

FROM ICONS TO FAIRY TALES

Russian Lacquer Miniatures

TINY IN SIZE,
MONUMENTAL IN MEANING
SUCH WAS THE NATURE OF
RUSSIAN LACQUER MINIATURE PAINTING



How Tobacco Snuff Created Art

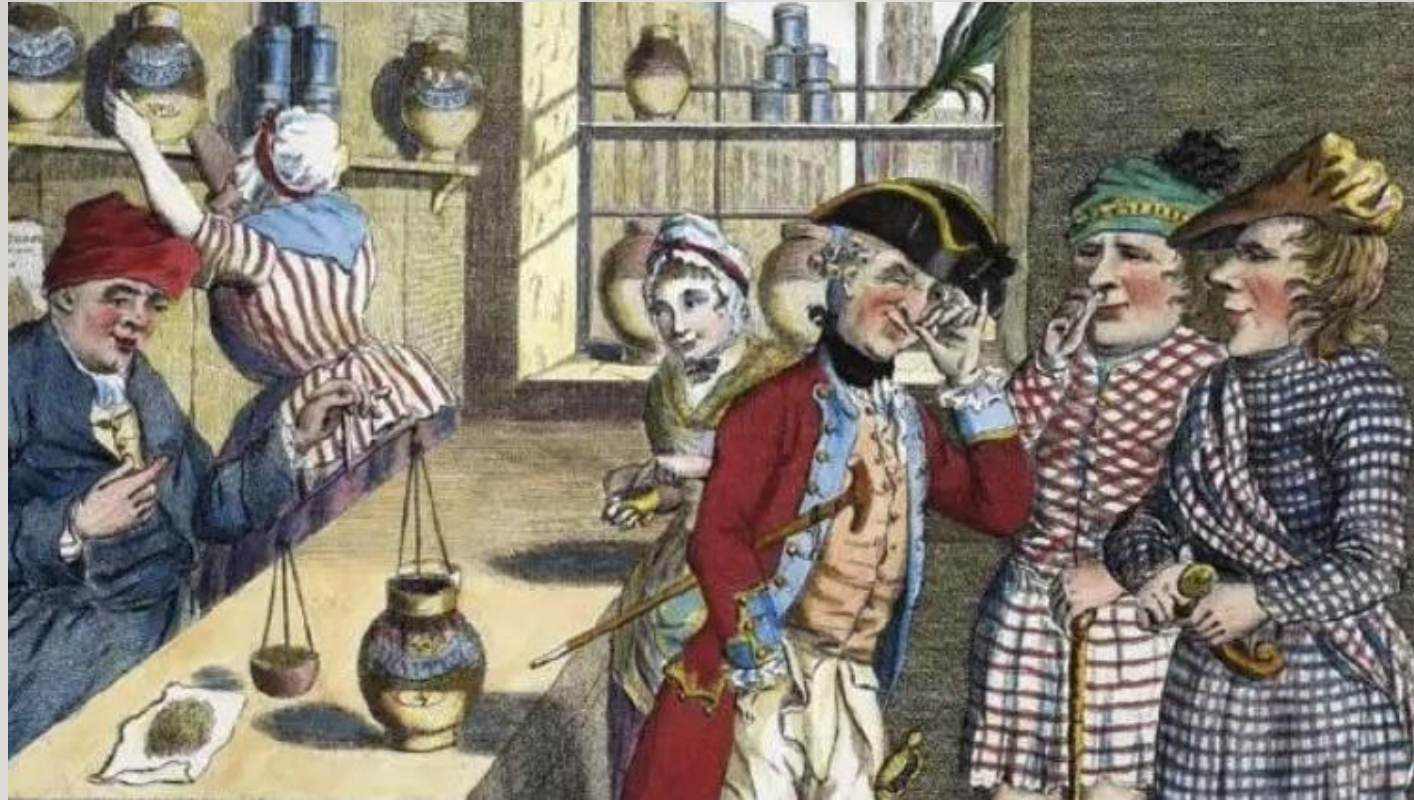
18TH-CENTURY EUROPE: SNUFF SOCIAL
CULTURE

NEED FOR DECORATED CONTAINERS

PAPIER-MÂCHÉ + VARNISH:
LIGHT, DURABLE, ELEGANT, AFFORDABLE



Tabatières or tabakerka



SOCIAL LIFE, TASTE, STATUS, PERSONALITY

SNUFFBOXES IN RUSSIA

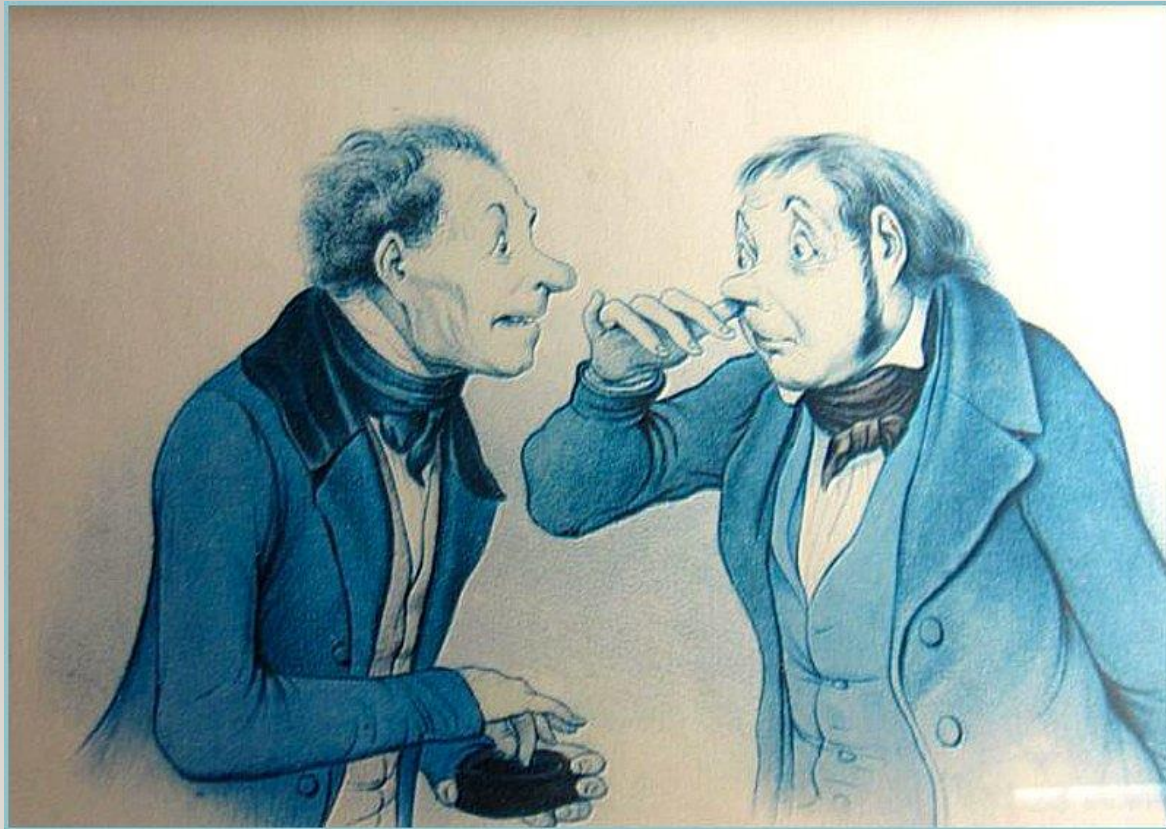
1795 --- BIRTH OF FEDOSKINO



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- ❖ 16th century - tobacco in Russia
 - ❖ Peter the Great's Grand Diplomacy Voyage to Europe
 - ❖ **1697** free sale of tobacco throughout Russia legalized
 - ❖ **1795:** Pyotr Korobov visits **Stobwasser** lacquer manufacture in Germany
 - ❖ *Why not make this in Russia?*
 - ❖ Establishes workshop in **Fedoskino** near Moscow

SNUFFBOXES IN RUSSIA

AN EVERYDAY HABIT TURNED INTO ART



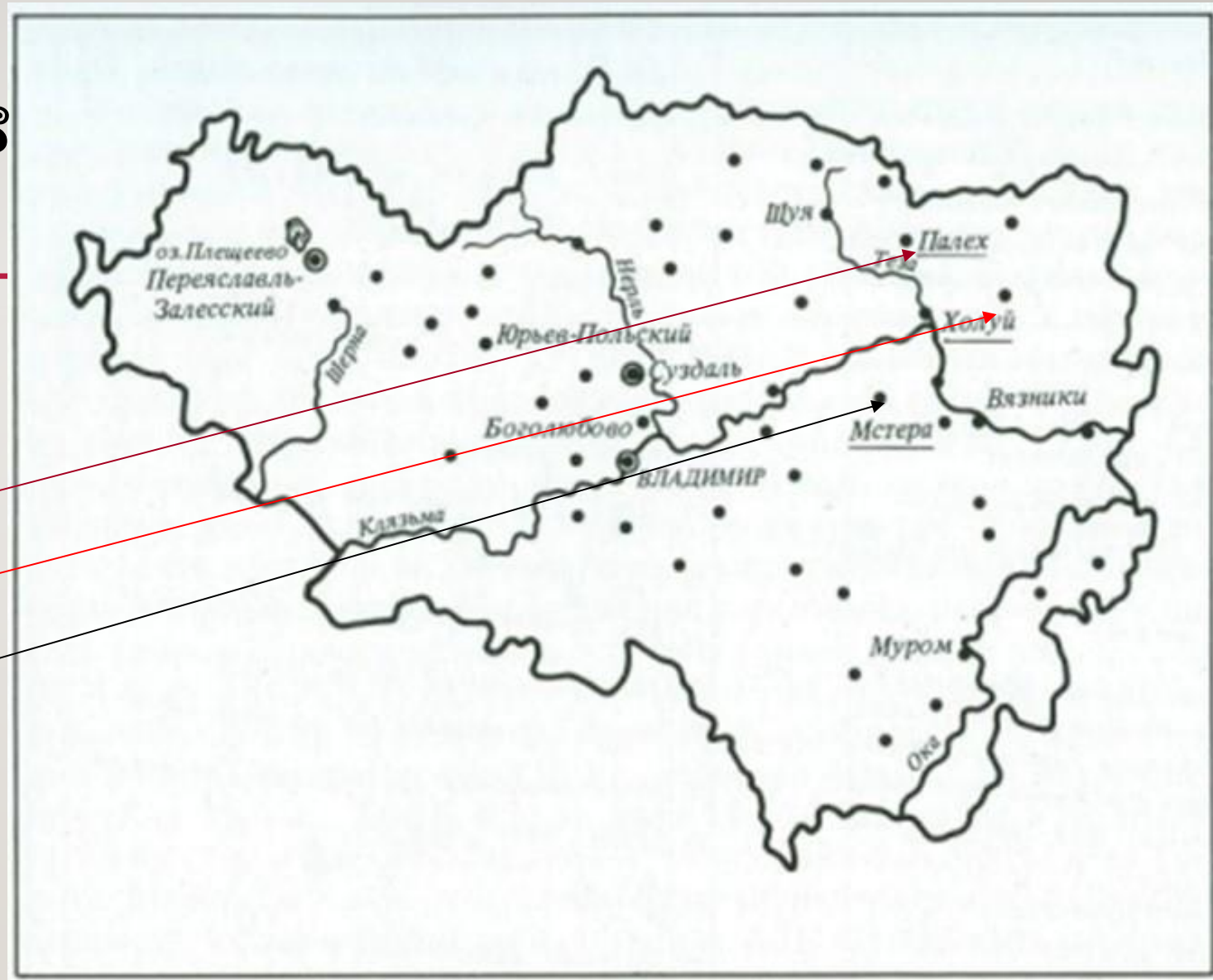
4 MINIATURE CRAFT CENTERS

❖ Fedoskino

❖ Palekh

❖ Kholuy

❖ Mstera



FEDOSKINO

- ❖ Oldest tradition
- ❖ Oil paint (not tempera)
- ❖ Traditional Russian and European art patterns
- ❖ Realism: winter roads, nature, tea parties, churches, fairy tales, Troyka theme
- ❖ Optical luminosity: mother-of-pearl or metal beneath the paint





souvrussia.com





PALEKH: MYTH, GOLD, SACRED MEMORY

- ❖ Palekh Village history
- ❖ Icon painting center from 16th century
- ❖ “Tiny” icons for the Old Believers
- ❖ Egg-tempera, elongated figures, symbolic perspective
- ❖ 1920 – new art born: sacred visual language to secular boxes
- ❖ Ivan Golikov - Artel







“TINY” ICONS FOR THE OLD BELIEVERS

MIKHAIL ZINOVIEV, VASILY MARKICHEV.

ICON OF THE MENAION WITH THE RESURRECTION AND THE PASSION OF THE LORD. 19TH CENTURY

FROM CHURCH WALLS TO LACQUER BOXES

1920

Ivan Golikov – Artel of
Palekh Craftsmen

THE SURFACE CHANGED
THE TECHNIQUE STAYED

THIS IS HOW PALEKH
LACQUER MINIATURE WAS
BORN

Pavel Bazhenov. "On Guard of the Borders of the USSR".
1935





ICON PAINTING DISCIPLINE

Writing – painting

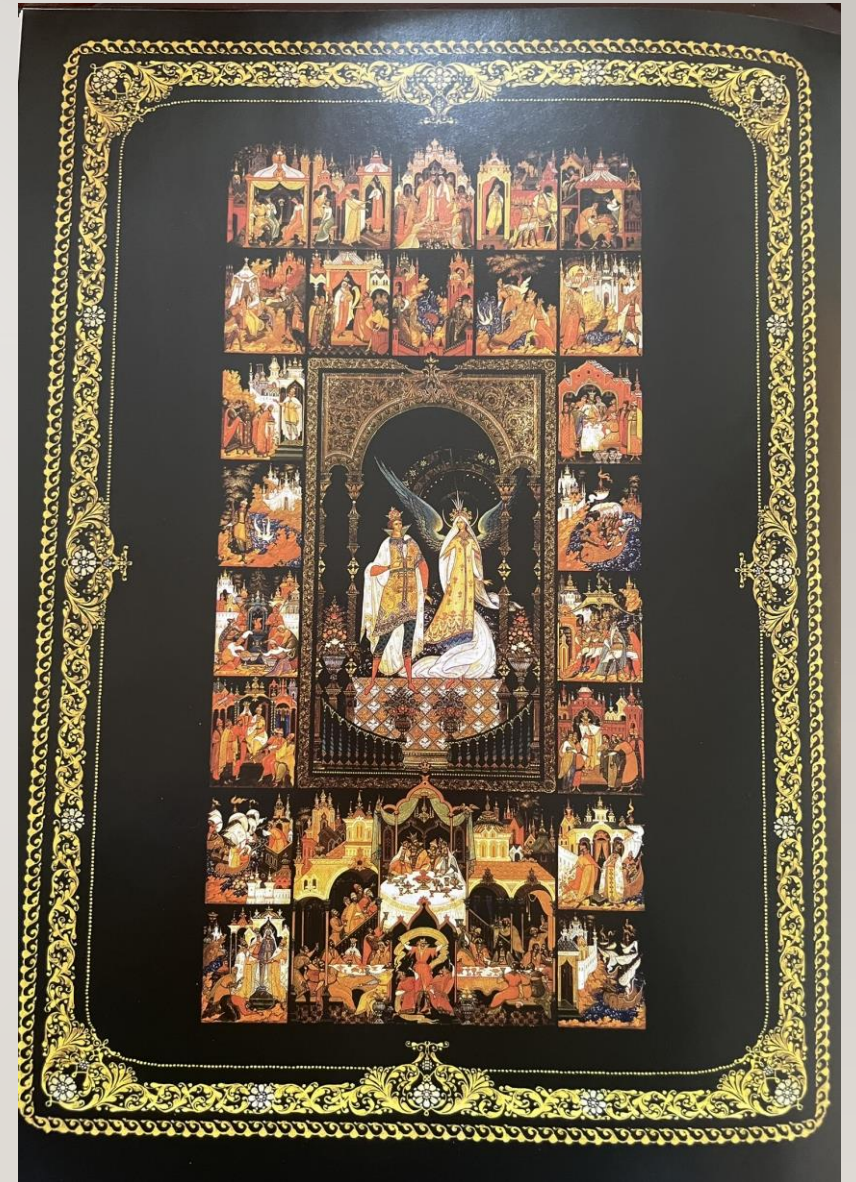
Centered layout - with margins

BLACK background - stage

Gold – eternal meaning

Figures - elongated, light, weightless

Details



PALEKH SECRETS

“Plav” , or melt, method used for icons

White ground so colors will glow

Polishing with a wolf fang and brush

Gold not a decoration but a structure

Special paints

Handmade brushes

If Fedoskino is prose, Palekh is poetry

LOOKING BEYOND RUSSIA

Persian, Japanese, Ancient Miniatures,
Renaissance art frescos



Raphael, "Jacob's Encounter with Rachel"
Fresco, 1519 Vatican

Ivan Golikov, "Encounter", 1924



PALEKH'S DYNASTIES AND CONTINUITY

A LAND OF ARTISTIC FAMILIES

SKILLS AND SECRETS WERE PASSED DOWN THROUGH
GENERATIONS

PALEKH MINIATURE IS NOT JUST A CRAFT,
BUT A FULL ART SCHOOL

PALEKH MUSEUM

HUNDREDS OF ARTISTS STILL WORK IN THE VILLAGE
TODAY, PRESERVING TRADITIONS. THIS CONTINUITY IS
ONE REASON THE TRADITION SURVIVES.



PALEKH IN 21th CENTURY

PALEKH'S ART AND THE WORLD

1924, PALEKH MINIATURES EXHIBITION IN VENICE

COLLECTORS FROM EUROPE AND AMERICA

BLACK GOLD

TODAY, PALEKH MINIATURES CAN BE FOUND IN
MUSEUMS AROUND THE WORLD

IN AMERICA, THE MUSEUM OF RUSSIAN ART IN
MINNEAPOLIS HAS AN EXTENSIVE COLLECTION.

KHOLUY: MINIATURES THAT MOVE

- ❖ Kholuy is a narrative art
- ❖ Characters move, landscapes unfold.
- ❖ The colors are warm, the compositions open, the gold modest
- ❖ Kholuy invites the eye to wander and the mind to follow





IF PALEKH IS MYTH FROZEN IN TIME, KHOLUY IS FAIRY TALE IN MOTION.

MSTERA: ORDER, ORNAMENT, HARMONY



- ❖ Icon tradition with decorative focus
- ❖ Chooses light over darkness
- ❖ Multy-colored backgrounds are cream, gold, pastel, painted in light-turquoise and ochre-pink shades
- ❖ Everything is organized

Mstera speaks the language of harmony





FOUR VILLAGES

ART DOES NOT SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE

EVEN WITHIN A SINGLE TRADITION,

IT CAN ARGUE,

DREAM,

REMEMBER,

AND INVENT—

IN FOUR DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

ALL ON A SURFACE NO LARGER THAN YOUR HAND

