

Art workshops as a resource for sustainable development of the textile industry in a cross-border region

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Abstract. Based on a study of archival sources and materials, the article reveals the role of art workshops in the development of the textile industry in the cross-border Altai region. In addition, the authors take into account the transboundary nature of the territory and the specific socio-economic and cultural factors.

Keywords: art workshop, textile industry, factory, cotton factory, artistic Council

1. Introduction

The socio-economic development of the textile industry in the Asian part of Russia at the present stage is uneven and depends on many facts that determine the development possibilities of the border areas. The main problem today is a decline in the production of natural and artistic fabrics, a drop in the production of finished products, a decrease in production volumes. Given the urgency of the problem in relation to the prospects for the socio-economic development of Altai and cross-border region, it is necessary to consider the regional practice of the Barnaul cotton factory in the second half of the 20th century.

The construction of the Barnaul cotton factory began in 1951 on the basis of the decree No. 1801 of the Council of Ministers of the USSR dated May 28, 1951 [1]. As an enterprise of artistic industry, artists have been involved in the development and creation of its products. Therefore, for the successful operation of the plant, not only production capacities were necessary, but also a certain creative potential, its own art workshop. For example, Mr. Burylin, the owner of the Ivanovo manufactory, like many Russian manufacturers of the 19th and 20th centuries, paid great attention to the finishing of fabrics at their enterprises. A professional design of fabrics helped to successfully promote the product to the market. Artists and engravers enjoyed the respect of manufacturers. Their work was highly valued, since the results of their work directly influenced the profits of the factory. Often, to create a design for fabrics, mainly from France, foreign artists were invited.

Today, this textile plant is closed and reorganized into a shopping center. It is difficult to assess, the reorganization and liquidation of a textile enterprise was due to market necessity and the inexpediency of its existence in new economic conditions. However, the fact of the existence of such an enterprise in the history of Altai allows us to speak about the feasibility of a comprehensive scientific study of this practice.

2. Materials and Methods

The sources for the study were the materials from the Center for the Archive Fund of the Altai Krai and the personal fund of G. A. Belysheva. The fund contains 411 items, dated 1945-1989. The following methods were used: the principle of historicism, art history analysis of textile patterns, a biographical method, as well as a comparative analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

The search for artists for the art workshop of the Barnaul cotton factory had begun long before the construction of the factory was completed. Before the leadership, the primary task was to attract a specialist in decorative and applied arts to work in the company, who has experience in the textile industry, who could organize and lead an art workshop, as well as who could take on the selection of personnel for it. The administration of the factory from the famous Ivanovo textile region of Russia recommended Gleb Belyshev.

A hereditary textile worker, graduate of the Ivanovo Chemical-Technological Coloristic Technical School, with the specialty of a technician artist of art workshops at textile factories. Since 1957, he was a member of the Union of Artists of the USSR, a participant in regional and republican exhibitions, had 17 years of experience in the Novo-Ivanovo manufactory, was an expert in the artistic design of textile fabrics. Belyshev was considered one of the best artists in folk and floral designs [2]. In February 1961, negotiations began on his transfer to Barnaul. The State Archive of the Altai Krai stores records of these negotiations-telegrams [3]. In them, the administration of the Barnaul cotton factory guaranteed to provide the artist with a separate living space, and stipulates the working conditions. In July 1961, Mr. Belyshev received an official invitation to work as the head of the art workshop in Barnaul. In winter 1962, the negotiations were completed. This is confirmed by the text of one of the telegrams of January 13, 1962: "We agree on the transfer of Belyshev to the Barnaul factory – the chief engineer of Vyrasheikin" [4]. On March 15, 1962, Mr. Belyshev arrived in Barnaul together with G. A. Belyshev and his wife, Sofia Alexandrovna Igumnova. She was also an artist of textile design, a specialist in "children's" ornament. Mr. Belyshev has been the first and permanent leader of the art workshop of the Barnaul cotton factory for 20 years.

Arriving in Barnaul, he immediately began recruiting for an art workshop. The correspondence of Belyshev with his colleagues and students from Ivanovo [5] was preserved. These were letters from V. R. Mikhailov and K. Ya. Shelomanova, with a request to take them to work in a new workshop. Artists were ready to leave their apartments in the European part of the country, a place of work at the oldest textile enterprises with a long tradition, to take only what was needed, brushes and paints, and go to a distant and unknown region. At the same time, Siberia frightened and attracted artists. Scarecrows with their remoteness, climatic conditions, uncertainty in terms of home appliances (many had families and children who needed kindergartens and schools).

Letters came to Belyshev requesting him to work not only from Ivanovo, but also from Kherson (Ukraine), from Tashkent (Uzbekistan), from Gori (Georgia). V. R. Mikhailov, one of the first to arrive in 1963, was an artist of textile design at the Krasnaya Talka Ivanovo factory. Also among the first was K. Ya. Shelomanov. Together with him, the Palekh style of writing came from Palekh to the workshop. In 1964, Tamara V. Mokraya arrived in Barnaul from the Kherson cotton factory. She wrote a letter to the director of the Barnaul factory, "G. Vyrasheikin, please inform me if there is a vacant textile artist in your factory. In 1963, I graduated from the Faculty of Art Weaving of the Vinnitsa School of Applied Arts. Received a diploma and went to work at the Kherson cotton factory. Since there is not available jobs of the artist here, I work not for my direct specialty. In addition, I make sketches and take executions. The artist's place will be vacant only in a year. But I really want to work on my favorite specialty ..." [6]. The administration of the factory gave a positive answer. "To your letter of employment I inform you: 1) The factory agrees to accept you for the position of a textile artist in the art workshop of the finishing production ..." [7].

So, G. A. Belyshev organized a team of textile artists. From 1962 to 1970, following Belyshev, five more textile artists from Ivanovo came to the Barnaul cotton factory. All of them already had experience in a factory workshop.

Despite the extensive experience in the field of the textile industry, the creation of a creative workshop for Belyshev was a matter of new, complex, but interesting. Eight years after the opening of the workshop, Belyshev said in an interview, “When I first came to the workshop, there were still builders here. We started from scratch. After installing all the equipment in the workshop, we invited the first artists to work. Already in October 1962, we had the first artistic council” [8]. The art workshop was created in a short time. At that time, there was a problem with personnel, because neither in the Altai Territory, nor even in the whole of Siberia there was an art workshop for the development of patterns for fabrics. On the other hand, it was precisely in this that the importance and significance of this matter lay. Already in the fall of 1963, the first results of the workshop’s activities were presented at the artistic council, 12 new tissue drawings appeared. In the same year, the first meter of fabric was released in the factory. This was a great event for the factory, the city, the Altai Territory, and the whole of Siberia as a whole.

In 1965, the full commissioning of the factory was completed. In the same year, the newspaper “Altayskaya pravda” wrote about the creative workshop’s activities, “For three years there has been an art workshop at the Barnaul cotton factory. Seven textile artists work here. Six of them came to Altai from Ivanovo to give the Siberian chintz the beauty and freshness that Ivanovo’s patterns have long distinguished” [9]. G. A. Belyshev, in a short time, managed not only to form a team of capable artists, but also to create an atmosphere of creativity, friendship, interest in the general, the result of the work. This is confirmed by the high appreciation of the workshop’s activities at the Art Council of the Ministry “RosGlavHlopProm” in Moscow (February 1968), by the art historian of the All-Union Institute for the Range of Products of Light Industry and Clothing Culture, Yu. N. Tukhtarova, “The pictures of the Barnaul people are more professional than the Cheboksary ones. The team is strong, works with interest, following the direction for the design of fabrics. Therefore, the drawings are interesting and deserve the highest praise” [10].

The next important organizational moment was the creation of an artistic council. G. A. Belyshev put a lot of effort into organizing the first Siberian Council, on whose decisions the palette of patterns for fabric depended.

The documentary basis for the creation of the Artistic Council at the Barnaul cotton factory was the model provision on the artistic councils of the main departments of the USSR Ministry of Industrial Goods and Ministries of Industrial Goods of Union Republics [11]. This document defined the tasks for the Arts Council:

- Consideration, discussion, approval, and evaluation of new patterns on paper, in fabrics and new models of garments being developed and presented by enterprises, art organizations, and houses;
- Development of directions in the work of art workshops, model houses, design and design offices of enterprises;
- Consideration and discussion of artists’ reports on creative travel;
- Discussion of individual issues of arts and crafts, decoration and modeling of consumer goods.

The organizer and leader of the Art Council at the Barnaul cotton factory was the head of the art workshop, a member of the USSR Union of Artists. The artistic Council included chief engineers, artists, technologists, stylist, designers, heads of enterprises, as well as representatives of trade organizations and art historians. The meetings of the Art Council were convened regularly, once a quarter. Evaluation of the drawings and products of industry submitted for consideration by the Artistic Council was conducted by voting, and was considered accepted if at least 2/3 of the present members of the Artistic Council voted for it. There were the following three rating parameters: “Excellent,” “Accept,” “Reject.”

In October 1962, the first artistic council was held at the Barnaul cotton factory [12]. In the autumn of 1963, the first twelve drawings of fabrics made in the art workshop of the Barnaul cotton factory were presented at the Art Council [12].

According to the memoirs of the doctor of art history, professor of the Altai State University, T. M. Stepankaya, who was a member of the Artistic Council in 1970-1980, the meetings of the council resembled the defense of a thesis [13]. On special stands were exhibited models. At first, the word was given to the author. Then there was a discussion. Representatives of sewing organizations were very active (for example, the Avangard garment factory in the city of Barnaul), as an unsuccessful pattern in the product can be lost or used in a limited range, or there would be a large fabric residue when cutting. After discussion, they proceeded to the vote. Each meeting of the Art Council was accompanied by a demonstration of clothing made of fabrics produced at the Barnaul cotton factory. The models were both specialists from different Model Houses, as well as the workers of the Barnaul cotton factory and their children. The composition of the council was numerous, about 15 people, but invited guests were always present. According to the memoirs of T. M. Stepankaya, the most analytical, concise and reasoned, were the speeches by A. A. Belyshev [14].

4. Conclusion

In general, the Art Council of the Barnaul cotton factory evaluated the aesthetic qualities of fabrics, guided by the decisions of the Aesthetic Commission. The main attention was paid to the following points: 1) compliance with a promising fashion range of colors, annually established for men and women's clothing, sometimes with clarification of particularly fashionable color combinations; 2) compliance with fashion in the artistic and color design of fabrics (Figure); 3) matching fashion in tissue structures (including finishing).

Thus, the art workshop and the Art Council of the Barnaul cotton factory's activities made the company's products high-quality and competitive in the domestic and foreign markets. The products were successfully exported to the USA, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Algeria, as well as to the border regions of Kazakhstan and Mongolia. The fabrics made according to sketches by artists of the art workshop of the Barnaul cotton factory got prizes at international exhibitions (Germany in 1970, France in 1976).

The methods of textile artists of Altai relied on the experience of Ivanovo workshops, as well as the modern scientific achievements of art history. The principles of the work of artists were based on the desire to master the ideological and imaginative content of ethno-art and the traditional means of its artistic embodiment, as well as participation in the design and implementation of textile samples.

The unique experience of the art workshop of the Barnaul cotton factory must be studied and used in the strategy of sustainable development of cross-border areas.

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