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The role of private factories in the development of art glass in Russia in the 19th century

Ol'ga A. Chistyakova

Head of the Department of art glass, Stroganov Moscow State Academy of Arts and Industry, 125080, 9, Volokolamskoe hwy, Moscow, Russian Federation; e-mail: felixv68@mail.ru

Abstract

The article aims to study the history of private glass factories in Russia in the 19th century and their contribution to the development of art glass. The author deals with statistics and pays attention to individual plants and their groups, creating a picture of the diverse glass industry of prerevolutionary Russia. The number of glass factories in Russia was about 80 by the end of the 18th century. The task of glassmaking was primarily to meet local needs for utensils and containers. Most glass factories in Russia were landowners' patrimonial manufactories, where their own serfs worked. The Bakhmetev Factory in the village of Nikolskoe, the Penza province, where high-quality crystal and milk glass were made, stood out among the private factories of the beginning of the 19th century. The Maltsovs were the most important glassmakers of the second half of the 19th century. Two centres of Russian glassmaking and crystal production, which later grew into other industrial areas, emerged out of two small factories. By the end of the 19th century, the Dyatkovo Factory belonging to them seized primacy in the production and quality of produced glass. Along with large factories, small private factories also contributed to the development of art glass in Russia. The glass factory of N.B. Yusupov on his Arkhangelskoye estate (1810-1827) belongs to such small factories.

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Keywords

Crystal, art glass, Maltsov factories, Bakhmetev Factory in the village of Nikolskoe, 19th century, private glass factories.

Introduction

The creation of art glass belongs to the oldest practices of decorative and applied art and its tradition goes back thousands of years. The labor-intensive production of art glass in human history is in constant development, sometimes slowing down, then accelerating, manifesting inself differently in various cultural traditions. The emergence and development of Russian workshops and factories engaged in the production of glass and crystal served as a basis for the formation of the national style of this branch of decorative and applied art. Studying the Russian tradition of glassmaking and glassmaking schools helps to identify the unique features of the artistic world of Russian glassmaking and generalize the accumulated experience.

Art glass, like other types of decorative and applied art, reflects the style and philosophy of the epoch that created it, while preserving the imprint of folk traditions [Groshkova, 2015]. The history of the Russian glass industry, dating back three centuries, allows us to capture these stylistic changes, trace the formation of the national style and its reflection in the technology of producing and decorating glass products.

The synthesis of the high professionalism of the masters and the creative vision of the artists was embodied in techniques for decorating glass and crystal products. The most expressive techniques used by large glass enterprises, such as the Imperial Glass Factory, the Gus and Dyatkovo Crystal Factories, began to be borrowed by peripheral provincial glass enterprises, being transformed in the process of creative searches and acquiring their own distinctive features. The national stylistics of the Russian art glass of the epoch, which developed a number of decorating techniques and their numerous variations, gradually crystallized.

Research results

The golden age" of Russian artistic glassmaking fell on the 18th and 19th centuries. The industry was formed during this period: the technologies of manufacturing and decorating glass products were developed with due regard to the experience of European countries. Many factories and plants making glass products appeared in Russia, but only some of them became known worldwide.

The production of art glass had long been the prerogative of the state, and rhere were numerous state-owned factories, i. g. the Izmailovo, Vorobyovo, Yamburg, Petersburg ones, specializing in the manufacture of products for palace decoration: glassware, mirrors, and windowpanes. Private factories produced windowpanes, containers, and medicine glasses [Asharina, 1986, 14].

In the second quarter of the 18th century, there were some merchants who knew well the needs of the huge Russian market and were able to organize production. The second half of the 18th century is characterized by the completion of the formation of the main centers of art glass with their own specific features. In addition to the already established centers, new ones appeared, among their owners there were representatives of the upper strata of society.

The task of glassmaking was primarily to meet local needs for utensils and containers. F. Skopin's factory, which opened in Vyatka in the 19th century, produced shtofs, half-shtofs, and large bottles, covering the needs of distilleries in the province [Kaisin, 2014, 50].

By the end of the 18th century there were many glass and crystal factories in Russia. The factories of the Nemchinov brothers (in the Dorogobuzh district of the Smolensk province) and the Maltsovs (the Raditsa Glass Factory and the Dyatkovo Crystal Factory) were among them [Kurlovich, Chubur, 2018, 41]. For example, the Maltsovs founded the Dyatkovo, Chernyatino, Zneber, Shumovskaya,

Ivotok and Klenskaya Glass Factories only in the Bryansk district of the Orel province from 1790 to 1839. There were about 80 glass factories in Russia at the end of the 18th century [Chukanova, 2015, 3]. The Vladimir, Petersburg, Kaluga, Orel, Smolensk, and Penza provinces were the main areas of glassmaking from the 18th to 20th centuries [Asharina, 1986, 14].

In the first half of the 19th century, most Russian glass factories were landowners' patrimonial manufactories, where their own serfs worked. Therefore, noblemen, including the representatives of the highest Russian aristocracy (the Golitsyns, the Orlovs, the Tolstoys, the Sheremetevs, the Shuvalovs, and the Yusupovs), predominated among the glassmakers of the first half of the 19th century.

The private factories of the first third of the 19th century copied the products made by the Imperial Glass Factory in the field of artistic searches. However, "the Bakhmetev Factory in the village of Nikolskoe, the Penza province, was an exception. Beautiful crystalware was made there already at the beginning of the century" [Zhuravlev, 2016, 83].

The Bakhmetev Factory in the village of Nikolskoe had been producing crystal, both engraved and faceted, including the diamond pattern since the end of the 18th century. Serfs worked here, including entire dynasties: "Local serfs learned glassmaking, and it became the main thing for them for two and a half centuries" [Vedernikova, Gol'skii, 2015, 209].

Among other things, such a rare type of glass as milk one was produced here. The museum at the Bakhmetev Factory in the village of Nikolskoe has several objects made of milk glass produced here: these are an enamelled glass and a jar; some products of this factory are stored in other museums [Drozdov, 2019, 234-235]. Thus, the Bakhmetev Crystal Factory in the village of Nikolskoe was the only private enterprise that produced milk glass in the 1810s and 1820s (milk glass was also produced by the Imperial Porcelain Factory in Petersburg).

This factory was of great importance: "In 1840-1850, the factory produced various glass products: glasses, decanters, goblets, tall wine glasses and small wine glasses. Crystal products were supplied to the court for members of the imperial family and prominent statesmen" [Shebarshin, 2012, 18].

The second half of the 19th century was marked by the explosive growth of glass enterprises. Thus, about 20 new factories appeared in the Vyatka province, in which only two factories were opened at the beginning of the 19th century, from the 1840s until the end of the century [Kaisin, 2014, 51]. New factories were constructed due to the fashion for windowpanes, the pharmaceutical industry and the perfume business.

The largest glass factories of the 19th century included the Imperial Glass Factory in Petersburg, the Gus and Dyatkovo Factories of the Maltsov family, M.F. Orlov's factory in the Kaluga province and the Nikolskaya Pestrovka Factory in the Penza province. These giant factories created both exclusive luxury goods and mass-produced glassware, characterized by technological and uncomplicated functional forms. Along with the oldest high-capacity enterprises that organized the mass production of household utensils for the widest range of consumers, there were small private factories.

In the second half of the 19th century, the Dyatkovo possessions of the Maltsov family in the Bryansk district, where the abundance of mineral raw materials and forests contributed to the development of industry, amounted to about 750 square versts (about 800 square kilometers) and together with the estates located in neighboring provinces—more than 2,000 square versts. All this makes it possible to say that "the Maltsovs' factories became the main glass manufacturers in the second half of the 19th century" [Zhuravlev, 2016, 83].

The Maltsovs, who had the unofficial title of "crystal kings", are a vivid example of glass manufacturers who were able to establish large-scale production and in some cases keep it private until the First World War. Their products, as a rule, received prizes at Russian and international exhibitions [Makushev, 2006, 16].

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Maltsovs owned 15 factories, where almost half of all Russian workers employed in the glass industry worked [Zhuravlev, 2016, 83]. The division of the assets between S.A. Maltsov and I.A. Maltsov, which took place in the first decades of the 19th century, led to the emergence of two centers of crystal and glass production: "The division of the Maltsovs' business into two parts and the formation of two centers of crystal and glass production—the Gus and Dyatkovo factories—were an important event in the history of the family. In fact, this happened in the first decade of the 19th century, when the brothers divided the family business into parts. The younger brother Sergey Maltsov engaged in the improvement of glass and crystal production, making the town of Gus-Khrustalny the center of his possessions; the elder brother Ivan Maltsov united enterprises of industries that were new to the family, concentrating the management of his own enterprises in Dyatkovo" [Ibidem, 28-29]. Two centres of Russian glassmaking and crystal production, which later grew into other industrial areas, emerged out of two small factories.

Products made by the Maltsovs' factories were designed with dueregard to the needs of different target audiences. The Maltsovs made things for both average consumers (mass production) and well-to-do people (unique goods, works of art). Few enterprises produced such unique objects made of art glass. Engraved and painted parts of the products were made to order, and many things can be attributed by the names of customers [Makushev, 2006, 36-37].

The Maltsovs focused on a wide market from the very beginning. They created a trading network covering the whole of Russia: "Products, made by the glass and crystal factories of the Dyatkovo-Ludinovo industrial district, were sent to Saint Petersburg, Kharkiv, Kremenchuk, Rylsk, Odessa, Kursk, Kyiv, and Riga in the first quarter of the 19th century. The Nizhny Novgorod Fair, where colored crystal made by the Maltsovs' factories was in particular demand, was an important place for selling products [Ibidem, 38]. There was an extensive, decentralized sales system. The Maltsovs' factories entered foreign markets in the first half of the 19th century; they were striving to trade with the Middle East. By the beginning of the 20th century, the sales territory expanded even more, including such remote cities as Irkutsk, Omsk, Tashkent, and Tbilisi [Ibidem, 39].

The Dyatkovo Factory became in a way a trendsetter in crystal production in the 19th century: "The main patterns of the diamond facet, developed at the beginning of the 19th century, became samples and are still used in glassmaking to make classical lead crystal products" [Chumakova, 2011, 11]. The Dyatkovo Factory seized primacy in the production and quality of produced glass by the end of the 19th century.

The Dyatkovo Factory also enriched Russian glassmaking with the following new techniques during the 19th century:

- pressed glass;
- applied colored glass (together with the technique of glassblowing);
- architectural decorative glass (for altar canopies, balusters, church chandeliers, church oil lamps);
- various types of glass coloring [Ibidem, 11-12].

The principle of original painting began to be applied in the Dyatkovo Factory. Elisabeth Böhm was the first factory artist.

In addition, the Maltsovs' factories responded to the trends of the time and the fashion for

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"historicism": "Products that imitated the form and decoration of the folk painted glass of the 18th century in the "Russian" style, produced by the Maltsovs' factories, were a great success not only at Russian exhibitions, but also at foreign ones" [Zhuravlev, 2016, 83].

Small private factories also contributed to the development of art glass in Russia. The glass factory of N.B. Yusupov on his Arkhangelskoye estate (1810-1827) belongs to such small factories.

The factory did not have time to develop sufficiently due to objective circumstances, though its potential was great. The obstacles included the war, which put off the start of production for two years, trouble in the internal structure (e. g., the collapse of the furnace in 1814-1815 and the periodic escapes of the workers), and the fire in January 1820, which put an end to its history.

The history of the factory is very interesting and full of surprises. For example, it refutes the opinion that private factories produced only potash glass during the first half of the 19th century: "only the Imperial Factory could afford to produce crystal like foreign ones... so all the crystal, produced by our large private factories and sold as crystal, contained no lead" [Asharina, 1998, 134]. The experience of the private factory on N.B. Yusupov's Arkhangelskoye estate bespeaks the opposite: the constantly ordered red lead was added to charge material in such proportions that led to the production of real crystal glass.

The history of N.B. Yusupov's factory can be divided into two main stages. The first stage lasted from 1811 to 1820, when this enterprise operated as full-fledged production, in which the process of making crystalware or glassware went through all stages—from making charge material and melting "crystal matter" to decorating finished objects. Such a cycle was fully observed only three times, in 1814-1816, but this institution was thought of as a factory from 1811 to 1820, and only after the fire the idea of reviving production was finally rejected. The second stage lasted from 1820 to the beginning of 1827, when the factory was turned into a lapidary workshop, where the craftsmen were engaged in decorating the purchased things.

The crystal factory on N.B. Yusupov's Arkhangelskoye estate worked primarily to "meet the needs of the estate" and was one of the well-known "scientific whims" of the owner of the estate. Skillfully organized production allowed the enterprise to achieve some success in a short time: N.B. Yusupov gained a wealth of experience while managing the Imperial Glass Factory, knew the real level of costs and what he could and had to demand from the craftsmen.

The crystal makers of the Arkhangelskoye Factory achieved a high level of skill in the decoration of products. Having been trained at the Tasa Crystal Factory and the Imperial Glass Factory, they applied all the acquired skills in the production process.

The masters not only completely solved the tasks set by them in the art of faceting, but also managed to find their own style, expressing it through the bamboo leaf facet specially developed, which became some kind of "speciality" of the factory. The curator of the glass collection of the State Historical Museum of Russia E.P. Smirnova noted that she had never seen things decorated in this way in museum collections. The bamboo leaf facet was quite common, it was used by many factories, and there was no such geometric elaboration of the pattern anywhere else.

N.B. Yusupov's glass factory on his Arkhangelskoye estate is one of the illustrative examples of the interaction between the European and Russian trends in artistic glassmaking. This is confirmed by the diverse glass collection of the Arkhangelskoye Estate Museum, covering a wide range of objects produced by glass enterprises in Western Europe and Russia. The glass collection of the Yusupov family includes products made by English, French, Bohemian, and German glassmakers. People working in the workshops of N.B. Yusupov on the Arkhangelskoye estate used European products as

samples to create works of art that were not inferior to their prototypes in glass treatment methods and artistic qualities.

The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were marked by a great breakthrough in Russian glassmaking, but this refers rather to the technical component [150 let..., 1914; Beskinskaya, 1970; Bezborodov, 1952; Denisova, 2004]. Glass production during this period increased 15 times compared to the middle of the century due to the transition of most factories to the manufacture of sheet glass used for windows and containers for various industries. Simple manufacturing technology and a high demand for such products made their production very profitable. At the same time, the production of high-grade glass and crystal was falling because it was less profitable and required a lot of skills.

Glassware used by households was classified into "technical" and "artistic" one, and if the demand for the former was high, expensive glassware was bought by few households. Thus, there were unfavorable conditions for manufacturing luxury art glass—expensive crystalware and glassware produced in limited batches—in Russia. In general, there was a tendency for the evolution of consumer tableware, which performed a purely utilitarian function, and it was aestheticized in the context of mass production.

Conclusion

The experience of private workshops in Russia provides an opportunity to plunge into the atmosphere of the glass production of the era, as well as to study and recreate traditional practices and authentic techniques used during the 18th and 19th centuries.

The study of the experience of private enterprises producing high-quality products with high artistic characteristics finds direct analogies to the modern studio direction in art glass. The historical experience of private enterprises is especially important in modern times, as the development of private initiatives and the reduction in the public sector of the economy led to the situation in which most glass enterprises became private, and the art glass market changed due to global competition and a shift in demand. Glassmaking found itself in a difficult situation, and the experience of private factories can contribute to a new understanding of the existing circumstances and conditions.

Private production initiatives were of great importance to the development of glassmaking in the 19th century. Glass factories were numerous, private plants developed with great speed, and their products were often not inferior to the products made by the Imperial Glass Factory. Among the most significant factories dealing with art glass there are the Maltsovs' numerous factories and the Bakhmetev Factory in the village of Nikolskoe. Small plants, such as N.B. Yusupov's glass factory on his Arkhangelskoye estate, also contributed to the development of Russian art glass.

Despite the fact that the opportunities for the glass industry have significantly expanded in the age of advanced technologies, the information presented in this article is unique from the perspective of preserving the gene pool of the profession.

The study of the collection and history of glass and crystal manufactured by private factories in the 19th century is potentially able to contribute to the following trends:

- the revival and popularization of craft traditions of Russian hot glassmaking (blowing hot glass into a mold, glassblowing in furnaces, blown glass figurines);
- the preservation and application of the artistic experience of domestic glassmaking as a unique phenomenon of world culture;

- the formation of a unified artistic space of Russian glassmaking on the basis of art glass workshops;
- the creation of the technological base for artistic glassmaking that is necessary for making works intended to represent the traditions and achievements of domestic glassmaking in the international arena.

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Роль частных заводов в развитии художественного стекла в России XIX века

Чистякова Ольга Анатольевна

Завкафедрой «Художественное стекло»,

Московская государственная художественно-промышленная академия им. С.Г. Строганова, 125080, Российская Федерация, Москва, ш. Волоколамское, 9;

e-mail: felixv68@mail.ru

Аннотация

Статья посвящена истории частных стекловаренных заводов в России XIX в. и их вкладу в развитие художественного стекла. Автор обобщает статистику и уделает внимание отдельным заводам и их группам, создавая картину разнообразной стекольной промышленности дореволюционной России. К концу XVIII в. число стекольных заводов в России приближалось к восьмидесяти. Задачей стекловаренных производств было прежде всего обеспечение местных нужд в посуде и таре. Преобладающее большинство стекольных заводов России являлись вотчинными помещичьими мануфактурами, на которых работали собственные крепостные. Среди частных заводов начала XIX в. выделялся завод Никольском Бахметьевых селе Пензенской губернии, где изготавливали высококачественный хрусталь и молочное стекло. Важнейшим стеклозаводчиком второй половины XIX в. стала семья Мальцовых. Из двух небольших заводов выросли два центра русского стеклоделия и хрустального производства, которые впоследствии приросли другими промышленными направлениями. Принадлежащий им Дятьковский завод к концу XIX в. захватил первенство в производстве и качестве производимого стекла. Наряду с крупными заводами, маленькие частные заводы также вносили свой вклад в развитие художественного стекла в России. К таким небольшим производствам относится стекольный завод Н.Б. Юсупова в Архангельском (1810-1827 гг.).

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Ключевые слова

Хрусталь, художественное стекло, Мальцовские заводы, Никольско-Бахметьевский завод, XIX век, частные стекольные заводы.

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