St. Petersburg,
1865 – Moscow,
1870 – St. Petersburg,
1882 – Moscow,
1896 – Nizhniy Novgorod,
1901 – Riga,
1913 – Kyiv.

Initially, the exhibitions were called manufactory, although they also showed handicrafts, many of which had artistic significance. Already at the Warsaw Exhibition of 1841, along with industrial, agricultural and artistic products were allowed. The 15th exhibition of 1882 in Moscow was conceived as a “demonstration of the totality of productive human activity as a whole”, both industrial and purely artistic. For this reason, this exhibition was named the All-Russian Art and Industrial Exhibition. All subsequent exhibitions bore the same name.

Exhibitions were considered not just as a demonstration of products, but more often as “excellent examinations for the manufacturing and generally productive forces of the Fatherland.” As a result, exhibitions often played the role of a kind of exchange, and millions of transactions were concluded during each exhibition.

Special art departments, in which the works of famous artists were presented, were opened at the exhibition in Moscow in 1882 and Nizhny Novgorod in 1896.

The list of organisers of the All-Russian Exhibition of 1882 in Moscow and 1896 in Nizhny Novgorod contains information about the spread of crafts across the country. At the 1896 Nizhny Novgorod Fair, 1,275 artisans participating independently presented their products, and about the same number of craftsmen within the expositions of the zemstvo administrations, about 2,500 people in total. The Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, and Vyatka zemstvos shew the largest expositions (*The All-Russian Exhibition in Nizhny Novgorod..., 1896, p. 236*).

In addition to the common All-Russian exhibitions, All-Russian specialised (agricultural, hygienic, handicraft) exhibitions were also held. Provincial exhibitions were held at the local level (since the exhibition of the Vladimir Province in 1837). In addition, regional scientific and industrial exhibitions dedicated to the economic and cultural achievements of entire regions were organised. Such were the Siberian-Ural Exhibition of 1887 in Yekaterinburg and the Kazan Exhibition of 1890. The Ethnographic Slavic Exhibition of 1867 deserves special consideration.

The great public outcry of industrial exhibitions, admission to which until 1853 was free for visitors, led to significant number of visitors. Already at the first exhibitions, the number of

visitors exceeded 100,000, the Moscow Exhibition of 1882 and the Nizhny Novgorod Exhibition of 1896 were visited by over 1 million people.

After holding a number of local exhibitions in 1882, an artisanal department first appeared at the All-Russian level. The provincial zemstvos and statistical committees played a major role in the preparation of them. There the handicraft industry appeared before specialists and the general public with the necessary completeness, characterising the degree of distribution, the size of production, the economic significance of this form of labour, which involved several million workers. An important aspect of this exhibition was the maintenance of interest in folk art, the study of mass aesthetic representations, but at the same time, to identify weaknesses of handicraft industries and the need to assist in preserving the traditions of folk art (*Goppe, 1882, p. 256*).

The development of Russian painting, sculpture, and architecture for a quarter of a century was represented by an extensive art department. More than 1 million visitors saw the works of V.M. Vasnetsov, A.A. Ivanov, I.E. Repin, A.K. Savrasov, M.M. Antokolsky, E.A. Lancere, K.A. Ton, N.L. Benois, etc.

The material result of the art and industrial exhibitions was the formation of museum collections, e.g., the Handicraft Museum of the Moscow Zemstvo, the Technical Museum of the IRTO, the Nizhny Tagil Factory Museum, the Museum of the Izhora Admiralty Factories, etc.

The experience of pre-revolutionary exhibitions was used in Soviet times when organising a number of industrial, agricultural, and handicraft exhibitions of the 1920s. The idea about the need to create a permanent stationary exhibition expressed by many figures of the 19th century was reflected in the creation of the *Exhibition of Achievements of National Economy*, or VDNH. Now it is the *All-Russian Exhibition Center*, or VVC. In the post-Soviet era, a wide variety of exhibitions were a constant phenomenon of the economic and cultural life of Russia.

The role of international exhibitions in the dissemination of Russian traditional applied art

The 1851 World Fair in London

It was the first of the international fairs of art and industrial exhibitions in history. This exhibition laid down the methods of holding such exhibitions and had a huge impact on many types and trends in art. It was open from May 1 to October 15. Six million people – a figure previously unseen in history – visited it.

Industrial goods and various handicrafts, machines, production methods, as well as minerals and works of fine art were presented at the first world exhibition. For the first time, many technical achievements were shown to the world. Germany demonstrated railway locomotives and steel from Krupp plants. England presented the Crystal Palace, the main sensation of the exhibition, a structure made of glass and metal, which became the prototype of the architecture of the 20th century. In addition, the British also showed steam engines for ocean-going ships. The United States presented Singer sewing machines and Colt automatic revolvers. France captivated visitors with Sevres porcelain, Lyon silk, and tapestries (*Shpakov, 2008, p. 23*). Due to the underestimation by Russian officials of the importance of the exhibition, Russia has not shown all of its achievements in science and industry. In the Russian exposition, the equipment was presented very modestly. P.P. Anosov, a well-known metallurgist, took part in the exhibition,

demonstrating the bulat he restored (*Shpakov, 2008, p. 27*). However, many Russian exhibits did not receive awards.

And, nevertheless, Russia surprised everyone with the success of its art industry and folk-art crafts. Silk fabrics, artistically processed leather, jewelry, numerous malachite products, among which there were even tables, fireplaces, vases, and other malachite furniture – they amazed visitors to the exhibition.

Out of 365 Russian exhibits, three were awarded a Large Medal – court jewelers Kamer and Zeftigen, Moscow manufacturer of silver products I. Sazikov and St. Petersburg factory of malachite products Demidov. Also, 60 exhibits were awarded a medal of the second degree and 67 were done commendable reviews (*Industry, pp. 563-583*).

The 1867 World Fair in Paris

It was one of the first (after the exhibitions of 1851 in London and 1855 in Paris) in the world history of art and industrial exhibitions. The official name was the *World Exhibition of Works of Agriculture, Industry and Arts*. The exhibition opened in April and lasted until November. On the Champ de Mars, a huge building made of glass and iron was erected for it, inside which seven exhibition galleries were located. More than 200 large and small pavilions occupied 70 hectares of the adjacent area. In total, about 42 thousand exhibitors participated in the exhibition. During the six months of the exhibition's operation, about 10 million Europeans got acquainted with the latest achievements of Russian industry, science, technology, and culture. Among the exhibits presented, Prussia exhibited a guillotine capable of chopping off 6-8 heads at once (*Shpakov, 2008, p. 49*).

The well-known writer Dmitry Grigorovich was appointed the General Commissioner of the Russian Department. The Russian Department consisted of 1,392 exhibition items. The Emperor Alexander II, who arrived in Paris, visited the exhibition. The Emperor Napoleon III, who ruled France, visited the Russian exposition together with him. The assassination attempt on Alexander II by Polish emigrant Anton Berezovsky overshadowed the celebrations.

An unprecedented triumph of the Russian Department began from the very first day of the exhibition. This triumph was directly connected with the exhibited works of Russian decorative art. Crowds of visitors came to see a bronze model of the Peter and Paul Fortress by the St. Petersburg factory of artistic bronze, and a carved wooden hut built without a single nail by a carpenter's artel from the Vladimir province. The jury awarded this exposition with a silver medal (*A Forgotten Reality..., 2018*).

There were the works of 40 Russian painters in the art exhibition. The battle artist Kotsebu for the monumental canvas *Poltava Victory*, mosaic works of the Peterhof Lapidary Factory, and the Imperial Academy of Arts were awarded a gold medal and a cash prize. Ivan Sokolov, the master of the Peterhof lapidary Factory, was awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honor for the mosaics of St. Isaac's Cathedral (by the way, he participated in the exhibition of 1851) (*Shpakov, 2008, p. 55*). The images of the ancient Novgorod church on Nereditsa, built in 1198, and copies of its frescoes presented at the exhibition so shocked the French that Napoleon III ordered a special medal to be cast in honour of this temple.

At the same time, as the press noted, Russia “amazed with some industrial products.” According to the industry section, medals of various degrees were awarded to tools and tool

steel of the St. Petersburg Obukhov plant, products of the Admiralty Izhora factories, the St. Petersburg Mint, fabrics of the Nevsky Paper-Spinning Manufactory, and many other enterprises (*A Forgotten Reality...*, 2018). Of the more than 1,300 exhibits presented in the Russian section, 478 received awards (2 Grand Prixpri, 21 gold, 93 silver, 211 bronze medals and 151 Honorary reviews) (*Shpakov, 2008, p. 56*). Among the awardees were such products of Russian crafts and art industry as jewelry of I.P. Sazikov, P.S. Ovchinnikov, I.P. Khlebnikov; Yu.S. Nechaev-Maltsev crystal, M.S. Kuznetsov porcelain (*Illustrated description of the World Industrial Exhibition in Paris...*, 1869, p. 349).

The 1873 World Fair in Vienna

It took place from May 1 to November 2 and also glorified Russian traditional folk art. Visitors showed interest in the unique wooden clocks of the Bronnikov brothers from Vyatka. E.F. Faltz-Fein from the Kherson province for samples of washed wool, furs of the Riga entrepreneur M. Grunwald, and furniture of the St. Petersburg workshop N.F. Shtange (chandeliers and candelabra), founded back in 1818, were awarded. The Tula samovar *Rooster*, made according to the sketch of the future famous artist V.M., was awarded a gold medal. The legs of the samovar were cast in the form of a cock's paws and tail, and the spout was in the form of a rooster's head. On the glittering gilding, inscriptions "The samovar is boiling – it does not tell you to leave" and "Where there is tea, there is paradise under the spruce" were emblazoned (*Shpakov, 2008, pp. 74-75*).

The World Exhibition of Science, Technology, and Arts of 1889 in Paris

It was dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Great French Revolution. Because of politicization, Russia and 10 other monarchical states participated in the events of the exhibition unofficially, i.e., only by private individuals. 29 countries officially took part in the exhibition. The exhibition gathered 56 thousand participants. About 62 thousand exhibits were thematically divided into 9 groups. The exhibition was located in the very center of Paris. The exhibition area occupied more than 70 hectares. A 300-meter-high metal tower was built specially for the exhibition, designed by Gustave Eiffel.

Though Russia did not take an official part in the Paris review, but the Russian department was nevertheless presented with dignity. It occupied an area of 3800 sq. m. 820 Russian representatives exhibited their exhibits here. The Symphony Orchestra conducted by N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov has repeatedly performed at exhibition events. Russian restaurant with Russian dishes, which was arranged on the first platform of the Eiffel Tower during the exhibition, enjoyed great success with the Parisian public.

Russia's unofficial participation in the exhibition inevitably affected its quality. The cost of participating in the exhibition was entirely borne by the exhibitors themselves. There were no Russian exhibits in the car department. The mining section did not reflect the state of the Russian mining industry and was significantly inferior to similar departments at previous world exhibitions. Nevertheless, 671 Russian exhibitors received awards – 19 honorary diplomas, 128 gold, 184 silver, 210 bronze medals and 130 honorary reviews, i.e., more than 80% of the total number of awards of the world exhibition.

Among the most significant exhibits of the Russian department there was the collection of soils sent by Professor V.V. Dokuchaev. The “cube” of chernozem brought from Voronezh was of particular interest. The collection of Russian soils received the gold medal of the exhibition. Visitors and the press noted the quality of Kuznetsov’s faience, Batashev and Vorontsov’s Tula samovars, Morozov’s chintz, Novinsky’s furs, Labzin’s Pavlovo-Posadsky shawls, hunting furniture and Greenwald effigies, products made of Alibera stones. Special praise was given to Savin’s leather, Svirsky’s furniture, Chopin’s bronze, Khlebnikov and Ovchinnikov’s silverware, and Frashe’s melchior. The first producer of Russian cognac, the founder of famous cognac factories in Kizlyar, Erivan (Yerevan) and Tiflis, D.Z. Saradzhiev was awarded two gold medals at once (*Nikitin, 2009*).

The 1900 World Fair in Paris

International art, industrial, scientific, and technical exhibition dedicated to the coming 20th century. It was held from April 15 to November 12. The exhibition was visited by over 50 million people – a record number in the history of international exhibition activity. 35 countries participated in the exhibition. Russia turned out to be the main triumphant of the exhibition.

Even before the exhibition began in Paris, the Alexander III bridge across the Seine River built by Russian engineers was opened. It is still considered the most beautiful Paris bridge. Russian Department occupied the largest exhibition area – 24 thousand sq. m. The General Commissar of the Russian Department was Prince Tennishev. Vice-President of the International Jury D.I. Mendeleev also participated in the work of the department. In the Department of electrical Engineering, the first radio personally presented by its inventor Alexander Popov was demonstrated. The central pavilion of the Russian Department was built in the form of the Kazan Kremlin. Nearby there were structures in the form of peasant huts, boyar towers and a church.

During the exhibition, the Russian exposition received 1,589 awards, including 212 highest, 370 gold medals, 436 silver, 347 bronze, and 224 honorary reviews.

In particular, the highest awards were given to a number of structures of the Great Siberian Railway. The Transsib was presented in the form of a panorama. The audience entered the sleeping car and saw a moving panorama in the windows, which was depicted on a tape winding from one cylinder to another. The Grand Prix was awarded to the Crimean champagne factory New World by Prince Lev Golitsin, and chocolate partnership Einem (today, it is the factory Red October), and the exposition of the Prokhorov manufactory. The crystal Grand Prix of the exhibition and a large gold medal were awarded to the Kasli cast-iron pavilion of the Kyshtym Mountain District, designed by architect and artist E. Baumgarten. Even the matryoshka doll, participated in such an exhibition for the first time, received a gold medal – for the originality of the form and the originality of the painting (*Orlov, 1900, p. 224*).

The influence of socialist realism on Russian folk art

In the Soviet period of Russian history, though the Bolsheviks fully shared the progressive ideas coming from the philosophy of Enlightenment, and artists who worked in the traditional manner were viewed as Black Hundreds, or, at best, as a “backward element”, folk art crafts did

not disappear. Moreover, in the 1920s and 1930s, new centers of lacquer miniature appeared in Palekh, Mstera, and Kholui. Unemployed bogomazs have found their place in art.

This is also the merit of prominent Soviet figures. Thus, Palekh art could hardly survive without the support of the famous writer M. Gorky. Everyone can treat the work of the “petrel of the revolution” differently, but its role in the development of the Russian lacquers’ art is enormous. It is no coincidence that the Palekh Art School bears his name. The prominent Bolshevik figure M.I. Kalinin played an important role in the preservation and further development of the Zlatoust engraving on steel. At the beginning of 1940, according to the initiative of the Soviet leader V.M. Molotov, the Leningrad Art Glass Factory was created. It is also possible to admire the fact that the then Soviet leaders in the conditions of war with the Finns and during the preparation of the war against Germany still found the time and opportunity to create enterprises producing artistic products.

The dominant (and generally permitted) artistic method in the Soviet era was socialist realism, or so-called realism. It was a term used in Soviet literary and art criticism from the 1930s to the 1980s to denote the “main method” of literature and art, which “requires the artist to truthfully, historically concrete depiction of reality in its revolutionary development,” combined “with the task of educating workers in the spirit of socialism.” At the time of its proclamation in the early 1930s, socialist realism was opposed to the realism of the 19th century, which was called “critical” by M. Gorky. As it was proclaimed, socialist realism, having no grounds for criticism in the new society, had to glorify the heroics of everyday work, scenes of unity of the people and party speakers calling to him, to embody a bright dream of the future. In practice, the introduction of socialist realism (mainly through the newly created organisation in 1932 – the Union of Artists of the USSR and the Ministry of Culture) led to the subordination of literature and art to the principles of ideology and politics. All art associations, except the Union of Artists, were banned. The main customer was the state, the main genre is a “thematic painting” in the spirit of *peredvizhnik* realism, reworked by the masters of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia. Artists who continued to defend the freedom of creativity and did not fit into the “official line” were not allowed to attend exhibitions. “Socialist realism” was replaced in the 1960s and 1970s by the so-called “harsh style” (*Gorkin, n.d.*).

Since the 1950s, the movement of “unofficial art”, creating an alternative to “socialist realism”, began. Most of what was called the Soviet “underground” had no artistic value, being simply an element of propaganda in the Cold War to create some kind of “free art”. The undoubted merit of Socialist realism was the preservation and development of the traditions of Russian realistic art. Many artists, creating by the method of social realism, have created many beautiful works of art.

Socialist realism had a great influence on folk art, both in the subject matter of the created works and in the ways of representation, e.g., in embroidery and lacquer miniature, especially in the 1930s, when Soviet symbols were depicted (sickles and hammers, red stars, Budenovka, portraits of leaders). In general, for folk art, the period of socialist realism, unlike some types of art, was one of the most difficult and contradictory periods of development (*Sergievsky, 2018, p. 314*).

The achievements of the country’s traditional art were clearly evidenced by the international exhibition of art and technology, held from May 25 to November 25, 1937 in Paris, which

became a triumph of Russian science, technology, and art. The Soviet exposition at the exhibition collected 270 awards, 95 of them were the Grand Prix, 70 gold, 40 silver, 6 bronze medals, more than fifty diplomas. The sculpture *Worker and Kolkhoz Farmer* created by V.I. Mukhina for the exhibition immediately entered the history of sculpture of the 20th century. The jewelry mosaic panel *Industry of Socialism*, which was a map of the Soviet Union made of precious and semiprecious stones, was demonstrated at the exhibition and became a global sensation. The forerunners of the panels were set icons made of precious and ornamental stones, made in the Urals in the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as relief set maps of the Urals made of minerals by Kuzma Denisov and his son Alexey Denisov-Uralsky in the 1870s and 80s. In this sense, folk art has had an inspiring effect on the work of the art industry, made by state order. The products of folk art also attracted great attention of the public. In particular, the Veliky Ustyug silver blackening by Evstafiy Shilnikovskiy received a large silver medal. Also, at this exhibition, for the first time, a lacquer miniature of a Lackey, awarded a bronze medal, received world recognition. The triumph was especially impressive, given the outright hostility and bias of the jury and the anti-Soviet campaign in the press.

After the Second World War, Russian traditional art found itself in a paradoxical position: it became an officially recognised historical value of the country, but recognition did not mean that this art would continue to develop, and would not remain the storage units of museums.

The trend that dominated architecture from the late 1930s to the mid-1950s, known as the Stalin's Empire Style, based on the style of the absolute monarchy of the early 19th century, influenced all types of Soviet artistic creativity. Not only the monumental pomp and imperial scale of high-rise buildings, but also classicism in painting directly influenced the products of traditional art. The rooms of that time were characterised by high white ceilings with a lot of stucco, an abundance of carvings on pieces of furniture, bronze statuettes. Soviet symbols were widely used in ornaments: an endless alternation of five-pointed stars, banners, ears of corn, and laurel wreaths. Stalin's Empire Style was distinguished by huge bronze chandeliers with crystal pendants and natural expensive materials (marble, crystal, wood) in the decoration of a solid, but heavy interior.

As interior accents, products from factories such as Dulevo or the Leningrad Porcelain Factory were popular. Small figures of people and animals, utopian scenes from the life of a village or city displayed in porcelain were available in almost every house. The dominant colour was white – other colors were applied in separate strokes, never painting the statuette as a whole. In addition, Gzhel motifs were popular (*Sergienksy, 2018, pp. 317-321*).

All this contributed to the preservation of traditions and the further development of decorative applied art. However, already in 1954, the struggle against “architectural excesses” began. It again affected traditional art. In 1960, almost all art artels were liquidated. They turned into ordinary factories. In these conditions, it could only wonder that Russian traditional art has survived at all.

In addition to political problems, there were also social and cultural problems, which, however, were characteristic of all industrialised countries. In the four decades since the war, Russia transformed from a predominantly peasant country into a country of townspeople. In 1897, the urban population of Russia was 12.9% of the total population, 15.3% in 1914, 21.3% in 1926, and 74.4% in 1979. The traditional peasantry has completely disappeared as a class. The

artisanal sector of the economy also practically disappeared, more precisely, it became “shadow”. As a result, traditional art largely disappeared, and what existed was mostly presented in the form of kitsch products for tourists. And once again, Russian traditional art demonstrated a unique survival. Kitsch can and should be considered as evidence of a certain artistic decline. However, in the specific conditions of the 1960s and 1980s, the desire of tourists to buy a souvenir turned out to be beneficial for art.

Conclusion

In the new millennium, the traditional applied art of Russia has entered the conditions when interest in its ancestral roots and folk art has already covered a considerable part of Russian society. However, certain difficulties for the traditional applied art of Russia arise due to weak and ineffective advertising, and the lack of a distribution system for artistic products. If the sale of antiques, as well as the so-called “modern art” rely on a wide network of relevant institutions and organisations, then the sale of Russian folk-art products is just beginning to acquire organized forms. It seems that over time, a network of sales and distribution of folk-art products should still develop. When creating such a network, the experience of the past may well be useful.

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