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Folk Art as a Phenomenon of Philosophical Understanding

Abstract: Folk art is fundamentally based on the cultural and traditional heritage of previous generations. Traditional applied art cannot exist without relying on the cultural heritage of society. The article is devoted to the philosophical understanding of the phenomenon of folk art. Folk art, which originated in the Paleolithic period and is based on the artistic tradition of the ethnic group, continues to exist in some industrialised countries, including Russia. The author concludes that folk art of the world and Russia has passed a contradictory path. Having generated the “great” art of the classical type, folk art has moved down to the level of subsidiary crafts, and in some countries – to kitsch. However, in the modern conditions of globalisation and the “return of ethnicity”, folk art takes on new features.

Keyword: cultural heritage, folk art, tradition, traditional applied art, conservation, renovation, revitalization, industrial era, post-industrial era.

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Народное искусство как феномен философского осмысления

Аннотация: Народное искусство основано на культурном и традиционном наследии предыдущих поколений. Традиционное прикладное искусство не может существовать без опоры на культурное наследие общества. Статья посвящена философскому осмыслению феномена народного творчества. Народное искусство, зародившееся в период палеолита и основанное на художественных традициях этноса, продолжает существовать в некоторых промышленно развитых странах, в том числе в России. Автор приходит к выводу, что народное искусство мира и России прошло противоречивый путь. Произведя «великое» искусство классического типа, народное искусство перешло в разряд вспомогательных, а в некоторых странах – в китч. Однако в современных условиях глобализации и «возвращения этничности» народное искусство приобретает новые черты.

Ключевые слова: культурное наследие, народное искусство, традиция, традиционное прикладное искусство, консервация, реновация, ревитализация, индустриальная эпоха, постиндустриальная эпоха.

Conservation, Restoration, Renovation and Revitalization of Folk Art

What is meant by “folk art” in the philosophical concept? Folk art exists as a phenomenon. Recall that in philosophy, the word “phenomenon” (Greek: φαινόμενον, from φαίνεσθαι—to appear, to be visible, also—to appear) is a phenomenon, an object given in sensory contemplation (*Mikhailov, 2010*). It is necessary to recall that a phenomenon is an object of our perception, e.g., the Moon is a satellite of the Earth, representing a spherical body devoid of atmosphere. A moon is an object. However, the crescent is a phenomenon. Thus, traditionally, folk applied art, it is a phenomenon. Therefore, we study how traditional art manifests itself as part of the art as a whole.

Consequently, folk art has existed and will continue to exist as long as people exist. This article is an attempt to flesh out the folk art as such.

Folk art is fundamentally based on the cultural and traditional heritage of previous generations. According to the most prominent researcher of Russian folk-art M.A. Nekrasova, “each nation has its own culture of poetically imaginative and craft traditions. Passed down from generation to generation as a result of collective creativity, these traditions acquire stable expressive and emotional structures that pass through the centuries. With tradition, folk art transmits not only skill but also artistic principles, implemented by each time in its way and bearing its national character.” (*Nekrasova, 1982*) According to the academician, the President of VSNI V.F. Maksimovich, “traditional arts and crafts are one of the most important elements of the cultural “gene pool” of Russia, as it assumes the function of protecting national identity in the context of globalisation, the widespread of products of mass culture that generates and accumulates a cultural memory of generations. Authentic works of folk art have always played an important role in educating people’s patriotic feelings, contributing to the preservation of national identity and the identity of national cultural life.” (*Maksimovich, 2018*)

Thus, traditional applied art cannot exist without relying on the cultural heritage of society.

As M.A. Nekrasova noted, “Folk art is not separate objects. This is a whole and harmonious world, which is mercilessly violated when a particular thing is snatched from it and when it is placed in an unusual environment. Works of folk art are extremely inferior in the halls of modern exhibitions and are much better perceived in the natural environment of the peasant hut—where they still live, and in museums of everyday life, in the ‘working environment’ for which they were created.” (*Nekrasova, 1983*) According to T.E. Lonchinskaya, a scientist and restorer of art products, “works of folk art—objects of material culture—are the expression of the spiritual life of the people.” (*Lonchinskaya, 2009*)

However, as A. Buychik notes, “the cultural image of society cannot be formed from nowhere, from a clean slate. This is the result of centuries-old transformations, diffusions and interpenetrations of semiotic series, traditions, folklore, in its essence, the formation of intangible cultural heritage and its transfer to the material shell, which begins to form the concept of heritage value, first in economic perception (equivalent), and then spiritual—the value of the past for society in the future.” (*Buychik, 2019*)

Folk art is based on artistic traditions. Traditions at all times are a necessary condition for the very life of the nation. Traditions also have an integrative character for ethnic communities, singling out “their own” and at the same time separating them from “others.” In early societies,

traditions regulated absolutely all spheres of life of an individual and society as a whole. It is no coincidence that many researchers call the human society of the pre-industrial era traditional. The industrial revolution led to the disappearance of many traditions of the former society, and those traditions remained were subjected to a kind of “erosion”, turning into a set of customs and rituals that often do not make sense in the eyes of ordinary citizens.

The main directions of preserving cultural heritage and developing traditional applied arts on its basis can be considered conservation, restoration and renovation. Conservation (Lat. *conservatio*—conservation) is actions aimed at long-term preservation of any objects. Restoration (Lat. *restauratio*—restoration) is a set of measures aimed at preventing subsequent destruction and achieving optimal opportunities for further long-term preservation of monuments of material culture (*Vygonnaya et al., 2000*).

Renovation can be considered very important for the development of traditional applied art. T.E. Lonchinskaya, speaking about the renovation in lace-making, which is absolutely true for all other types of traditional folk art, notes that “renovation (Lat. *renovatio*—renewal) in the traditional applied art of lace-making is the recreation, updating of artistic works with a comprehensive study of them. Renovation of folk artworks includes: mastering the cultural heritage, studying the historical period, understanding technological and technical traditions, analyzing compositional solutions, studying technology and material, learning the experience of previous artists, using the collective nature of work, fully preserving the spirituality of the folk-art tradition and, as a result, educating the artist-bearer of this art form in artistic Russian lace weaving.” (*Lonchinskaya, 2009*)

Finally, the peak of the preservation and development of folk art is its revitalization, that is, the renewal of the life of folk art. Not only the preservation of ‘old’ traditional art forms but also the development of new ones. All this revives folk art in new forms really.

Folk Art as One of the Foundations of Ethnic Identity

In our era, the philosophy of traditional applied art can acquire all the features of a global philosophy. Indeed, the end of the 20th century, with its wars, multiple mass genocides, environmental problems, and cultural crises, has led to disillusionment with the very belief that man can change the world for the better. Theodor Adorno, one of the greatest philosophers of the last century, said, “After Auschwitz, poetry is impossible.” (*Adorno, 2003*) The seemingly almost achieved victory of humanity over nature was equivalent to defeat. The general crisis, which engulfed almost all aspects of human existence, destroyed the former enthusiastic optimism. The longing for a brighter future that was so characteristic of philosophy and art has largely disappeared. After all, the future was not bright at all, but rather frightening. The environmental crisis has made everything fragile, temporary, ephemeral and doomed (*Lebedev, 2013*).

Today, humanity has come to realize the exhaustion of the previous version of the world's development, in the absence of a clear understanding of what will replace it. It is no accident that nowadays, when determining certain features of the state of the world, the prefix ‘post-’ is most often used. Western society is called post-industrial, post-class, and post-national. Europe is considered a “post-Christian” continent. European integration, which largely deprived the countries of the European Union of state sovereignty, led to the emergence of European “post-

statehood.” The lack of ideological alternatives is also evident in the post-ideological nature of the modern world ([Lebedev, 2013](#)).

In these conditions, the problem of preserving the traditional cultural heritage of humanity in general and specific ethnic groups in particular becomes one of the most important tasks of the people of the 21st century. When the present becomes shaky and uncertain, and the future is alarming, people for the most part turn to the good, old, time-tested ideas and arts. In other words, the cultural heritage of the people becomes its support in the vague everyday life of our time. Cultural heritage is a part of material and spiritual culture created by past generations ([Cultural heritage..., 2016](#)). All types of art, including the most “avant-garde”, claiming to throw the classics of the former culture from the “steamboat of modernity,” to some extent rely on the cultural heritage of the past. Human progress is generally impossible without understanding the primary sources in the development of culture in the history of mankind.

To objects of cultural heritage (monuments of history and culture) of peoples of the Russian Federation include the “immovable property (including archaeological heritage) and other facilities with historically related territories, paintings, sculpture, decorative-applied art, objects of science and technology and other items of material culture resulting from the historical events, representing value from the viewpoint of history, archaeology, architecture, urbanism, art, science and technology, aesthetics, ethnology or anthropology, social culture and are evidence of epochs and civilizations, authentic sources of information about the origin and development of culture.” ([Federal Law no. 73-FZ](#)) In general, it can be considered that cultural heritage is the totality of all the cultural achievements of society, both material and spiritual, as well as the historical experience of society, deposited and forever fixed in the national memory. According to modern researchers, it is “based on achievements of various ages, passing to new generations in new epochs.” ([Dobrynin, 2012](#))

Currently, the most important problem of all countries and peoples of the world is the crisis of national identity. What is it? This term (Lat. *idem*—the same) it appeared in ancient logic and meant a certain relation, the members of which are identical to each other. However, of course, identity is not just a philosophical category. Identity in the human psyche is the ability to express in a concentrated form for him how he imagines his belonging to various social, national, professional, linguistic, political, religious, racial and other groups or other communities. In other words, what the individual relates himself to is identity.

The choice of self-identification for any individual is almost unlimited. Therefore, we will highlight only some of the most important groups of individual identities:

- 1) ascriptive (literally “attributed”, that is, those over which individuals have no power, which are determined outside of the individual’s merits). These include age, gender, consanguinity, race, and ethnicity;
- 2) cultural is clan, tribal, language, national, religious, civilizational affiliation;
- 3) territorial is immediate environment, native city, native region, country;
- 4) political is shared ideology, voting, party membership, loyalty or opposition to the existing government, etc.;
- 5) economic is profession, position, labour collective, economic interests, self-relation with a certain class and social group;
- 6) social is your social status, a sense of belonging to a certain part of society.

Therefore, the identity of a person, except for the ascriptive one, is largely determined by him. People can change their spouse, religion, political views, country of residence, social status, and even sexual orientation many times. However, as it can be seen, it is the culture that determines all other identities.

Any country stands on a certain national identity based on religion, language, historical memory, and historical traditions. Of course, there are variables among the features of identity. What was previously considered the greatest national achievements may well become something shameful. However still, national culture in the broad sense of the word is the basis of national identity.

One of the “eternal” questions of philosophy is the question not only of the origin and preservation of religion, nation, and state but also the search for ideas about the meaning of being a people and country. When describing this complex sphere in recent decades, such concepts as “nation”, “race”, “mentality” are increasingly considered outdated and at the same time politically incorrect terms that have meaning only in some particular definitions. Nowadays, researchers introduce more general categories—“identity”. Only now this concept is written in English-identity. At the same time, of course, there are no “pure” theories of identity, and there cannot be, despite all the wishes of researchers. If in ancient philosophy, the analogue of questions about identity were arguments about the relationship between constancy and variability, in modern philosophy, it is a dispute between essentialists and constructivists.

Essentialism (Lat. *essentia*—essence) is a direction in philosophical thought characterised by attributing to some entity an unchangeable set of qualities and properties, suggesting that things have some deep reality, true nature, inaccessible to our understanding. It can be said that essentialism is an attempt to fix some eternal and unchangeable essence (ethnic, social, sexual, etc.).

Philosophical constructivism proceeds from the fact that every cognitive activity is a construction, that is, the creation of a certain structure. In other words, there is no reality other than that created by man. In this sense, the individual’s national identity, cultural preferences, and even gender identity are also “constructed” It is no coincidence that proponents of philosophical constructivism widely use the concept of “nation-building” (national building).

Historians view ethnic identity through individual and collective memory. From the point of view of historians, national identity can be defined as coincidence and identity with an ethnic group, social and group identity, as well as continuity over time. In general, liberal philosophical political theories, based on the individual and his freedom, do not seek to address the problems of group solidarity in society. For conservative thinking, on the contrary, the nation and the family always represent more than just a community, and religion is more than just a religious affiliation. Conservative thinking considers faith to be the main form of knowledge and action.

The era of globalization with its imposed templates of Western mass culture could not but cause an identity crisis. It is not by chance that cultural struggles (not street demonstrations or parliamentary votes) define the essence of an era. An indicator of the struggle for cultural identity can be found in the current process of glocalization. This concept is formed from the combination of two words—“globalisation” and “localisation”, and its meaning is that in the period of globalization when the power of national states that transfer sovereignty to various supranational structures is weakened, such phenomena as separatism, increased interest in local

differences, increased interest in ancient traditions and the revival of dialects are becoming more important. The turn of the 20th and 21st centuries was remembered for the rise of “self-supporting” moods in many developed countries of the world. Belgium is actually divided into three regions, Scotland is trying to leave the United Kingdom, Corsica – France, and Catalonia—Spain. Autonomist movements emerged in completely forgotten historical regions such as Frisia, Lombardy, Moravia, and the Aland Islands. Even in one-nation Italy, political parties and leagues have sprung up intending to separate the rich Northern regions from Italy. Several English provinces in Canada also raise the question of independence.

Glocalisation gave rise to the phenomenon of “return of ethnicity,” that is, the revival of almost forgotten historical cultural traditions. This sometimes takes on semi-comical features when, for example, they try to create rock music with texts in old dialects, or when they try to celebrate artificially recreated holidays. But we must admit that in several historical provinces of European countries, the revival of traditional applied art is really taking place. And if once in the century before last, for William Morris, the forerunner of design, who tried to revive ancient crafts, Handicrafts had to resist standardized machine production, in our time, for the 21st century William Morris, it is about preserving their national identity.

In Russia, this process has also taken on a special character. Despite the dominance of liberal-westernist figures in the media, philosophers talk about a conservative cultural revolution in Russia. Another thing is that the threshold of irreversibility has not yet been passed, and you do not need to relax at the thought that it's okay, Russia will “digest” Americanism, as Tatar and German cultural and political influence once did. The struggle is not over, and it is in traditional arts (since “modern” arts are formed in the West) that a victory can be won in preserving the Russian national identity.

Folk art in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Era

Folk art can be considered as a special area of artistic creativity, which can include both professional and amateur visual arts. Consequently, as long as the people retain the ability to create art, folk art will continue to exist and develop.

Considering the issues of artistic creativity, it should be noted that this process involves the creation of not only traditional works, but also new ones that have never existed before. Sometimes this creation of the new involves opposition to a kind of template and everyday life. An important component of creativity is the economic side with its focus on new technologies, products, and their competitiveness. Therefore, the creation of artistic products implies compliance with the following principles:

- the principle of semantic integrity-achieved through a kind of dialogue between the Creator and the consumer through knowledge and experience, technical calculation, getting used to the situation, overcoming stereotypes;
- the principle of expediency-is based on identifying the utilitarian expediency in the process of creating a product based on its artistic, technological, social, environmental and economic expediency;
- the principle of harmonization-is revealed in the ratio of the whole and individual parts of the created product based on integrity and expediency; the principle of expressiveness-is

focused on identifying the aesthetic features of the product, implying its convenience, strength and beauty (*Makysashin, 2012*).

Unlike most industrialised countries, traditional folk art still exists in Russia today. Moreover, Russian folk art, which developed in ancient times, e.g., the art of wood or bone carving was formed in the Neolithic era, developed during the industrial development of Russia. For example, some of the most famous Russian arts and crafts originated in the Soviet period of Russian history. So, the Russian lacquer miniature (Palekh, Mstera, Kholuy) was formed in the 1920–30s. The art of artistic processing of amber, which is popular among the Baltic peoples, but not widely spread among Russians, was born in the Kaliningrad region after 1945. In the late 1960s, Barnabas's bone carving appeared. Some artistic crafts in Russia experienced periods of decline and a new revival. So, in Soviet times, the almost disappeared Rostov enamel, Zhostovsky painting of metal trays, Kholmogorsky carved bone, Velikoustyuzhsky blackening on silver and Zlatoust engraving on steel were revived. In the 1970s, the art of Nizhny Tagil metal painting was revived.

Back in the 1920s, A.V. Bakushinsky, who studied the psychology of artistic perception, noted the craving of the masses for realistic and visual art very accurately. Pointing to the interest in the popular environment to the realistic transmission of reality (initially manifested in the framework of applied art), the researcher suggested that, ultimately, this should lead to the addition of easel art forms in This way, A.V. Bakushinsky considers Amateur art as a new stage in the development of folk art (*Bakushinskiy, 1981*).

In the industrial age, folk art takes on new forms. It is amazing, but mostly, with all the mass participation of participants and creators, mostly artistic creativity is viewed as a hobby. However, this work at leisure has all the features of folk art. Yes, once it was necessary to clearly separate folk art and Amateur art. This was also necessary to save traditional arts and crafts. But an era has passed and now we can say that the art of the people can develop in the 21st century.

Development goes in a spiral, as Hegel noted. The idea of spiral development was considered by Hegel as an integral part of dialectics-the negation and synthesis of progressive development “in a straight line” and “walking in a circle”.

As A.S. Barmenkov rightly notes, “Every stable system has mechanisms of self-defence, and in the case of folk art, this is, first of all, collective imaginative thinking, penetration into tradition. It becomes problematic when the artist understood the tradition, allegedly accepted this art, mastered special techniques, but later left them, apparently, the development of the tradition was shallow, so there was a desire to move to a different figurative, plastic system. It is good when the artist understands this and leaves the team, leaves the craft. It is worse when it does not go away, but performed the idea that the fishery is dead or dying. In the light of the above, the influence of the “author” on the development of folk art can lead to various results:

- enriching the craft with new motifs, themes, and technological techniques;
- improving the level of workmanship and artistic and aesthetic quality of products;
- destruction of the traditional image system.

In turn, “collective” performs two main functions:

- contributes to the preservation of tradition and continuity;
- serves as a source of artistic excellence.” (*Barmenkov, 2018*)

Thus, the line between amateur author's artistic skill and between the artist of traditional art becomes very conditional. We can observe the appearance of new types of folk art with our own eyes.

New is Well-Forgotten Old: Modern Types of Folk Art

We will give as an example such popular among ordinary, "ordinary people", types of home art that have a long history and flourished in our time, as patchwork sewing and making glass products using a burner at home.

Patchwork, or patchwork (from the English words patch—flap, patch, and work-work), a type of folk-art activity that has existed since time immemorial to this day. Traditions of patchwork were developed in Russia. So, methods of economical cutting, including from scraps of cloth, were described in *The Domostroy*. In the Soviet era, patchwork was also of interest to artists of that time, futurists and constructivists, as a new expressive form. However, most people were engaged in making clothes from scraps only for poverty and scarcity. Patchwork is a kind of mosaic of pieces of fabric, which used to create household items, clothing, accessories, and art panels. This art can be both decorative, applied, and purely artistic. If earlier patchwork arose from the need to maximise the use of all available fabrics, in our time, patchwork is turning into real art, and millions of people are passionate about it, women and men, young and old, all social strata and groups. The main means of expression in patchwork is a successful combination or contrast of colours, patterns and textures of the fabric. Classic patchwork is symmetrical compositions of geometric shapes. The images for the storied patchwork usually use a technique of artistic stylization, typical of decorative and applied techniques. Patchwork is often supplemented with embroidery, batik, free painting on the fabric, applique, decoration of beads, feathers, etc. (*Patchwork*, 2016)

Lampwork is a technique for processing glass over the flame of a burner. It is one of the newest types of folk art. It is usually used for making glass beads, parts for accessories, small decorative figures. Lampwork requires special equipment: propane or oxygen burner, as well as fairly expensive raw materials. Historically, since ancient times, glassblowers made toys and all sorts of trinkets from the remains of glass mass. At the end of the 20th century, as burners and glass for processing became available and cheap, lampwork began to turn into an art craft. The main advantage is the ability to let in products of any shape and size. In addition, all lampwork products are unique, because it is impossible to repeat them.

Kaliningrad Amber Art Processing

Among the "youngest" in age, but at the same time achieved world recognition of Russian art crafts, one can name the art of artistic processing of amber. This art form was born after 1945 in the Kaliningrad region, former East Prussia. On October 17, 1945, according to the decisions of the Berlin (Potsdam) conference, part of East Prussia with the main city of Königsberg was officially incorporated into the USSR. In 1946, the Königsberg region was created as part of the RSFSR. Immediately began the organized settlement of the new region of Russia (*Lebedev*, 2015). As it is noted by the Kaliningrad scientist Y. Zverev, "in the economic and geographical literature, there is a term country of migrant capitalism." In this sense, the

region can be called a “region of resettlement socialism” with all its advantages and disadvantages.” (*Zverev, 1997*)

There are 22 cities, 4 urban-type settlements, and just rural localities in the region. The region has almost no villages in the traditional Russian sense. By the way, there are also no farms that are so typical of their closest neighbours—the Balts. There are small villages whose inhabitants are engaged in agriculture. But for them, too, the urban lifestyle prevails. There are many universities in the region, including the University. The average level of education is higher than the national average. As you can see, the majority of Kaliningrad residents are citizens with a high level of education. But it was here that the art craft was born—the processing of amber.

There was not a single amber specialist among the settlers. However, still, the aesthetic sense and ingenuity inherent in the Russian people quickly led to the appearance of Amateur jewellers in the new Russian jewellers, amber makers. At the same time, all German specialists in the extraction and processing of amber left East Prussia taking with them all the production secrets. Almost all of the amber deposits were severely damaged as a result of the war. In addition, the Germans tried to destroy all equipment and documentation. Finally, masters of amber processing from the neighbouring Baltic republics due to a number of political circumstances in the first decade and a half of the region’s existence, when the local art craft was born, they did not come to Kaliningrad. Thus, the extraction and artistic processing of amber in Russia started from scratch. And it is impossible not to be amazed that Russian masters created their own special Kaliningrad school of artistic processing of amber with amazing speed.

Since 1654, in East Prussia, the main production of amber took place in the village of Palmniken. After joining the USSR, Palmniken was renamed the village of Yantarny. In 1947, an amber factory was established there. Amber was not only extracted here but also artistically processed. In the first decade of operation, the plant produced quite simple products: beads, bracelets, pendants, brooches, mouthpieces, cufflinks, buttons. From the very beginning, novice amber artists tried to create their own style with some success, although due to lack of experience, the first amber products were quite primitive. Decorations mostly repeated the shapes of leaves, berries, and fruits. For more naturalness and “beauty”, amber was even tinted. Precious metals, especially gold and silver, were widely used in working with amber.

Kaliningrad craftsmen in the late 1950s moved from imitation and the first, still simple products to creation to fundamentally new artistic products than the previous East Prussian ones. Kaliningrad products also differed from the artistic method that was cultivated in Latvia and Lithuania. In these republics, amber was mined for many centuries. Baltic jewellers did not set out to give a product made of amber a certain, predetermined shape, but only emphasized its natural shape and colour. The Kaliningrad style creatively combined both the Prussian desire for decorativeness and the Baltic desire to preserve the naturalness of the ‘sunstone’.

Kaliningrad residents, in addition to mass production for the General consumer, began to create original thematic compositions during these years: monumental vases, panels, boxes decorated with amber and Souvenirs. Such large-sized products reflected the Imperial monumentalism inherent in all art of that time, the so-called “Stalin’s Empire” or “triumph style”. As a result, the work became heavy for the reason that the masters who came to the plant were carvers of other stones—jasper or marble (*Zberikova, 2018*). The plant produced not only

serial products in hundreds of thousands of copies. The factory also created original artistic products using various jewellery techniques.

In 1959, the government of the USSR issued a decree “on improving the range, quality and decoration of amber products.” Now artists and art historians have been attracted to the use of amber. Achievements in amber of the Baltic peoples were creatively processed. Now it is finally possible to talk about the formation of the Russian Kaliningrad school of amber. The founders of the Kaliningrad school of amber processing were masters who worked at the Kaliningrad amber factory in the 1960s: A. Meos, A. Popov, A. Kvashnin, E. Lis, V. Mityanin, R. Benislavsky, A. Yaroshenko and V. Shorokhov (*Mashkov, 2018*). In 1961–1962, the All-Union competition for the best sample of amber products was held. The competition received 439 applications made in sketches and materials from many cities and republics of the USSR, including the Baltic States. However, the victory went to A. Popov from Kaliningrad. This was a milestone in the all-Union and then world recognition of the Kaliningrad school of amber art processing.

Since the second half of the 1960s, the USSR has had a kind of amber boom. Various amber products (not all of which can be called artistic) were now offered by most jewellery stores in the country. This affected the quality of the products since now the “amber maker” were required to produce according to the plan, a huge number of amber products without taking into account their artistic value. However, the Soviet consumer was not spoiled and was quite satisfied with the amber products offered by the trade.

After the collapse of the USSR, the amber industry was gripped by a protracted crisis. Against this background, hundreds of new private enterprises began to appear. They were quick to respond to the latest fashion trends. The state monopoly on the extraction and processing of amber has lost its influence, and the amber industry has largely passed into private hands. Customers’ tastes have also changed. Now buyers were eager to purchase exclusive handmade jewellery made by a famous master.

Gradually, the crisis was overcome. The restoration of *the Amber Room* in Tsarskoye Selo gave a strong impetus to the development of the craft. Modern jewellers restored the European techniques of processing the “sunstones” of the 17th and 18th centuries, almost forgotten in Europe itself. Modern Russian masters in the new century are not afraid to combine amber with metals, bone, wood and other elements. A great demand for Baltic amber arose due to a sharp increase in the tourist flow from Asian countries, especially from China, where amber is quite popular.

Conclusion

It should be noted that these examples are not limited to folk art. The emergence of new directions in this work, caused by the development of technology, can be expected.

The appearance of new materials, such as previously non-existent types of textiles and new types of dyes, provides unique opportunities in the field of fabric painting. The development of 3D technology provides new opportunities in the jewellery industry when the master can use a computer to present a three-dimensional image of the future product. Even in such truly traditional forms of art that have existed since primitive times as ceramics and bone carving, the introduction of new tools provides new opportunities for the development of these types of creativity.

However, still, it is still only becoming a new folk art. The most important obstacle to its further development is that it is not handled by professionals. For the development of folk art, including its new forms, so that national art is not limited only to the restoration of old techniques and products, it is necessary to give higher education to artists. For thousands and thousands of years, traditional art has been based on the practical experience of masters, based on the examples of their ancestors. However, in our time, this is not enough. A modern artist who wants to create great masterpieces must possess all the artistic experience of humanity and especially of his people, but also be a comprehensive person. And then his knowledge, experience and work will give excellent shoots.

Human society is not just a sum of individuals, but a multitude of different social communities—nations, classes, faiths, and a great many other social groups. Each of the social communities has its own identity, which is largely manifested in folk art. To Kant's questions: Who am I? From where? What can I know? What can I hope for?—each individual can give an answer based on family background, native language, and culture. However, of course, it is unlikely that even a cosmopolitan individual will consider the Black Square or the poem *Dyr Bul Shchyl* as one of the foundations of their national identity. However, national culture is in many ways a folk art, and it will remain popular as long as the people exist as a community.

The universal project of Enlightenment, which was born three centuries ago and consisted of an attempt to rationalise politics and morality, is now coming to an end. The progress and triumph of a single universal civilization of the western type, which was waiting for all mankind, is over. And, as a result, the old era with its values ends, but the new one has not yet come. In short, “postmodern” has come.

The concept of “postmodern” (as a synonym often used the word “postmodernism”, although it is not the same) from a philosophical term has become a fashionable word, used incredibly widely by a variety of people in a variety of circumstances. As is often the case with popular words, it becomes difficult to give a specific and generally accepted definition of what is hidden behind the concept of postmodernism. Postmodernism is understood as both modern philosophy and the latest artistic trends. The most important thing in the definition is the prefix “post”, which means that the period of the so-called Modernity is completed. In its most general form, postmodernism expresses deep disillusionment with the results of all previous development, loss of faith in man and humanism, reason and progress, in all previous ideals and values. Not only bright but the future, in general, is becoming more and more problematic. The dominant forms of modern social and political thought are completely inadequate to the challenges that Western civilization has to face: globalisation, fundamentalism, ethnic and religious conflicts, and the growth of social and ethnic intolerance. The project of a United Europe with a common culture is failing. Instead of fusing into the same common Europeans, the peoples living on the old continent are increasingly striving to remember their old roots and emphasize their unique differences from their neighbours. Often even openly imaginary, invented only to have at least the appearance of specialness, claiming that you can demand the provision of certain preferences. Postmodern philosophy deconstructs the rules and behaviour accepted in public life, and under the slogan of “pluralism” refuses to search for absolute truth, which is what philosophy has always done.

In place of the universalist concepts and Western “mass culture” that still come from the Enlightenment philosophy, humanity turns to the good old traditions and traditional culture. Sooner or later, the healthy part of any society must have a reaction of rejection to Hollywood, “modern art” in which there is no art and also not modern at all (after all, its main features were formed in the century before last). Under these conditions, the growing interest in traditional art forms is quite understandable. As noted by academician RAO, the President of *the Higher School of Economics* V.F. Maksimovich, “traditional applied art is a myriad of spiritual, moral, aesthetic, technological and material wealth, in which the soul and character of a person, his worldview, ideas and dreams, history, and relationships with other peoples are so fully revealed.” (Maksimovich, 2013) Because of this, art, which has folk roots, has an ennobling effect on a person. The differences between the two types of cultures (traditional and modern) are both simple and global. One culture prepares a person for eternal life, the other—for a good pension (Komarova & Katushkin, 1999).

Traditional folk art has a direct impact on the “high” arts of the nation. As historical experience shows, for example, in the work of W. Morris, the work of *Abramtsevsky and Talashkin Circles*, traditional art has a huge, inspiring impact on the art of the country as a whole. In other words, not only elements of folklore but also new, quite modernist art still comes from a folk source. Therefore, if our artists and artists in the art industry are striving to achieve worldwide fame (and this is the natural feeling of any artist), they need to rethink the creative work of their ancestors again and again.

There is also a certain danger that the authorities in some countries will start pedalling the theme of “primordial traditions” with embroidery, painted clay pots and folk dances in every possible way during the crisis. Some post-Soviet countries, such as Ukraine or the Baltic States, are classic examples of this. In conditions when industry and science have been eliminated in these countries, the ruling elites begin to actively extol the “spirituality” of the people of the subordinate country and invent great antiquity along with “folk culture,” ranting that industry and science are not needed at all by a people with a rich inner world and singing songs.

So, over the period from the end of the last and the first decades of the 21st century, it becomes clear how right the Russian Slavophiles were. There is no single world civilization, there is a set of local civilizations that differ from each other in their culture. In these conditions, the revival of folk art is taking place. This is not only in Russia. This is a global trend.

Folk art of the world and Russia has passed a contradictory path. Having generated the “great” art of the classical type, folk art has moved down to the level of subsidiary crafts, and in some countries—to kitsch. However, in the modern conditions of globalization and the “return of ethnicity”, folk art takes on new features. These days, alone craftsman with a computer can also be considered a master of folk art in new forms. This is a new type of good old home industry. Art associations that make toys can be considered new types of art associations. Of course, it would be good to bring back the old concepts of “craftsman”, “artel”, “artisan”, but it is thought that in real life there will be new concepts synonymous with the old terms.

This is a way of dialectical return of the art of small (and not very small) forms to the sphere of human cultural needs. In the coming times, everyone can become an artist, if they have the desire and time.

This means that traditional applied art is not only necessary in Russia, but also it is necessary whether Russians want to be a nation and not just a population of a certain territory. Consequently, the history of Russian traditional applied art in Russia continues.

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