



W. M A S J U T I N :

## F O L K A R T A N D N O T E S

Whenever a new state comes into being—not a few were newly founded during the World War and after it—the creation of the new money is an important problem. Of course the habits of the population must be taken into consideration and therefore we often find the same old designs repeated on the new notes, only the symbols of power having been changed. Or the notes were altered completely, but the new designs were reminiscent of something in the past. In the Far East, for instance, notes were put into currency which bore no similarity to the money circulated by the former Russian Empire, but were in the style of United States notes (7—9). It was necessary to follow old models to some extent, but beside this there was an opportunity of symbolising political power by means of the new notes and this was made the most of. A land such as Ukraina which on account of its geographical situation had not for a long time been in a position to form a state of its own, issued notes of entirely new design, intended to remind the populace of the glorious historical past of Ukraina (18, 19, 21). At first, Latvia made use of designs taken from old peasant embroideries (10). Thus a connecting link was established between the cultural treasure of the people and their material prosperity. Particularly interesting were the notes issued by the Asiatic border states belonging to Russia, the designs of which revealed very strong national aspirations, since in the main the population felt no sympathy for the new developments. On the other hand, artists like Tschechonin and Narbut, commissioned by the state to create new notes, were not fully equal to their task (18—19). These notes were excellently carried out as far as the graphic quality is concerned, but they were not in accordance with the traditional conception of "valuables", appealing to the people and inspiring them with confidence.

Among all the varieties issued, the notes given out by Buchara and Chiva were an artistic revelation. The only means of printing to hand, in Chiva, for instance, was the primitive form of the wood block. This paper money is really national, because its roots are in the handiwork really practised by the people.

The paper money reproduced here is from the Kardakoff collection, this gentleman being in possession of one of the largest and most interesting collections in existence. Trans. by E. T. Scheffauer.