

# Research on Sino-Russian Culture and Art Exchange under New Historical Background

Ke Mou  
Heihe University  
Heihe, China

Yang Liu  
Heihe University  
Heihe, China

Xiaojuan Wang  
Heihe University  
Heihe, China

**Abstract**—In the 18th and 19th century, the culture and art exchanges between China and Russia mainly represents on the outflow from China to Russia. While in 20th century, it manifests on the outflow from Russia to China. This thesis sorts out the influences of Sino-Russian traditional art and culture exchanges and evolution on the relationship between China and Russia, and reflects on the question that how can we transmit our traditional art to Russian people while learning and inheriting traditional Chinese art. Furthermore, it analyzes the positive meanings that deepening the understanding and friendship between the people of two countries during the art spreading process.

**Keywords**—Chinese and Russian culture; artistic dissemination; evolution of exchanges

## I. INTRODUCTION

The cultural exchanges between China and Russia have been a miracle in the history of human culture exchanges. Although it began later than Sino-India culture exchange and Chinese and Western culture exchanges, two countries have mutually impressed each other a lot and Russian literature, painting, dance and other artistic classes have left enormous and far-reaching influences to Chinese artists and art education. On the contrary, Chinese culture and art have created great influences on Russia as early as the reign of Mogolians. In a manner of speaking, Russian civilization has contained Eastern factors at its first stage. No matter we consider from the aspects of nation wishes, geographical relationship or the view of social development conditions, eastern factors have been running through Russia and its cultural development. The two big countries that China and Russia, under the complex and changeable international environment, have conducted close cooperation in an increasing number of domains and many common interests exist between them, so that they are becoming increasingly inseparable and interdependent. Therefore, it definitely has positive meanings for us to understand the influences of traditional art and culture exchanges between China and Russia on the relationship of two countries, further to drive us to reflect on the methods for

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transmitting our traditional art to Russian people while learning and inheriting traditional art. In addition, it can facilitate to constantly deepen the understanding and friendship between Chinese and Russian people during art spreading.

## II. RESEARCH STATUS OF CULTURE AND ART EXCHANGES BETWEEN CHINA AND RUSSIA

At present, there are many domestic and overseas scholars engaged in researches on culture and art exchanges between China and Russia, such as: Li Sian's Introduction to Cultural Exchange History of China and Russia in Heilongjiang Area, Qi Xunjun's Communication and Influences of Chinese and Russian Culture, Liu Lili's Discussion on Culture Exchanges between China and Russia as well as Wang Xuejing's Culture Exchanges between China and Russia after Cold War and Its Influences on Their Countries' Relationship. The existing researches mainly are based on the influences of culture exchanges of two countries on their relationship, or proceeding with mutual influences of two countries' culture and from Russia's point of view; while rarely people would conduct analysis and excavation of the evolutionary history of traditional Chinese art being accepted.

Lots of academic achievements have been made about researches on culture exchanges of China and Russia and at present there are many works studying on this direction. Such as: Guo Moruo's Culture Exchanges Between China and the Soviet Union, Li Mingbing's Culture Exchange Records of China and the Soviet Union, Zhu Qiuda's Comparison of Chinese and Russian Culture, Tang Ge's Russian Culture in China, etc. all of which perform study from the aspects of two countries' cultural exchanges and cultural comparison. Few scholars at home and abroad work on the researches of acceptance and transmission of Traditional Chinese and Russian art, especially conducting systematical teasing and exposition in the new time.

In the 18th and 19th century, the culture and art exchanges between China and Russia mainly represents on the outflow from China to Russia. While in 20th century, it manifests on the outflow from Russia to China. The following several

aspects can be considered as the start for us to conduct researches:

- On the basis of the former “Chinese fever” and the following gradually cooling of this trend, to conduct researches on the characteristics of Russia’s acceptance on traditional Chinese art in various historical stages;
- Such researches can be made that the types of traditional art which are favored and well-accepted by Russian and Chinese people and the influences of them on cultural exchanges between two countries;
- as changes have taken place in Sino-Russia relationship, the situations of Russia’s acceptance to traditional Chinese art and its evolutionary history;
- We may reflect on the question that how to convey our traditional arts to Russian people during learning and inheriting them, further to enable more and more Russian people, and a sound developing mechanism can be established for the spreading of culture and art between China and Russia.

### III. COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSMISSION OF CHINESE AND RUSSIAN CULTURE AND ART IN THE NEW AGE

Chinese art treasures can be seen in many famous Russian museums, such as Russia Museum, State Hermitage Museum, Tretyakov Gallery, etc. Those art works possessing eastern romantic charm and artistic glamour indicate the artistic value orientation of early Russian art collectors. Meanwhile, reviewing the developing history of Russian arts, eastern art works have made great and special influences, since we can find some trails and tiny details of artistic styles and works being similar with Byzantine Art of China and East. Obviously, the essences and merits have been absorbed by Russia and motivated its own creativity during the process of art exchanges and development. Furthermore, China’s porcelain has more profound and lasting influences on the development implements plastic arts in the entire Europe. For example, there are porcelain images of “Chinese people” collected in Russia’s international museum. These porcelains, made by the first St. Petersburg’s ceramic factory in 1760, belong to the typical “Chinese style” and such artistic style presenting on that age reflected that China’s ceramics have made direct influences on Russia’s porcelain manufacture of that time. Moreover, in the 1980 s, Russian government once sent special persons to China Jingdezhen to learn ceramics. It is obvious that traditional Chinese porcelains have greatly influenced both ceramics industry of the former Soviet Union and plastic arts of implements. Those excellent China’s porcelain works collected in museums of Russia, more, give an expression on the high acceptance level and enjoyment of praises among the art domain of Russia.

Up to now, oriental culture halls still stand in the State Hermitage Museum (Winter Palace) of St. Petersburg and there are a total of 13 Chinese exhibition halls to display traditional Chinese paintings, porcelains, bronze wares and art treasures of other types. The terrines made by China and for the use of Tsar’s pharmacy also are displayed in there, as the extreme fondness of this arrogant Tsar is displayed, to China’s

art works. In addition, we can see lots of artistic modeling displays themed of Chinese Buddhism and Taoism as well as more than 1,000 New Year paintings of early Chinese folk customs in “Oriental Religion Room” of Kazan Cathedral in Russia. The number of Chinese art displays in there is the largest all over the world.

Opening a page of history, especially Catherine the Great of Russia shows special preference for Chinese culture and art. Catherine the Great builds wooden theatre of Chinese-style in Tsarskoye Selo, St. Petersburg. In the whole theatre building, the Chinese traditional culture elements with unique shapes such as dragon, lotus and so on are decorated in the pillars, ceiling, handrails, etc., which presents the influence of Chinese culture and art to the culture of Russia even its court, and mirrors the love of Russia royalty and nobles for Chinese art design style as well. Beyond that, the daughter of Peter the Great – Elizabeth is really fond of Chinese art works. Elizabeth purchases a large amount of silk, folding screen, tableware, lantern, furniture, etc. from China, and extensively introduces Chinese weaving art, furniture design and ceramic art to the upper class society of Russia, which is widely spread in court culture. The good friend of Peter the Great – Boris Sheremetev builds Chinese Pavilion and treasures up a large number of Chinese porcelain at his home.

After 20th century, there are frequent official and non-governmental culture and art exchanges between China and Russia. With the opportunity of “Year of Chinese-Russian Cultural Exchange”, by the way of culture exchanges, Chinese and Russian artists hold various exhibitions to actively promote the interaction and spread of Chinese and Russian art in the new period. In November, 2015, an exhibition named “The Orient in Impression—China in Russians’ eyes” was held in Moscow Carizin Nor National Museum. This exhibition displayed more than 600 Chinese-style artistic works from 13 units, such as the Kremlin, St. Petersburg Hermitage Museum and National Library of Russia. In December, 2015, “Russia Chinese Ink Art Exhibition” opened in Chinese cultural center of Moscow on 8 December local time. In Russia, there are a lot of culture lovers and collectors who have made great contribution and efforts to the culture and art exchanges between China and Russia. For example, for the sake of love for Chinese folk art, Zakharovs has been striving for the spread of Chinese culture and folk art from early times; they actively held exhibitions and wrote books in Russia. As early as 1987, Ms. Zakharova held a personal collection show whose theme was “My Chinese folk Toys” in Moscow Pushkin Formative Arts Museum, and more than 100 thousand visitors had visited this exhibition. In addition, she also holds series lectures related to Chinese folk arts. After that, they successively published about 30 articles about Chinese folk and classic art. A book named Fantastic Chinese Folk Toys was published both in Chinese and Russian. Thanks to Zakharova’s efforts and contributions on Chinese and Russian culture and art spreading, she became the first Russian person who awarded the fourth term of “China becomes more beautiful because of you” in 2013. Through collecting materials for two or three decades, Zakharova couples created and published the book Happiness Forever on the theme of “twelve Chinese zodiac signs” in our traditional culture, in order to convey and

describe traditional Chinese folk stories, folk legends, customs, slangs and proverbs to Russian people. The book is very popular in Russia. Till now, children aesthetics cultivation center of Pushkin plastic arts gallery in Moscow of Russia has taken this book as textbook for students to learn traditional Chinese culture. In classes, children show great interests in traditional Chinese folk culture and have endless leaning motivation. The book has motivated children's enthusiasm in creating paintings themed of traditional Chinese folk legends and their works has been exhibited in Russia and the Commonwealth of the Independent States for many times.

The communications of Sino-Russia relationship have both promoting and restrictive functions to the spreading of traditional Chinese art in Russia. Through figuring out the influences of Chinese and Russian culture and art on Sino-Russia relationship, we may reflect on the question that how to convey our traditional arts to Russian people during learning and inheriting them, further to enable more and more Russian people to have chances to have some acquaintance with our traditional arts. Therefore, the purposes and meanings of studying culture and art exchanges between China and Russia lie in establishing a sound development mechanism for the transmission of culture and art exchanges between China and Russia. In this research field, it is quite novel to conduct researches on the communications and transmission of Chinese and Russian culture and art in the new age from Russia's point of view. However, teasing and summarizing the communications and transmission of Chinese and Russian culture and art, definitely have significant meanings for us to learn from the past experiences and further to explore a more effective pattern of culture and art exchanges between China and Russia in the future.

Igor Rogachev has mentioned that: "Russia's fate and development in 21st century cannot be separated from all-round cooperation with China." "When we witness that deeper and deeper cooperation between two countries in economy, military matters, energy, culture and other aspects are constantly taking place, cultural and artistic exchanges between two countries become unprecedentedly frequent. Russian people begin to study Chinese and they are extremely interested in Chinese culture. Confucius Institutes are enjoying their popularity from more and more people, since they have promoted the spreading and popularization of Chinese culture. In addition, researches on cultural and artistic exchanges between China and Russia in the new time lay the foundation of putting forward the establishment and formulation of Sino-Russia art exchange policies and measures, so as to enable traditional Chinese arts can be increasingly acquainted by more Russian people. Furthermore, a sound developing mechanism can be established for the spreading of culture and art between China and Russia."

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