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Teaching the theory and history of traditional arts and crafts in Russian universities in 2015-2023: an analytical review

Abstract. The article is devoted to understanding the results of an analytical review of teaching the theory and history of traditional artistic crafts in Russian universities in 2015 and 2023. As part of the study a comparative analysis of curricula and work programs of disciplines in the field of training 54.03.02 Decorative and applied arts and crafts at universities in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Novosibirsk, Yekaterinburg, Krasnoyarsk, Nizhny Novgorod was carried out. The author reveals the role of theoretical disciplines in the training of future artists; the potential of the course of theory and history of traditional artistic crafts is formulated; an overview of the main changes in the system of folk arts and crafts and vocational education in this area in 2015-2023 is given which led to a revision of the mission and content of the designated course.

Keywords: Higher school of folk arts (academy), traditional artistic crafts, traditional applied art, theory and history of traditional artistic crafts, continuing professional education.

The Higher school of folk arts (academy) is the only university in Russia with a developed network of branches (institutes) located in the historical centers of traditional arts and crafts which provides the opportunity to implement continuing professional education in their specific types taking into account regional specifics. An important aspect of the training of future artists is not only the increment of experience in performing skills but also the development of theoretical professional disciplines. The latter form the cultural level and the general outlook of the future specialist; they provide an idea of the mission of the artist of traditional artistic crafts as a carrier and translator of the "cultural code" of the country; they guarantee the development of qualities necessary for the effective realization of their own professional capital in the conditions of the modern socio-cultural situation.

The place and role of general professional theoretical disciplines in the educational process of the future artist have repeatedly become the subject of scientific study [1, 2, 3, 10, 16, 17]. The course that provides undergraduate training at the Higher school of folk arts (academy) is "Theory and History of traditional arts and Crafts". Its essence content and significance in the system of continuing professional education at the levels of secondary vocational education and higher education (bachelor's/master's degree) were disclosed earlier [4, 5].

Let us briefly formulate what the fundamental importance of this discipline in the educational process of the Academy is:

- familiarization with the diversity of regional historical centers of traditional arts and crafts, the history of their formation and artistic and stylistic features of works, the work of specific artists;
- fostering a value-based attitude towards the traditional artistic crafts of Russia as a system-forming component of the national spiritual and artistic culture of the country;
- formation of interest and motivation to study, preserve and develop the traditions of national art through the development of unity of universal general professional competencies related to artistic and creative activities;
- assistance in the formation of the quality of "watching" mastering the skills of visual culture and experience of visual communication;
 - formation of experience in research activities in this field.

For the first time an analytical review of the teaching of the history of traditional arts and crafts in higher education institutions was carried out as part of a dissertation study in 2015. A comparative analysis of the curricula²¹, of the training area 54.03.02 (Decorative and applied Arts and crafts in other universities (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Nizhny Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk, Yekaterinburg) showed that as well as at the Higher school of folk arts (academy) there are similar theoretical courses²² in the training of artists. However, both the quantitative ratio of watches and their content do not fully correlate with the expected mission of these disciplines in terms of forming a holistic view of future artists about the place and role of traditional crafts in the national art of the country [6, pp. 70-72]. This fact is probably due to the fact that the educational process in these universities unlike the Higher school of folk arts (academy) was initially focused more on training artists in the field of decorative and applied arts rather than folk crafts.

In the period 2015-2023 significant changes took place in the field of education and state policy in the field of folk arts and crafts concerning the approval of significant regulatory documents ensuring the availability of information (popularization) of traditional crafts:

2015 - Strategy for the Development of folk Arts and crafts for 2015-2016 and for the period up to 2020 (order of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation dated July 20 2015 No. 2011) [12];

2018 – launch of the specialized portal of folk art crafts Промыслы.рф (Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation) in order to provide broad information support to Russian enterprises of folk arts and crafts [9];

2020 – FGOS 3++ areas of training 54.03.02 Decorative and applied arts and crafts (order of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation dated 08/13/2020 No. 1010) [14]; FGOS 3++ areas of training 54.03.05

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²¹ The number of credits ranges from 1 (St. Petersburg State University) to 8 (Higher school of folk arts (academy).

Variants of course names: "Traditional crafts and crafts"; "Traditional crafts and crafts of the peoples of the world"; "Artistic crafts of the peoples of Russia"; "History and modernity of decorative and applied arts and folk crafts"; "History of decorative and applied arts and folk crafts"; "Artistic and decorative folk crafts"; "Industry and folk crafts Nizhny Novgorod region"; "History and theory of traditional arts and crafts".

Traditional applied arts (order of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation dated 11/25/2020 No. 1450) [15];

2022 is the Year of Folk Art and the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Peoples of Russia, Decree "On the Day of Folk Arts and Crafts" (dated 06/17/2022 No. 384) [13] Fundamentals of state Policy for the Preservation and Strengthening of traditional Russian spiritual and Moral values" (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation dated 11/19/2022 No. 809) [11].

It would be natural to assume that the course of the state cultural policy determined the corresponding changes in the curricula and content of the programs of the disciplines of the training area 54.03.02 Decorative and applied arts and folk crafts in favor of increasing the number and quality of courses devoted to the study of specific types of traditional crafts, comprehension of their specifics and artistic and stylistic features. This hypothesis required another analysis and understanding of the issues of teaching courses on the theory and history of traditional crafts.

In 2023 as part of the analytical review the educational and methodological support of the same universities was studied like in 2015 (table 1).

Table 1. The specific weight of the content of courses related to the theory and history of traditional arts and crafts (2023)

University	Direction of training		Training course	Number of credits / ac. hour			
Saint-Petersburg							
Smolny Institute of the russian academy of education			Not functioning				
St. Petersburg State University		and and	Traditional crafts and crafts of the peoples of the world	2	72 34 – room. 38 – independent work of students		
St. Petersburg State University of Industrial Technologies and Design (Institute of applied arts)		and and	The history and modern problems of decorative and applied art Arts and crafts of the peoples of Russia	3	108 34 – room. 47 – independent work of students 27 – control 108 56 – room. 51.75 – independent work of students		
The Interregional Institute of Economics and Law at the Interparliamentary Assembly (Nevsky Institute of Design)		and and	History and theory of decorative and applied arts and crafts	3	0.25 – control 108 64 – r independent work of students		

Higher school of folk	54.03.02 Decorative		6	216			
arts (academy)	and applied arts and	traditional arts and		144 – room.			
	crafts	crafts		72 – independent			
				work of students			
	Mo	oscow					
Kosygin Moscow	54.03.02	The history and	3	108			
State University of	Decorative and	modernity of		independent work			
Design and	applied arts and	decorative and		of students			
Technology	crafts	applied arts and		27 – control			
Institute of Design		crafts					
Moscow Pedagogical	54.03.02 Decorative	The history of	4	144			
State University	and applied arts and			61 – room.			
Institute of arts	crafts	applied arts and		56 – independent			
		crafts		work of students			
				27 – control			
Moscow State Art and	54.03.02 Decorative	The history of	4	144			
Industrial academy	and applied arts and	decorative and		72 – room.			
named after S.G.	crafts	applied art		72 – independent			
Stroganov				work of students			
Novosibirsk							
Novosibirsk State	54.03.02 Decorative		2	72			
Pedagogical	and applied arts and	and crafts of the		46 – room.			
University	crafts	peoples of the world /		26 – independent			
Institute of arts		Traditional crafts and		work of students			
		crafts of the peoples					
		of Siberia					
		The history and	4	144			
		modern problems of		54 – room.			
		decorative and		90 – independent			
		applied art		work of students			
Krasnoyarsk							
Federal State	54.03.02 Decorative	Artistic and	4	144			
Educational Institution	and applied arts and	decorative folk crafts		54 – room.			
of Higher Education	crafts			54 – independent			
"Siberian Federal				work of students			
University",				36 – control			
Krasnoyarsk		Artistic culture of	2	72			
		Siberia folk art		40 – room.			
				32 – independent			
				work of students			
Yekaterinburg							
Ural State University	54.03.02 Decorative a	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	f 3	108			
of Architecture and	applied arts and craft		1	36 – room.			
Art named after N.S.		applied art		72 –			
Alferov,				independent			
Yekaterinburg				work of students			
Nizhniy Novgorod							
Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical The areas of training have been eliminated							
University named after Kozma Minin							

Let's analyze the data presented in the table:

- firstly, there has been a reduction in universities implementing training in the field of 54.03.02 Decorative and Applied Arts and crafts (from 12 to 10);
- secondly, there is an obvious decrease in the number of theoretical courses related to the studied problem (from 14 to 11 disciplines respectively);
- thirdly, a decrease in the frequency of the use of the concept of "folk craft" (and their variations) in the name of the courses (from 14 to 6 mentions i.e. "skew" into the field of decorative and applied arts);
- fourth, an increase in the number of hours of independent work of the student and control in the process of mastering the content of the discipline.

These are only those changes that are related to the formal side of the organization of the educational process; however, they are a consequence of the dominant content of education in this area in each of the universities, i.e. the priority of training artists in the field of decorative and applied arts. The component concerning the understanding of the place and role of traditional ("folk") artistic crafts in the culture of the country implies the direction of preparation 54.03.02. This thesis is confirmed by the analysis of the content of the work programs of the listed academic disciplines. The most typical aspects of the content of programs that cause doubt and disagreement include:

- terminological confusion: the equivalent use of the concepts of "traditional crafts", "folk crafts", "folk culture", "folk art", new terminology i.e. "artistic and decorative folk crafts";
- inconsistency and unsystematic presentation of the material: the priority of history over theory as well as the illogical selection of content within the framework of one topic; it is proposed to study the types of traditional artistic crafts that are not related to each other either in a historical regional or artistic context (for example6 Gorodetsky painting and Kholuy miniature are combined into one topic; northern rabble and Kaslin casting etc.);
- one—sidedness of the representation of the diversity of types and centers of traditional artistic crafts: for example, artistic textiles are represented only by Vologda lace, Pavlovoposadsky printed and Orenburg shawls; artistic ceramics i.e. Gzhel ceramics and Dymkovsky toys etc. In the event that the study of the discipline involves acquaintance with the history of decorative and applied arts and folk crafts; the latter may not be reflected in the program at all.

The program of the course on the theory and history of traditional arts and crafts taught at the Higher school of folk arts looks harmonious and systematic [5]. Its content includes three large blocks ("Theoretical aspects of traditional applied art", "History of development and current state of traditional arts and crafts of Russia", "Traditional applied art is a part of national culture") logically and consistently revealing various types of traditional arts and crafts and their regional characteristics, the specifics of the terminological field and historiography of the study of each craft.

The course focuses on the formation of a holistic view of the wealth of traditional arts and crafts of the country and the understanding of regional variants of their technical technological artistic and stylistic features which is facilitated by

the structure of each topic from general concepts to specific types of traditional arts and crafts and the range of basic scientific research in this area. Of course, within the framework of the one-year course it is not possible to consider all the centers of traditional artistic crafts that once existed and are in existence today; however, the selected ones are able to form a holistic view of the national artistic traditions of Russia, the origins and characteristic trends of their development.

The successful development of the material is facilitated by the balance of classroom classes and independent work of students, the implementation of their own research (course work) within the discipline, the developed teaching methodology and the educational and methodological complex. The latter includes both author's developments specifically for this discipline (monographs textbooks) and the entire set of scientific publications of the Academy's staff prepared within the framework of the scientific and pedagogical school of Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences Professor V.F. Maksimovich "Creation of an innovative system of continuous multi-level education in traditional applied arts" affirming traditional crafts as a unique phenomenon of the cultural heritage of Russia [8, p. 15].

Thus, the essential features of the content of the declared course are:

- its interrelation with all levels of education, consistent complication and development from secondary vocational education to master's degree [6];
- the systematic presentation of the theory, the historical stages of the formation of specific types of traditional arts and crafts of the country and their current state;
- presentation of the variety of types of traditional arts and crafts, their regional variants (including taking into account the profiles of students' training);
 - a balance of classroom lectures, practical classes and independent work;
- a developed educational and methodological complex that takes into account the specifics of the educational process of the Higher school of folk arts.

The analysis of the curricula and the content of the work programs of the listed disciplines proves the uniqueness of the system of continuing professional education at the Higher school of folk arts (academy); thereby, confirming its status as the only university in Russia focused on the training of artists not decorative and applied arts but traditional crafts ready and capable of their preservation and development nowadays.

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