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The Experience of the Loss of the Motherland by Representatives of Russian Emigration in the Chinese Provinces (1905–1917)

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Abstract

The authors consider the problem of separation from the mother culture in the conditions of forced emigration of officers of the tsarist army during the period of increasing Russian influence in the Chinese provinces of the Russian Empire before its collapse. The awareness of one's own mission and acceptance of one's destiny reflected in the way information was presented in the film and newspaper discourses of the Russian diaspora in China at the beginning of the twentieth century. Understanding the historical, cultural, psychological, and linguistic significance of Harbin's Russian culture is important in the context of the formation of the diaspora mentality, the viability of cultural values, ties with the historical homeland, and overcoming depressive moods caused by ethnic trauma and the loss of the homeland. A lever for managing ethno-cultural identity. Russian emigrants were able to record the Russian language in subtitles, as well as daily life and incidents, and discuss world and Russian news. This allows us to trace the evolution of the Russian diaspora in Harbin. Ethnotrauma due to the distance from Russia, the fall of the Tsarist Empire, the First World War forced us to look for new forms of preserving ethno-confessional, socio-cultural identity.

Keywords: China, Chinese Eastern Railway, Harbin, film and newspaper discourse, Tsarist Army, ethnotrauma, Russian emigrant diaspora, ethnocultural contacts.

1. Introduction

The Russian pre-revolutionary emigration of the XX century was initially presented to emigrants as a temporary phenomenon, due to the penetration of tsarist Russia into the spaces of Manchuria and Northern China. The researchers considered it as a promotion of Russia's policy on its distant borders, which was associated with the objective difficulties of ethnic and cultural conflicts, epidemics, natural disasters, and distance from the metropolis (Marinenko et al., 2019; Semenov, Semenova, 2021; Tokmurzaev et al., 2021).

This idea was quite active during the twentieth century, but revolutionary events changed the attitude to Russia (Geifman, 1993), to its culture, language, and history among the descendants of white immigrants, as the ethnocultural competencies of migrants change from generation to generation (Islamova et al., 2019). Therefore, we find the attempts of the emigrant community to preserve its own ethno-socio-cultural identity outside the metropolis in a foreign-language environment quite interesting for scientific analysis in various aspects (Khatyamova, 2008; Golubeva-Monatkina, 2004).

The "center-periphery", "capital-province", "colony-metropolis" opposition vector set in the past (Ivanescu, Urushadze, 2018) is once again becoming a priority in the geopolitical space of the XXI century. Therefore, we consider it necessary to consider the issue of preserving the ethno-socio-cultural identity in the situation of breaking the geopolitical paradigm of the early twentieth century. based on the material of film and newspaper discourses, since such oppositions become a prerequisite for building the foundation of a

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multipolar world, in which "hopeless" peripheral regions cultivate new conditions for economic and cultural growth within their countries, providing a breakthrough in many spheres of life.

The distance from the metropolis formed an idealized image of Russia as a place of strength of the national spirit. This specificity crystallized the ideal features of Russia in the mythologized picture of the world of emigrants who mastered the spaces of Manchuria and Northern China in the context of the so-called specifics of the "Russian soul" (Fedulov, et al, 2015; Pogrebnaya, Anikeev, 2019). Russian-American writer and historian V. P. Petrov noted that "the Russians were masters in the exclusion zone, and therefore did not even seek to learn the language of the country in which they lived" (Petrov, 1984: 18). Subsequently, this idealized image of Russia contributed to the formation of nationalist and fascist organizations in the Russian white emigrant environment (Lagutkina, 2013).

This aspect predetermined the accentuation of ethnic trauma among Russian emigrants of the early XXth century in China, which was clearly manifested at the time of the revolutionary waves in Russia, when the death of the Tsarist Empire became obvious.

We believe that the ethnomyth of Russian migrants in China at the beginning of the twentieth century contains the following levels:

1) the traditional picture of the world associated with the origins of the national history and culture of the metropolis;

2) the moment of maximum glorification of the nation (military victories, the acquisition of new territories in Northern China and Manchuria);

3) the moment of falling self-esteem of an ethnic group/ nation (ethnotrauma: "Bloody Sunday" 1905, the February Revolution, the fall of the Tsarist Empire, the October Revolution, the loss of the motherland);

4) forming an image of the future, understood as an idealized image of the Russian metropolis;

5) construction and exploitation of the deep opposition "we are them" (first the opposition "we (Russians) vs they (Japanese/ Chinese)", later "we (emigrants) vs they (Bolsheviks)").

Each of these mythologized constructions forms a frame that is filled with real historical facts, creating manipulums for transforming the worldview of the recipients of the discourse (Karabulatova, 2020).

The contradictory geopolitical situation on the eve and during the First World War actualized national myths that served as formative and structuring vectors of understanding the surrounding space. Russian myth is a myth about the Messianism of the Russian people, the sanctity and God-chosen Russian spirit, and so on. At the same time, the apocalyptic catastrophes of the Russian Empire could not but affect the transformation of the Russian myth in the context of ethnotrauma. The mythology of ethnotrauma, as an integral part of geopolitics, is built in mythologized ideologems, which are based on the well-known dichotomy "we vs them" (Osipov et al., 2015). The juxtaposition itself makes extensive use of the symbolic level, supporting and generating other myths (Asriyan, 2015).

The complexity of the issue is because the life of Russian emigrants in China at the beginning of the XXth century (on the eve of the revolution of 1917 and after it) was unavailable for analysis, due to the prohibition of censorship. However, the policy of perestroika in the 1980s opened access to documents covering various aspects of the life of white immigrants for researchers (Ablova, 2006; Khatyamova, 2008; Rakunov, 2011).

Our attention is focused on Harbin, because the formation of Harbin, as well as possible, corresponds to the understanding of the cultivation of a potential geopolitical center in the early twentieth century. Despite the fact that the algorithm of Harbin development, which was built by the Russians in the late XIX century – early XX century (Shkvarya, 2019), corresponded to the principles of development of most Russian cities with the corresponding attributes of industrial zones, shopping streets, market squares, manufactories, nevertheless, the city, becoming the center of socio-economic life, experiences social and psychological loads due to its distance from the metropolis, foreign-cultural Chinese environment and confrontation with the Japanese side.

The issues of CER construction, as well as military-political, socio-economic cooperation, have only recently become the object of close attention (Ablova, 2005; Shkvarya, 2019; Miao Hui, 2015; Smirnov, 2005; Rakunov, 2011; Chuprina, 2012) due to access to the archives of the Russian diaspora in China. However, Russian, and foreign historiography demonstrates that today we have gaps that concern not only the emigration of the troops of the tsarist army, the Russian intelligentsia from Russia to China, but also the issues of their arrangement in China. Russian emigrants in China have not fully analyzed the socio-cultural and political conditions of military and economic migration, as well as the consequences of the emigration of representatives of the tsarist troops and the Russian intelligentsia before the revolution of 1917, which led to a change in the social behavior of these migrants with the transformation of the socio-cultural identity reflected in the newspaper and film discourse of Russian emigrants in China. At the same time, despite the recognition of the role of cinema and the media as the main means of manipulating public consciousness (Reifman, 2012; Karabulatova, 2020), the significance of local Russian emigrant cinema in the socio-cultural life of Harbin and China was not considered. At the same time, the socio-political discourse of cinema and print is a communicative event that occurs between the film crew and the moviegoers, thanks to which the process of understanding reality on the screen and beyond is underway.

2. Materials and methods

Chronological framework of the study: the time – from 1905 to 1917. The territorial scope of the study covers the adjacent territories with China (Siberia and the Far East), and, above all, Harbin as one of the main centers of Russian emigration in China.

The methodological basis is based on the traditional principles of objectivity, science, and historicism for scientific research. At the same time, we consider objectivity as a recursion of the historical past without ideological disavowal. The principle of science makes conclusions evidential since we rely on reliable facts. The principle of historicism helps to focus on an objective assessment of events, facts, and personalities in the history of Russian emigration in Harbin on the eve of the revolution of 1917. Historical events are given in comparison and in a complex way with the linguo-culturological commentary. In the study, we also used comparative-historical, complex, and statistical methods. This makes it possible to analyze the socio-cultural situation of Russian emigration in Harbin from different angles, to understand the distinctive features of the positioning of identity in the documents of that era during the emigration process. From the statistical approach, we took the following methods: grouping with the indication of the dynamics of the number of printed publications, the number of films created in Harbin, Russian emigrants 1905–1917.

Russian expatriate community in Harbin (1905–1917), as well as publications of the Russian film company of Harbin, and publicly available audio recordings of Russian artists from Harbin, make up the materials of the study.

The analysis of historical events captured in the newspaper and film discourse of that time considers the assessments of Russian and Chinese analysts (Petrov, 2006; Wang Zhicheng, 2008; Li Xing, Li Renian, 1996), as well as the published memoirs and museum materials available for analysis.

3. Discussion

Problem nostalgia of Russian immigrants is not new, it has been actively developed after the era of perestroika, when it became available literature and sources of the Russian abroad (Chuprina, 2012; Golubeva-Mohnatkina, 2017; Islamova et al., 2019; Lagutkina, 2013; Lee Shingen, Lee Gangnani, 1996; Oglezneva, 2009; Rakunov, 2011; Wang Zhicheng, 2008). We observe a sharp bias in analytical research: the abundance of works on the history of the construction of the CER and the city of Harbin, reviews of Russian printed publications in China before 1945 (Ablova, 2005; Barikhnovsky, 1978; Shkvarya, 2019) and research gaps in the history of local cinema, media with a pronounced imperial affiliation, or with actualization only on the negative features of Russian emigration (Shkarenkov, 1981). The latter are used sporadically in the works as illustrations. At the same time, publications on the White emigrant press in China have recently begun to appear (Khisamutdinov, 2006), but the Russian emigrant socio-political discourse of cinema and mass media in China remains undeveloped in the scientific field.

Stage art has accompanied cinema, but research on this topic is also rare (Medetbekova, 2017; Chunying, 2014). At the same time, Chinese researchers note that the October Revolution in Russia gave a powerful surge in the migration wave of Russian emigrants, who numbered about 300,000 people in Heilongjiang Province (Shi Fan, 2003 po: Chunying, 2014). Such many Russian emigrants could not but affect the cultural life of Harbin (Khisamutdinov, 2019; Revyakina 2001). However, Russian researchers indicate that the number of emigrants who arrived did not exceed 60,000 (Shkvarya, 2019). Such discrepancies, in our opinion, also reflect an inadequate assessment of historical events.

Russian cinema studies ignore the fact of the syncretism of traditional Chinese art and Russian stage art in the formation of the Russian film discourse in China (Kizyun, Kemerova, 2017; Rykunov, 2013). The analysis of the situation at that time ignores the fact of the syncretism of traditional Chinese art and Russian stage art in the formation of the Russian film discourse in China (Kizyun, Kemerova, 2017; Rykunov, 2013).

The first experiments of Chinese cinema to a certain extent reflected the format of Chinese stage art with a well-established repertoire of roles, in which there were 4 roles of characters with a distribution according to specific characteristics: age, profession, gender, social status, combining the symbolism and conventionality of the depicted action (Ruan, 2012).

Thus, one of the first paintings "Zhuangzi tests his Wife" (1913, B. Polaski, Li Minwei) was guided by the usual distribution of roles of traditional Chinese theater, since the main female role in the film was played by a man, as was customary in the Chinese stage tradition (Medetbekova, 2017; Ruan, 2012). At the same time, K.K. Medetbekova points to the breakthrough nature of this film because for the first time a woman appeared in the episodic role of the maid, played by Yan Shanshan, the director's wife (Medetbekova, 2017: 7).

The experience of chronicle cinema created the effect of personal presence as a kind of experiment in the artistic search for new forms (Konkov, 2016), immersion in the "western shadow theater" (Yang Xian, 2020).

Monitoring of the film historiography shows that information about the Russian cinema of Harbin is extremely scarce and not structured, occurring in separate works of G. V. Melikhov (1991), R. Yangirov (2007), as well as in the Chronicles of Russian Cinema (2004; 2007), focusing more on the issues of the formation of the film distribution system than film production (Ponomarev, 2019; Rykunov, 2013). However, the researchers emphasize that Harbin was no different from other provincial Russian towns with their specific literary and cultural life (Balyakova, 2008; Kizyun, Kemerova, 2017; Kodzis, 1998). This atmosphere

of Harbin was formed due to the nostalgic moods of Russian emigrants who sought to build an ideal Russia (Asriyan, 2015), under the influence of the ethno-trauma of the loss of the motherland as such (Fedulov et al., 2015; Osipov et al., 2016; Pogrebnaya, Anikeev, 2019).

The multiple interpretations of the presence of the Russian emigrant press in Harbin (Miao Hui, 2015; Solodkaya, 2005; Khisamutdinov, 2006; Wang Zhicheng, 2008; Petrov, 2006) are due to the constructs of political mythology (Savelyev, 2018), making it difficult to create an objective reconstruction of the events of the past.

4. Results

Russians lived in Harbin at the beginning of the twentieth century, on the eve of the 1917 revolution, which gave a dynamic character to the Russian diaspora (Miao Hui, 2015). As E.V. Kizyun and T.A. Kemerova prove, Harbin was founded in 1898 by "Russian builders and employees of the CER/KVZhD" (Kizyun, Kemerova, 2017: 40). Russian emigrants arrived in Harbin from the dying Russian Empire, and the city was already home to veterans of the Russo-Japanese war, who became the first Russian wave of migration to Harbin. The new emigrants, the builders of the CER and the intelligentsia that followed them from different layers of infrastructure, became the second wave of Russian migration to Harbin. Therefore, the phenomenon of Harbin deserves the close interest of researchers of humanities, as a real Russian city in the original foreign-cultural environment.

By the time of the appearance of Russian emigrants of the second wave, the Russian-language media had firmly settled in Harbin. Russian magazine "Harbin" (1898, editor – in-chief-officer of the guard of the Chinese-Eastern Railway (CER/ KVZhD) A. I. Guchkov (1862-1936), the future chairman of the 3rd State Duma), which covered the features of the daily life of the first Russian residents of Harbin. The Weekly Telegram and Announcement Sheet (first issue – 01.08.1901) became the very first Russian newspaper in Harbin. A little later, the local newspaper "Harbin News"/ "Kharbinskiye novosti" (the first issue of June 10, 1903) began to be published, which was also published by representatives of the CER/ KVZhD (the editors of the first issue were the head of the commercial part of the CER/ KVZhD, K. P. Lazarev, and the commercial agent, G. V. Preisman). And then in 1907, a Russian newspaper, "New Life"/ "Novaya Zhizn", was published.

Thus, the beginning of the twentieth century was marked by the growth of Russian media in Harbin. Russian media If we look at the semantics of informonyms (names of mass media – the term of A. Khayretdinova, 2012 – Yo. R, I. K.), we will see that the names of Russian printed publications in Harbin reflect the worldview of Russian emigrants outside the metropolis: "New Life"/ "Novaya Zhizn", "Border"/ "Rubezh", "Our Way"/ "Nash Put' ", "Russian Voice"/ "Russkiy golos", "Echo"/ "Ekho", "Rumor"/ "Molva", "Voice of emigrants"/ "Golos emigrantov", "Appeal"/ "Prizyv", "Russian Word"/ "Russkoye slovo", "Mouthpiece"/ "Rupor", "Bread of Heaven"/ "Nebesniy Khleb", "Voice of emigrant"/ "Golos emigranta", "Day of Russian Culture"/ "Den' russkoy kul'tury", etc.

At the same time, the traditional model of linking to a place was also used: "Harbin"/ "Kharbin", "Harbin News"/ "Kharbinskiye novosti", "Harbin Bulletin"/ "Kharbinskiy vestnik", "Manchuria Bulletin"/ "Vestnik Manzhurii", "Manchuria"/ "Manzhuriya", "Oriento – Vostok", "Evening Harbin Time"/ "Vecherneye kharbinskoye vremya", "Bulletin of Asia"/ "Vestnik Azii", "Ray of Asia"/ "Luch Azii". Or neutral, ambivalent, like: "Leaflet of weekly telegrams and announcements"/ "Listok ezhenedelnykh telegramm I obyavlenii", "To the Light"/ "K svetu", "Dawn"/ "Zarya", "Swallow"/ "Lastochka", "Trade Bulletin of the Harbin Stock Exchange"/ "Torgovyi byulleten' Kharbinskoy birzhi", "Val", "Gong", "Tribune"/ "Tribuna", "Life News"/ "Novosti zhizni".

According to the researchers, the Russian-language publications of Harbin consisted of about 115 newspaper titles, 275 magazine titles and 190 one-time issues of different-named publications (Solodkaya, 2005: 75).

Russian Orthodox Church supported the ethno-confessional identity of Russian emigrants. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Harbin had more than 40 Orthodox churches and churches, including the St. Nicholas and St. Sophia Cathedrals, the Alekseevskaya, Iverskaya and Pokrovskaya churches, as well as two monasteries (for women and men). Russian were able to feel themselves in continuous connection with the culture of the mother country, sacralizing the very institution of Orthodoxy in the Russian culture abroad. The idealized image of Russian Orthodoxy was promoted in the magazine "Rubezh"/ "Border" and in the newspaper "Bread of Heaven"/ "Khleb Nebesnyi".

The contemporary documentary film "Russians without Russia" (directed by Nikita Mikhalkov) illustrated the stability of this bond. For example, one of the descendants of white immigrants in China will say that Russian families will take off their last jewelry, but they will celebrate Christmas (Mikhalkov, 2003). Russian Fascist Party with printed organs (the magazine "Nation", the newspaper "Our Way" and another newspaper "Nation") (Stephan, 1978) was subsequently created in Harbin due to this mythologized perception of the Russian cultural world.

The very social and political life in Harbin not only initiated the appearance of newspapers, magazines, and advertising leaflets in Russian, but also served as an impetus for the development of the local film industry. First, we consider the reflection of local life in the local film discourse and the discourse of local

media, while we analyze the film discourse and the media discourse as a process of interaction, and as a result (Kibrik, 2003), since it was the local chronicle that recorded the real life of the Russian Harbin.

It should be noted that the very appearance of cinema in China is closely connected with Russian emigrants, having fallen on the fertile soil of the Chinese culture of "shadow theater". The film market and film production in China were positioned as the art of "live photographs", and the film industry itself began to develop in 1904, and in 1905, the Russian emigrant B. Brodsky founded the first film company in China. Cinema in Harbin began to develop in two directions: 1) as a showcase of chronicles and short films; 2) as a local film production.

Chinese cinema began to take its first steps at the end of the 19th century, when the first cinema session was held in Shanghai on August 11, 1896, heralding a new development of the so-called "shadow theater", designating cinema as "electric shadows" (电影, diànyǐng, diànyǐng, dianyin) in the familiar paradigm of Chinese art (Yang Xian, 2020). In 1905, Beijing-based photographer Ren Qingtai first shot individual scenes from the musical play "The Battle of Dingjunshan" on moving tape, combining the principles of Beijing Opera, traditional Chinese performance, and modern technologies of the time (Ruan, 2012).

Cinemas, as they were otherwise called illusions, opened everywhere. So, on January 7, 1905, the first cinema with the complex name "French Electro-Cinematic Theater" was opened in Harbin, the owner of which was the former Rostov film demonstrator Panteleimon Vasilyevich Kobtsov. Interest in "live photos" contributed to the opening of cinemas: "Illusion" (owner-L. S. Finkelstein), "Decadence" (owner – K.S. Yagdzhoglu), "Progress", "Orient", "Modern". As a rule, the opening of cinemas was accompanied with special pomp. So, when the "Illusion of L. S. Finkelstein" was inaugurated in 1906, on the day of the celebration, the building itself was lit with 3 thousand candles (Tishchenko, 2013).

In 1909, the Russian emigrant B. Brodsky founded the first film company in China, "Asia Film" (China Cinema Company, aka Asia Film, 亚细亚影戏公司) (Farquhar et al., 2006). It is from this moment that Chinese cinema begins its development. Chinese cinema faced a dilemma: should it focus on the local Chinese population and culture, or on the Russian Harbin and Shanghai elite?

However, Harbin could not become a cinematic capital, as Shanghai did in 1917. Cinema opened new directions in the recording of events, so moviegoers felt the factor of their own presence with the events that they saw on the screen, which contributed to the preservation of ethnic and cultural identity. The first incidents related to cinema followed. So, the Harbin media devoted February 15, 1909, to the discussion of such an event as the fire in Harbin. As a result of the fire, the "Only old cinema in the Far East of S.K. Trystar", which was in Harbin (Tishchenko, 2013). Russian expatriates were misinterpreted by the spontaneous combustion of the Life of Jesus tape during its demonstration, which contributed to the accentuation of the myth of the God-chosen Russian people, the coming Apocalypse, a possible world War, and the escalation of revolutionary sentiments within the Russian Empire.

At the same time, on the one hand, the cinema entered a certain dualism with the newspaper discourse on providing information both chronicles and important news. On the other hand, cinema was opposed to the entertainment industry: theater, circus, opera. In this regard, film screenings were combined with performances by singers, circus performers, masters of the word, etc. So, "Modern" worked in cooperation with the drama studio of V.I. Tomsky, providing its own platform before the film screenings for ballet dancers. Among the vocalists, Georgy Shvartz was popular with the orchestra of Ilya Livshakov, whose work included his own songs, imbued with the Russian spirit with a Chinese touch: "Harbin-Papa", "May Night on Chinese", "Harbin charms". Sofia Reggi (mezzo), Vladimir Raisky (tenor), pianist David Geigner, the Herald of Harbin Jazz Ensemble, the Serge Ermoll Orchestra, the Abel Bershinsky Jazz Quintet, the Dmitry Sokolov Jazz Orchestra, the Andrey Buzhinsky Orchestra, and the Miron Seletsky Orchestra also won the audience's love. There were also composers such as Lev Kligman, Pavel Shilyaev, Ippolit Raisky, Ivan Kolchin, Valerian Luksha, etc.

Market relations forced film distribution companies to look for ways to attract viewers. Thus, the illusion "Asia" engaged the famous juggler-equilibrist P. Govorkov. Also, the film programs were distinguished by their diversity and exclusivity. Local illusions showed European, American, Asian, and Russian paintings. If "Modern" shows the French operetta "Tomboy-Girl" (with Meg Pemonnier), then "Asia" at this moment announced the German comedy "Barcarola" (Letopis' rossiyskogo kino).

So, such American films as "Navaha", "The Death of the American battleship Texas", "Journalists and the Theft of the Gioconda painting", "The Famous American Wedding in the Middle of the Ocean", "Orgies of the Chinese in San Francisco" were very popular. In addition, a not entirely successful attempt was made to promote Japanese paintings to the local film market, but Japanese paintings ceased to be shown after the failure of the Japanese film drama "Mizzi-Jacqui" (1911). The political confrontation between Japan and Russia contributed to the rapid disappearance of Japanese films from the local film market, despite the territorial proximity.

Cinemas in this period become visual mouthpieces of ideology. At the same time, the political ideology itself in the Russian emigration in China actualized ethnic myths with an eschatological component, and the pre-revolutionary moods in the metropolis strengthened the myths about the impending end of the world.

At the same time, newspaper and film discourses of the time illustrate the stereotypes of Russian emigration, including the demonic image of the enemy-seducer (initially the Japanese, and then the Bolsheviks). However, the emigrant press and cinematography in Harbin show us the reasons for the delusions and the supposedly secret plans of the enemy (Savelyev, 2018).

Russian national emigrant myth is being formed in Northern China through the presentation of reality in newspaper and film discourses with a radical modification of the opposition "Russia-metropolis vs Chinese Russia / Russian migration in China" with an emphasis on the "central" element of identity – territorial and ethno-cultural integrity. Russian newspapers, such as "Bread of Heaven", refer us to the myth of the White Kingdom of St. John the Evangelist, about Belovodye (White Land), the country of the Great Teachers of humanity, but the name of the newspaper actualizes the sense of the God-chosen Russian man, his civilizational message, idealizing Russian culture and Russia as a whole.

If the print media had already become a familiar sign of the city, then the cinema took root quite difficult, since the public preferred the theater and circus as cultural leisure and entertainment, so entrepreneurs did not seek to invest, who did not see commercial benefits in the development of a new "attraction". Therefore, the Harbin cinemas combined the screening of films, benefit performances of operetta artists, and performances of artists of other original genres. Since the beginning of the screening of film shows was fixed and simultaneous, the citizens were in a situation of difficult choice, as they wrote in local newspapers and in the authoritative magazine "Rubezh". The magazine "Rubezh" often featured local stars of Russian culture in Harbin on its covers: Sofia Reggi, Vladimir Raisky, etc.).

In the song work of Russian Harbin residents, the image of the "gingerbread", semi-dairy town of Harbin is created: "Harbin is a charming city, Harbin is a cheerful city in the distant Manchu-Go, now Manchu-Di-Go. Life here is free, all the residents are happy..." (the local song "Harbin-Papa"), "We live like in a dream, in Harbin alone" (the song "May Night on Chinese").

Russian image of Harbin is contrasted with the usual places of Russian emigration.: "In Europe, everything is outlived, vulgarized, beaten up, and yet as in a dream in Harbin alone" (the song "May Night on Chinese"). Russian culture has transformed Chinese Harbin into a part of Russian culture: a Chinese province – a Russian dream-a realized dream of an ideal place on Earth-a place outside of social catastrophes, etc.

But Harbin would not be the "capital of Russian China" if it did not strive for ambitious projects. We are not referring to illusions that began to appear everywhere one after another in the early twentieth century (Melikhov, 1991), but we are talking about the experience of opening Russian-Chinese film production in Harbin.

In 1909, Russian film entrepreneurs first made the first filming, which made Harbin world famous. This was the experience of shooting a documentary chronicle that was supposed to cover the arrival by train in Harbin on October 13, 1909, of the Japanese Marquis Ito Hirobumi, who was shot on the platform by the Korean patriot Ahn Chun-geun. This event was widely covered in the press: "The persons who arrived from the Far East gave interesting details of the bloody scene of the murder of the Marquis of Ito, at which, as well as at the murder of Stolypin, Prime Minister V.N. Kokovtsev was present.

V.N. Kokovtsev showed a lot of courage and endurance of character and not only was not embarrassed by the imminent danger, but he picked up the falling Marquis, who almost died in his arms. It is known that the murder occurred at the moment of the solemn meeting of V.N. Kokovtsev in Harbin, and the ubiquitous cameraman, trying to fix the historical moment on the film, constantly turned his camera, both before the shot and during it, so the film recorded everything that happened at that moment. The lucky owner of this documentary film masterpiece was Panteleimon Kobtsov, who was at that moment with a film camera on the platform and was filming.

Filming the murder made it possible to see the event in detail, creating an information channel of world significance, and later this strategy of influencing the audience was actively developed in the First and Second World Wars. However, after the owner of this film masterpiece received a ban on the demonstration of this sharp plot in his cinema because it recorded the actions and emotions of people who were near the scene of the murder: V. N. Kokovtsev, selflessly supporting the falling Marquis, and then the terrified officials. Some were confused and froze, others ran away, some fell on all fours and began to crawl away from the scene. After learning about the ban on the display of this chronicle, its owner was approached by a French entrepreneur who was then in Harbin. He gave the author of the film 15,000 francs for this film and took the film to France, where it was shown for a long time (The murder of Ito and N. V. Kokovtsev in the cinema. "Petersburg Newspaper" October 24 (11), 1911).

The professional camera and the director's and cameraman's intuition of P. V. Kobtsov formed the basis of Siberian, Far Eastern and Chinese cinema. In 1911. Panteleimon Vasilyevich Kobtsov (in some sources – Kobtsev – Yo. R., I.K.) made a documentary film "The City of Black Death Harbin", which reflected the selfless heroism of Russian doctors in the fight against the plague in Harbin and nearby areas (Ginzburg, 2007: 76). At the same time, the presentation of the problems of the pulmonary epidemic of 1911 it reveals similar manipulative techniques as the COVID-19 pandemic with the actualization of the myths "friend – foe", "danger – safety".

The author's genius P. Kobtsov recorded important events of local life. For example: "Arrival of the commander of the Irkutsk military district General Nikitin in Harbin", "Flights of Ya. I. Sedov at the Irkutsk hippodrome", "Departure of the fire brigade in Verkhneudinsk", "Walking on a steamboat on the Amur River in Khabarovsk in favor of the committee of Grand Duchess Tatiana Nikolaevna", "Events in Manchuria", "Flood in Chita", "Tailagan, public sacrifice of the Irkutsk Buryats-Mongols", "Consecration and opening of a tuberculosis sanatorium in Irkutsk", "The city of the Black Death Harbin", "Religious celebrations of the Mongols and Buryats", "The death of the cultural monument Datsan in Chita», "Mongol-Buryat Tsam festival in Gusino-Ozersk Datsan", "Ice explosion and uprooting of stumps", "Fishing on the Amur (machinery and industry)", "Industry of Siberia", "Lena gold industry", "Exhibition of the Irkutsk horse Breeding Society", "Work on the fisheries of M. I. Shtykman". The film-making of P. V. Kobtsov can be divided into the following groups: 1) a chronicle of the events of local social life; 2) popular science films with a reflection of regional specifics; 3) ethnographic film sketches.

Already in the spring of 1912, Harbin film producers released an atypical film for that time: the shooting of the execution of Chinese revolutionaries in the suburbs of Harbin. The idea and its implementation of the documentary chronicle "Chinese Executions in Harbin" belonged to Anton Mikhailovich Don-Othello (Russified Neapolitan Antonio Michele Donatello). At the same time, the naturalism of cruelty was so off-scale that the first cameraman of the film, Ya. A. Zhdanov, refused to participate in the work on the picture during the filming, because his nerves could not stand it. The picture was saved by the same Panteleimon Kobtsov, who helped complete the shooting and editing process. For the sake of completing the filming of the film with the participation of P. V. Kobtsov, the execution of individual Chinese revolutionaries was delayed until the famous cameraman arrived in Harbin (Vatolin, 2003). However, the heavy atmosphere of the newsreel of the execution enveloped the film with a dark flair of infernality, which prompted film distributors to show this picture only at closed film screenings.

Russian cinema sought to screen Russian comedy-entertainment plays, some cinematic sketches, but Harbin cinema, being far from the metropolis, focused on dramas, documentaries, and chronicles, unlike the Russian audience in Russia.

5. Conclusion

Russian emigrants discourse The media and film discourse in Harbin reflect the state of the historical situation in the north of China at the time of the powerful waves of migrants from Russia to China in the early twentieth century. On the one hand, Harbin cinema in the early twentieth century had the same features as in most Russian county towns, since the Russian population prevailed over other ethnic groups in Harbin. On the other hand, the local specifics of life and the distance from the metropolis forced Russian emigrants to try to build a corner of Russia on Chinese soil. The search for the meaning of life, the need to preserve their own identity, predetermined the increased interest in using the new technologies of that time to construct a positive idealized image of Russia in the public consciousness of Russian emigrants in Harbin.

This process was tracked using local newsreels. However, socio-economic upheavals, the lack of a fundamental technical base and interested sponsors did not allow to realize a full-fledged feature film production in Harbin, despite repeated one-time attempts to film. Russian film and media discourse of the early twentieth century reflected the state of Russian emigrant society in Harbin and in China as a whole. We believe that the idealization of Russia subsequently played a decisive role in the processes of return migration of the descendants of Russian emigrants to their homeland, ignoring warnings about the dangers in Soviet Russia.

Russian emigrants' phenomenon of overcoming ethnotrauma consisted in constructing the illusion of Russian Harbin and turning off the non-Russian features of the city from the focus of attention. Russian language of the Harbin people was gradually penetrated by Sinaisms, preparing the local Russian population for assimilation and adaptation.

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