

Conference Paper

Ural – China in the Xxi Century: The Reality of Interaction in the Sphere of Culture and Education

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Abstract

The article deals with the main directions of cultural interaction of Sverdlovsk region and Heilongjiang province in education, exhibition activities, sports in the XXI century.

Keywords: Ural, China, culture, system of education, exhibition activity, sport, EXPO «Russia-China»

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1. Introduction

The relevance of the research is related to the fact that Russia and China are two powerful strategic partners in the modern world. Their contacts began in the XVII century, and the path to rapprochement between the two countries passed through the Urals. The development of Russian-Chinese relations significantly increased at the beginning of the XXI century in all spheres, including cultural exchange. The article is aimed at considering the system of relations between the Urals and China in post-Soviet Russia, particularly in the field of culture and education.

2. Methods of Research

The main method of research is historical and comparative, although the methods of analysis and synthesis, and the method of generalization are also used, enabling observation of how friendship and cooperation between Russia and China are strengthened and how the interaction between the Chinese provinces and the Ural regions is developing.

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2.1. The main events of interaction between China and the Urals in the 2000s

In 2005, the foreign trade turnover between China and the Sverdlovsk region amounted to 480 million US dollars, which was a record figure for the previous 15 years. At the same time, the course was taken not just to expand trade, but also to establish direct cooperation between enterprises, to participate in major investment projects, to create multi-profile joint ventures, and to develop contacts in the fields of culture, science, education and health. This trend was comprehensively analyzed by A. Kirillov and G. Kayota in the book on the history of centuries-old interaction between China and the Urals [2].

The year 2006 - the Year of Russia in China - was also notable for the fact that the 2004 decision adopted on the opening of the consulates of the Russian Federation in Guangzhou and the People's Republic of China in Yekaterinburg became operational, which contributed to the development of cultural ties between the countries. And the opening of regular flights between the Urals and China has solved many problems of business people, tourists, students and other passengers.

Educational contacts between the Urals and China have been also growing. Thus, on September 26, 2003 Ekaterinburg hosted a delegation of the representatives of science and education from Guangzhou, headed by the President of the University Lin Weiming. The guests handed over books in Chinese to the Ural State University (USU). Also, they mentioned that Yekaterinburg universities are distinguished by a special spirit, since they educate young people aimed at success. The guests called the organization of the university educational process curious and extraordinary [1].

In autumn 2007, the representatives of USU signed a Memorandum of cooperation with Guangdong University of foreign languages and foreign trade in Guangzhou. The ceremony of signing the documents on the opening of the Confucius Institute at the Ural State University named after Gorky was held on October 28, 2008. The Chinese partner provided two teachers of Chinese language and 3,000 textbooks.

By 2014, Ural Federal University, which united USU and USTU-UPI, signed 21 agreements with the Chinese universities on cooperation in the exchange of students, researchers and lecturers [4].

In March 2013, the Union of Chinese students of URFU was founded. Its partners are the Consulate General of China in Yekaterinburg, the Confucius Institute of URFU, and the Department of oriental studies of ISPS [3].

At the beginning of the 2000s, the cooperation in the artistic sphere revived significantly. Thus, on September 22, 2001 in Beijing the National Museum of the Chinese Revolution in Tiananmen Square held an exhibition from the collection of the Yekaterinburg Museum of fine arts. The huge hall of the Beijing Museum was filled with the paintings of the classics and modern masters of the Russian painting: K. Brullov, V. Tropinin, O. Kiprensky, I. Aivazovsky, A. Plastov, M. Brusilovsky, V. Mikhailov, and P. Reutov. The visitors saw 132 works of art. Speaking about the success of the exhibition, the head of the museum's department of Russian culture Iraida Zagorodskih shared her impressions, "I watched the Chinese looking at the presented works. Two or three hours can be spent in one room. Mostly they brought the whole families. One of the families toured a perimeter around the Russian hall several times, and stopped beneath some paintings again and again" [2, 224].

In January - February 2002, the Yekaterinburg Museum of fine arts held the exhibition *Russian art – 300 years* to the citizens of Guangzhou. The Museum's funds presented the paintings and drawings by the Russian artists. At the same time, the Yekaterinburg regional Museum of local lore opened the exhibition *The Writing of the Yellow river, sent down to the world*, which presented more than 300 items from the Eastern collections of the Museum [2, 225-226].

In autumn 2013, Yekaterinburg hosted the first festival of Chinese films *Unknown China*. The festival was the beginning of a long partnership between Yekaterinburg and Harbin in the field of cinematography.

In 2008, a wide range of cultural events was held shortly before the meeting of heads of the SCO countries in the capital of the Urals. For example, in the Regional Museum of local lore visitors enjoyed the exhibition *The Unknown Celestial Empire* with its fascinating and bright landscapes and fantastic sketches of the Eastern life. The Museum of Yekaterinburg history opened the exhibition *China in motion*, which demonstrated architectural monuments and modern skyscrapers, everyday life, traditional folk festivals and customs of the Chinese, as well as the preparations for the Olympic Games in Beijing.

In the same year, Yekaterinburg hosted the scientific and practical conference *Environmental safety of the SCO member states*, as well as the X International Symposium and the exhibition *Clean water in Russia*, with the participation of more than 300 representatives of the SCO countries and other countries.

More than 150 athletes took part in the table tennis tournament for the children's teams of the SCO countries in the city of Verkhnyaya Pyshma. The winners of the fights

were Pu Yu Ting among girls and Chen Yongbo among boys. Polina Bikeeva and Andrey Semenov from Yekaterinburg took the second place.

In 2009, the Chinese delegation headed by foreign Minister Yang Jiechi took part in the closing ceremony of the XII international festival of children's music *The Earth is our common home*.

A series of photo exhibitions about the participating SCO countries was shown by the Photographic Museum Metenkov's House. The exhibition was called *From the Great Wall of China to the Stone Belt*. Based on these contributions, the album "International festival of photography *From the Great Wall to the Stone Belt*" was released in Yekaterinburg.

Important for the development of both economic and socio-cultural relations are the Chinese-Russian Expo, held since 2014 alternately in Harbin and Yekaterinburg.

In June 2015, the Ural Federal University and the Chinese company Guangdong established a center for training Russian specialists to serve the Silk Road program in the city of Shihezi. This is in fact a response to the document of the Chinese government "On the excellent prospects and practical actions for the joint creation of the Silk Road Economic belt and the Sea Silk Road of the XXI century".

In July 2015, the ceremonial signing of the Agreement on scientific-technical cooperation served as the significant result of the constant contacts and cooperation between the Ural branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, research institutions of the Heilongjiang Academy of Sciences and the Office of science and technology of the People's government of the city of Harbin.

In late August - early September 2015, the Week of exchanges between China and Russia in the field of culture and art was held in Harbin. It was organized by the city authorities of Harbin and the government of Sverdlovsk region. Five other Russian cities, including Moscow and St. Petersburg, also took part in the events, which was held as the united artistic festival of the two nations.

On March 2, 2016, Yekaterinburg hosted the first meeting of the working group on the implementation of the Memorandum on trade, technical, scientific, economic and cultural cooperation between the government of Sverdlovsk region and the People's government of Harbin. On its outcome, the first Deputy Prime Minister – the minister of investments and development Alexey Orlov and the Vice-mayor of Harbin Qu Lei signed 11 agreements in six different areas. They determined the plan of further interaction and promising areas of cooperation, mechanisms for the exchange of views and decision-making for mutual cooperation.

The Russian-Chinese Expo demonstrate the new achievements of the two countries, and at the same time it is a useful platform for establishing new business ties, establishing further ways of developing economic and cultural cooperation between Russia and China.

3. Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be noticed that the number of people wishing to get acquainted with the Urals is growing in China. The Ural travel companies joined the all-Russian program *China Friendly*, and the *Red Route* to places of revolutionary, military and labor events has been launched for the tourists from China.

The tourism development Center of Sverdlovsk region makes a great contribution to the development of tourism from China. At the initiative of the Center, the travel routes for Chinese tourists have been developed and their descriptions have been published in Chinese.

The cultural dialogue between China and Russia is ongoing, and the new projects of cultural and trade relations, art exhibitions and festivals, scientific conferences and educational contacts between our universities lie ahead.

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