

MUSEUM NETWORK DEVELOPMENT IN SIBERIA IN THE 19TH CENTURY- THE PRESENT TIME

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Abstract

The paper describes the long-time period of formation and development of museums in Siberia. This process can be divided into three stages: 1) the 18th to the early 20th century- the foundation of museums in Siberia was connected with public needs, and the main role belonged to private initiative and public organizations; 2) 1920 to 1991– the mainstream national policy defined the museum network in Siberia; 3) 1991 to the present time - adaptation of the Siberian museums to changes in political, economic and socio-cultural situation; features of this process. The main features of each stage have been shown briefly in the paper. Museums in Siberia began to be created in the 18th century in line with nation-wide trends of museum business, mainly due to the personal initiative of the activists. The Imperial Russian Geographical Society (1845) and its subsidiaries: the East Siberian in Irkutsk (1851), the West Siberia in Omsk (1877) played a leading role in the development of museums in Siberia in the 19th century. The 1860's reforms stimulated the activity to open museums in Siberia. During this period the public initiatives played a great role. The first Siberian universities: Tomsk Imperial University (1888) and Tomsk Technological Institute (1900) influenced greatly the foundation and development of museums in Siberia. As a result of the establishment of Soviet power in Siberia (1920) the development of Siberian museums tended to follow national trends: the formation of the museum network, the creation of public museums, the opening of art museums, the creation of museum systems and the formation of associations, museum conservation areas. However, the latter phenomenon - the centralized management of the museums - was not enough effective in the vast regions of Eastern Siberia. The museums were affected in consequence of changes in the political, economic and socio-cultural situation in 1990's in Russia. As a result of the adoption of new legislation museum sphere, as well as the current financial conditions, some of the museums were closed. The other museums had to be reconstructed: the new museum technologies not only in management, but also in the expositions and work with visitors were started using. The characteristic feature of modern museum work was the revival of such museums as private and church. The features of Siberian museum network foundation at every stage of its development attract the greatest interest: the role of public and private initiatives, the specific work in nation-wide trends, difficulties in adapting to modern conditions, and so on.

Keywords: Museum network, Siberia, types of museum

1 INTRODUCTION

Nowadays attention to the history of museums in Siberia is growing due to increasing Siberian influence on political, economical and cultural processes in Russia. The relevance of the study of museum sphere highlights the fact that museums can serve as a tool to strengthen and broadcast a positive image of the region, not only in Russia but also internationally. The paper describes the features of museum network

formation in Siberia.

2 METHODOLOGY

The materials for this article were archive sources from State archive of The Russian Federation grouped in different parts of Culture Research Institute of Ministry for Culture of the Russian SFSR fund. In addition to this, some research by contemporary scholars who study museums in Russia and Siberia, such as A. A. Sundieva, (Sundieva, 2013, pp. 22-25). O.N. Truevtceva (Truevtceva, 2010, pp.23-33), etc. were used.

The results presented in the article were obtained relying on the following common research methods: description, comparison and analysis. The system approach due to which a museum network in Siberia is considered to be a self-regulated system of interrelated and mutually specified elements has become a methodological base of the article.

3 RESULTS

Siberian museums have evolved a long way. This process can be divided into 3 large stages.

The first stage of museums formation in Siberia started in the 18th century, when in 1782 the first public museum was opened in Irkutsk, then the other two museums Barnaul mining museum (1823) and the museum of mining technical college of Nerchinsk factory were opened.

These museums in Siberia were the first point to stimulate the research in history, culture and geography of this wide region, that became more intensive after establishing Russian Geographical society (1845) and its regional offices: East-Siberian in Irkutsk (1851) and West-Siberian in Omsk (1877), etc. Regional offices and branches were the base of local museums to be founded. The first local museums were dedicated to natural conditions, history, economy, and the way of life and culture of the certain city or the region.

After the Great 1860's reforms the public initiative played a vital role in the establishing of new museums, such as museums in Tobolsk (1870), Minusinsk (1877), Omsk (1878), and others. With the opening of the first universities: the Siberian Imperial University in Tomsk (1888), and Tomsk Technological Institute (1900) in Siberia new museums, such as archaeological, mineralogical, zoological, paleontological, medical and art museums were opened; and most of them work with the visitors now. It is necessary to note that naturalistic, archaeological and ethnographical collections dominated among others; most of which were unique.

At this stage Siberian museums expanded horizons in such aspects as nature, geography, history, economy, culture and politics of the region, as well as population and ethnic groups, its way of life and culture features. In addition, the museums facilitated the inclusion of the region to communicative and intellectual field of Russia and the world which was expressed, firstly, in the collection's catalogues publication of Minusinsk museum, in particular, that was highly estimated in Russia and abroad, and, secondly, in the participation of Siberian museums in subject and general exhibitions of different levels.

By the beginning of the second stage (during the Soviet period: 1920 – 1991) there were more than 20 public and academic museums in the cities of Siberia. In the first two decades of Soviet power the process of museum network formation was systematic, and its inner activity started to be controlled greatly during the whole period, which was one of the main features of this stage.

By the end of the Great Patriotic war there were only 47 museums in Siberia, but only 20 museums of local lore and 8 memorial museums could open their exhibition halls (Truevtceva, 2010, p. 27), therefore the urgent problem was to safe the holdings of museums and to open new museums (Unpublished Doc. 177., p. 166).

In this period such forms of live activities as exhibitions (especially, touring exhibitions for factories, kolkhozes, etc), lectures, meetings, historic and local historic clubs became popular. Part of Siberian museums continued research work (Unpublished Doc. 281., p. 3).

After the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union the activity for changing the museums' expositions started and a lot of museums changed the character. For example, J.V.Stalin Museum in Krasnoyarsk was transformed into the history museum of Krasnoyarsk CPSU, Joseph Stalin memorial house in Narim was transformed into the political exiled bolshevik museum (now The Museum of political exile), etc.

At the stage the new type of museums – social museums appeared (1960's) that were under control of state museums. Such types of museums as school museums, museums of military and labor glory, Komsomol history, museums of enterprises, memorial museums became the most widespread.

There is no exact statistic date of social museums, but the active support of local history activity on the part of the party, government and social organizations increased their number in the 1960's. School museums of this type were the most spreading. Academic and university museums took a special place there, the number of which increased in the 1960's – 1980's significantly (Truevtceva, Lamin, 2009, p. 200).

Since the late 1960's art museums network started to appear, as well as museum system and museum conservation areas. The number of them was not great in Siberia. For example, The National Museum of the Republic of Buryat (1977), Yakutsk State Museum of history and culture of the people of the North named after Em. Yaroslavskiy (1978) (Sundieva, 2011, p. 43).

Radical changes affected the museum field in Siberia at the third stage of its development – from 1991, when political, economic and socio-cultural conditions in Russia changed greatly.

As a result of the new museums regulatory framework and current financial conditions, some museums ceased to exist.

The remaining part of the museums continued to work and had to be reconstructed: they started using the new museum technologies not only in management, but also in the expositions and work with visitors. During this period, such new types of museums as ethnographical, ecological began to appear. At the same time, private and church museums began to revive, for example, the Art gallery in Listvyanka (Irkutsk oblast, 1996), the first Museum of Slavic mythology (Tomsk, 2007), the Museum of Tomsk eparchy (2008) (Polyakova, 2012, p. 9)].

During this period, new profile museums - ethnographic and environmental began to appear.

Simultaneously, the forms of work with visitors changed significantly: museum festivals in the framework of international events "Night in the museum" took place, the interaction with real and potential visitors increased due to the Internet (official sites and social nets). This area of the museum policy was called «Museum 2.0» or "museum-participatory", when a visitor leaves his mark in the museum space, participates in the museum content formation.

Siberian museums actively use these technologies, but their efficiency has not been assessed in detail and requires to be studied in future.

In this period it is necessary to note the development of professional cooperation in the framework of museum forums, the first of which was "Krasnoyarsk Museum Biennale". The next one was the Third Museum Forum "Museum Treasure" in Tomsk, in which specialists all over Siberia took part.

4 CONCLUSION

Siberian museum network formation has long history. During the XVIII – beginning of XXI centuries the museum system transformed significantly, as well as its main components, function, character of interaction with the society and government.

To sum up, it can be noted that the development of Siberian museums reflected national trends, although it had some differences: for example, most of the first museums were established by private and public initiatives. Besides, Siberian museums participated actively in international cultural events, especially at the first and the third stages due to the support of the research and educational centers (Tomsk universities, *Akademgorodok*).

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