



THE REVIVAL AT THE WORLD FESTIVAL OF YOUTH AND STUDENTS (1997 – 2017)

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the process of revival of the international festival movement of youth and students, which has become one of the main tools of the socialist bloc in confronting world imperialism. The philosophy, methodology and content of the World Youth and Student Festivals, as well as the program features are revealed. The authors have shown the importance of festivals in international life. The festival work has been playing an important role in achieving the global goal, namely, ensuring peaceful life of mankind on our planet and establishing democratic international values and not only those that would protect the interests of only one isolated stratum, the chosen nation or the countries of the so-called “first class.” The basic philosophy of the festival is the ideals of peace, friendship of peoples, international solidarity, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle. The flame of the festival has not died down in the unipolar world and shines brightly today, giving hope to the whole truly democratic international community. The nineteenth WFYS held in 2017 in Sochi (Russia) was another success of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which again is the only international organization being in charge of the preparatory process of the festival movement of a socialist orientation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The end of socialism in the USSR and Eastern Europe affected both the location and the frequency of the World Festival of Youth and Students (WFYS). The vector of festival shifted to the Asian and South American continents. Only in eight years, thanks to the perseverance of WFDY member organizations and the active support of the Government of Cuba, the next fourteenth festival was held in 1997 in Havana (Cuba), which attracted 12325 delegates from 136 countries under the unchallenged slogan “For anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship”.

With the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, there were many who hastened to predict the end of the festival movement. However, the World Federation of Democratic Youth was still in the ranks, despite the break-up of socialism in the 1990s and the renaissance of capitalism, it was able to

overcome internal contradictions both in its organization and to preserve the ideals of the festival movement in the face of the WFYS. Important decisions in strengthening the organization were adopted by the 14th and 15th General Assemblies of WFDY in Lisbon (February 1995) and Larnaca (February 1999).

2. METHODS

The resurgent Fourteenth WFYS was held in Havana in 1997 – the capital of the island of Freedom and with the decisive contribution of the leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz. The festival had attracted 12325 people from 136 countries under the slogan “For Anti-Imperialist Solidarity, Peace and Friendship” (Chernik, 2009). The 1997 festival in Cuba showed that the holding of the WFYS will have been continuing. Of the subsequent festivals, the two had also taken place in Latin America: the 16th in Caracas under Hugo Chavez (Venezuela, 2005); the 18th in Quito (Ecuador, 2013), and the two in Africa: the 15th in Algiers (Algeria, 2001); the 17th in Pretoria under Nelson Mandela (South Africa, 2010).

A great role in supporting the festival movement was played by the follower of Castro, the leader of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez. Based on the decision of the General Council of WFDY on January 6, 2005, the sixteenth WFYS was held in Venezuela with the participation of 17000 people from 144 countries under the slogan “For Peace and Solidarity, We Are Fighting Against Imperialism and War”. Hugo Chavez noted that Caracas was the first to receive such a large number of young people from all over the world.

The main goals of the festival were divided into national and international levels. Among them the following are distinguished: stimulating the participation of youth groups in political life; assistance to student organizations and groups (including creative); involving young people in solving global problems; description of the model for creating a just, multipolar world; solidarity with peoples fighting for self-determination and independence; solidarity with young people and the leaders of student, social, environmental and other movements (Sutcliffe, 2016).

The program of the festival included such events as meetings for social exchange, conferences, seminars, forums of international solidarity on issues of international cooperation of youth organizations in the field of solving the problems of war and peace, human rights, combating international terrorism and imperialism, and developing democracy. High emphasis was placed on issues of economic development and assistance to developing countries, the development of education, science and culture, the introduction of new technologies, employment issues. Within the framework of the festival there were concerts and exhibitions of young, beginning artists and artists, as well as famous masters from different countries. A forum dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the Victory of the Soviet Union and the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition over fascism was held (Barth et al, 2017). In his speech at the opening of the festival, Chavez outlined the philosophy of the youth forum: “I have said this before. I am convinced more than ever, I will keep this faith to death, that the only way to destroy capitalism is socialism. This is the only way to save the planet, new generations and the world from the insatiable American imperialism” (Foster, 2017).

3. RESULTS

The nineteenth WFYS took place in Sochi (Russia) from October 14 to October 22, 2017 under the slogan “For Peace, Solidarity and Social Justice, We are Fighting Against Imperialism –

Respecting Our Past, We Are Building Our Future!”. More than 20 thousand people from 188 countries took part in it. The decision to hold it in Sochi was taken at the First International Preparatory Meeting, organized by WFDY in Caracas (Venezuela) in June 2016.

In April 2016, a creativity competition was held to make up the logo of the upcoming festival, which was the updated logo of the two Moscow festivals of 1957 and 1985. A many-colored chamomile consisting of a great number of multicolored pixels reflects the traditions and continuity of generation, which symbolizes the generality of the youth throughout the world in the era of the information community. In the center of the emblem against the background of the globe there is the dove of peace with extended wings.

On January 19, 2017 the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation № 23 “On preparing and conducting the International Youth and Students Festival XIX” was published (Khismatullin and Kharisova, 2014). In accordance with the Decree, an organizing committee was formed, the chairman of which was appointed First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation, S.V. Kirienko. There, the Regulation was approved, on the basis of which the Organizing Committee of the WFYS began to work. Throughout the preparation of festival events the state control was carried out at the highest level. The style was set by President V.V. Putin, who, during a meeting with the participants of the All-Russian Youth Educational Forum “Tavrida” during his working trip to the Republic of Crimea, said: “To date, I think we need to get away from this politicization. It is necessary that this event should be dedicated to young people all over the world, regardless of their political views” (Fatykhova et al, 2017).

The officials from “Rosmolodezh”, who were commissioned to hold the festival, interpreted the instructions from above in their own way. Being mainly the representatives of the centrist party “United Russia” far from socialist views, they did not take into account the fact that the planet hosts many festivals, gatherings, forums, competitions, other actions dedicated to "just young people", including cultural, sports, educational, political and non-political. But the World Festival of Youth and Students is precisely a political anti-imperialist action. And the Sochi Festival was dedicated to the Great October Socialist Revolution and personally: the legendary Cuban revolutionary, Ernesto Che Guevara, the recently deceased, Fidel Castro and the fighter with colonialism in Western Sahara, Mohammed Abdelaziz (Ravzieva and Safiullin, 2016).

Nicholas Papadimitriou, the President of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, set the records straight and corrected the activities of Russian officials. He was very diplomatic, but he stressed the following in an interview with TASS: “This Festival has its own history. We view Russia as a country with a great history. It made a great contribution to the development of the festival movement ... I hope that we will do everything possible to ensure that the main principles and ideas of the Festival are taken into account ... The venue is of little consequence, since it is primarily a movement. We are grateful and respectful to Russia, which hosts it this year. And this event coincides with another, important but not least for us, for WFDY – the century of the Great October Revolution” (Papadimitriou, 2017). The essence of the festival movement was expressed by the slogan “For Peace, Solidarity and Social Justice, We Are Fighting Against Imperialism – Respecting Our Past, We Are Building the Future!” The WFDY President noted that while upholding the ideals of the WFYS, young people of the world together with the WFDY and with the help of the festival movement should

become the builders of life where peace and solidarity reign, the builders of a planet to be free of imperialism, this global system of capital and monopoly domination. And even if imperialism today looks so powerful, it is not invincible! (Papadimitriu, 2017).

Much as the Russian Youth would like to neutralize the ideological vector of the festival, Moscow officials could not influence to form delegations from far-abroad countries by no means. For example, the delegation of Great Britain was headed by the Union of Young Communists. Englishman Harry Warren wrote to "Morning Star" about his expectations: "Of course, much will be said about the Great October Revolution, about how the USSR crushed the aggressor, and about the aspects of socialism in today's Russia ... I will be happy to see other members of the WFDY, learn more about their countries and their struggle. As it is sung, the human race will rise with "the Internationale" (Safiullin and Gataullina, 2015).

The main goal of the festival was to develop common approaches to solving global problems and consolidating the population of the planet "In the name of world peace". The program of the international forum included a dialogue of cultures, economic problems and challenges of globalization, politics, international security, development of public institutions.

The main content of the program of the WFYS concerned the intensification of the struggle against imperialism, the promotion of the struggle of youth for their rights, the struggle for equality and against any kind of discrimination. There was an opportunity to discuss the most important issues related to science and the environment, the student movement. One of the main topics of the forum was the 70th anniversary of the festival youth movement.

4. DISCUSSION

The program of the festival had the following areas headings: discussion, cultural, scientific and educational, sports, regional, opening and closing of the festival. The discussion was concerned with the work of various venues for dialogue, including panel discussions, open lectures, scientific conferences. The key topics were "Culture and Globalization", "Global Economy", "Knowledge Economy", "Development of Public Institutions", "Politics and International Security".

Every day the forum held had a certain name, which set the subject of the discussions.

On October 15, "The First Education Day" was held, in which the themes of the discussions were: "The Goals and Achievements of the Great October Socialist Revolution"; "Exhibition Dedicated to the Soviet Era"; "An Exhibition Dedicated to the Life of Ernesto Che Guevara"; "Ernesto Che Guevara's Legacy in the Youth Movement"; "A Special Exhibition Dedicated to WFES VI and XII, held in the USSR"

On October 16, "The Day of America", the following topics were discussed: "The Struggle for the Preservation of Sovereignty, Independence and Self-Determination"; "Friendship of Peoples and the Fight against Fascism, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia"; "Vulnerable Position of the Youth and Youth Unemployment: Ways to Solve These Problems"; "The Role of the Youth in the Struggle for Peace and International Solidarity"; "The Role of the USSR in the Victory Over Nazism and Fascism"; "A Healthy Lifestyle is a National Problem of Modern Society"; "National Cultural Values – Traditions, Memory and Identity", etc.

October 17 – "The Day of Africa".

October 18 – "The Day of the Middle East".

October 19 – “The Day of Asia and Oceania”.

October 20 – “The Day of Europe”.

October 21 – “The Day of Russia” (Zyuganov, 2017).

On October 16 in the panel discussion the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, G. A. Zyuganov, delivered the report “100 years of the Great October Socialist Revolution”: “For me, participation in this festival is a great holiday. I have now made the round of 14 exhibition halls, which represent my beloved great country. There is a hall dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Great October Revolution. We will be celebrating it from November 1 to 8, 150 delegations from virtually all countries of the world will come to us. The festivals will be held in Leningrad (St. Petersburg), where three Russian revolutions were accomplished, and in Moscow. We will be happy to see the representatives of young people in them. And you are sure that you will support the sacred struggle that our fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers began, trying to build the first socialist state in the world” (Zyuganov, 2017).

In his speech, the leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation substantiated a radical change in the world history connected with the Great October of 1917. For one hundred years, the socialist alternative to world progress has been successfully demonstrating its advantages over capitalism in both domestic and foreign policy. None of the global problems of mankind for a hundred years could not be solved without participation of the countries of socialist camp and the Third World. Today, like a hundred years ago, in the epoch of triumphant imperialism, poverty ranks first among the threats of mankind; illnesses – the second; the problems of ecology – the third. In addition, in an unjust world, terrorism and neocolonial wars have been added to them (Zyuganov, 2017).

During the discussion, the Minister of Education of the Republic of Belarus, I.V. Karpenko, the first secretary of the Kimersenovsk-Kimchenirovsk Youth League of the DPRK, Chen Yong Nam, the former president of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, Tiago Vieira (Portugal), the secretary general of the youth league of the African National Congress, Njabolo Zuma (South Africa), spoke in public.

During the meeting G.A. Zyuganov presented the commemorative medals in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Great October Revolution to a number of its participants. Among the awardees were: the President of the World Federation of Democratic Youth – Nicholas Papadimitriou and the daughter of Che Guevara – Aleyda Guevara March (Zyuganov, 2017).

On October 18, the keynote speech of the leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation was continued in the speeches on the topic: “Student movement in the struggle for free, state and high-quality education. The struggle of young people for free and universal access to health care, education, science and information”. The speaker from Russia was the federal Komsomol organizer of the Central Committee of the Young Communist League of the Russian Federation, the chairman of the independent student union “Discourse”, A. Baibikova.

The representatives of Cuba, Jordan, the DPRK, the PRC, Sri Lanka, Germany, Great Britain appeared in public. All speakers spoke about similar problems in their countries, where young people from all over the world fight for a free and high-quality education. During the heated discussions it was possible to come to a common opinion on an agreement between student trade unions for solidarity in the struggle for the rights of students, free and high-quality education, the development

of science.

A vivid page of the socialist ideology of the festival was the left march at the nineteenth WFYS and a call upon the youth of the whole world – “No to Imperialism!”.

5. SUMMARY

The organizers paid special attention to the cultural program as it was in all previous festivals. Every day there took place the Sochi Jazz Festival, the Festival of Contemporary Music, the Maximum Festival, the National Culture Day, the Concert of the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Gala Concert “Music is the Image of the Future”, “Russia Show”, the street culture festival “More Jam”, “The Space “New Theater”, “the interactive site “Future Library”, “Youth Photo Center”, “Art Center”, “International Youth Film Forum” , “Dance Academy”, etc.

Also saturated was the sports program of the festival, which included the following events: the opening of the World GTO program; festival race for 2017 meters; the opening of “The Dancing Planet”; interactive zone of the Federation of Dance Sport and Acrobatic Rock and Roll; the final of the mini-football tournament “Towards the World Cup 2018”.

A distinctive feature of the format of the Sochi festival was a rich regional program that took place in many cities of the country: Veliky Novgorod; Vladivostok; Ekaterinburg; Izhevsk; Kazan; Kaliningrad; Krasnoyarsk; Makhachkala; Orenburg; Novosibirsk; Rostov-on-the Don; St. Petersburg; Sevastopol; Tyumen; Yaroslavl.

The Sochi Festival ended on October 21 with a colorful closing ceremony at the Arena of the Ice Palace “Bolshoi”. V.V. Putin appealed to the youth from the main festival stage: “At the festival there prevailed an unusual, absolutely unusual energy. Also, as it prevails in this square today. This is the energy of the young. I am sure that when you leave Russia, you leave here a part of your heart, But Russia will always remain in your heart. We believe in you”. The participants of the festival made the largest world peace with the Russian president.

To present day the festival work has been playing an important role in achieving the global goal, namely, ensuring the peaceful life of mankind on our planet and establishing democratic international values, and not only those that would safeguard the interests of only one isolated stratum, the chosen nation or the so-called countries of “the first class”.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The basic philosophy of the festival, which is the cornerstone of the success of each WFYS, is the ideals of peace, the friendship of peoples, international solidarity, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle. The flame of the festival has not died down in the unipolar world and shines brightly today, giving hope to the whole truly democratic international community. The nineteenth WFYS held in 2017 in Sochi (Russia) was another success of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which again is the only international organization guiding the preparatory process of the festival socialist movement.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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