

МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ КОНКУРС «ЕДИНСТВО В РАЗЛИЧИИ»

Essay competition

Индивидуальный конкурс эссе

“Unity in Diversity: Russia and the English-Speaking World.
Time for Equal Opportunities”

«МЫСЛИТЕЛИ, ЗВЕЗДЫ И ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЫ МИРОВОГО
УРОВНЯ РОДОМ ИЗ РОССИИ, ПОЛУЧИВШИЕ ПРИЗНАНИЕ
ЗА РУБЕЖОМ (В АНГЛОГОВОРЯЩИХ СТРАНАХ)»

“WORD-CLASS MINDS, STARS AND PROFESSIONALS
BORN IN RUSSIA AND RECOGNIZED ABROAD (IN ENGLISH
SPEAKING COUNTRIES)”

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CENTER OF PHYSICAL
EDUCATION COLLEGE OF ZHENGZHOU UNIVERSITY

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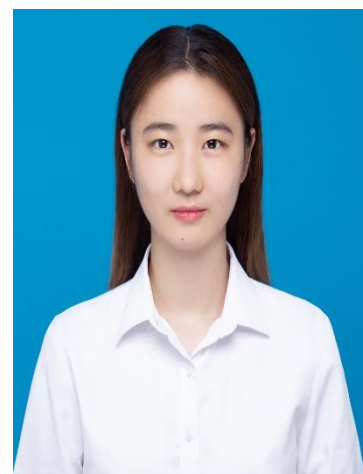
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As a Chinese, being asked “who is most famous Russian you know of”? I won’t hesitate to answer “V. Putin”, as will the majority of Chinese of all ages. We believe, he is known and being respected around the world. It has to be said, that not only Chinese people look up to his power, strength and mightiness but also English-speaking countries acknowledge him.

So, what makes a person be well-known around the world? What attributes should this person have? How can one person have influence on millions?

For Chinese the answer is quite simple, it’s cross-continental and cross-cultural influence one person can make on the whole other nation, bringing two extremely different peoples closer on different levels, such as political, economic, social and cultural. During the time V. Putin has been having a presidential seat, China and Russia have become more and more frequent economic and trade exchange partners, now China has been able to join Russia in gas projects, coal market and various agricultural projects. Thus, V. Putin said: “Sino-Russian relations are developing at the highest historical level, the relations of comprehensive strategic cooperation and partnership between the two countries are of particular importance, both sides have developed practical methods to deepen cooperation”. In 2019, during negotiations with Xi Jinping, V. Putin said “There is no such depth and breadth of relations with any country in the world today as Russia has with China”.

I found Chinese image of Russian President one-sided, so I turned to the Internet to learn what Westerners think of this person. World famous American social question-and-answer website “Quora” from 2014 to 2017 (a period of tense relations that Russia had with the USA and some European countries) posted a range of V. Putin-related questions, like “What do American citizens think of Vladimir Putin?” (2014); What do European citizens think of Vladimir Putin? (2014); Do Americans like Mr. Putin? (2016) and What does the world think of Putin? (2017). Answers include “the man runs Russia”, “Putin is as fine a leader as any nation has had in decades”; “he has vigor and discipline”; “he loves his country, wants to see it strong, safe, and self-sufficient”. Analyzing these answers, I asked myself: “If not ultimate recognition, then what is it?”. As for Chinese, we base our opinions on practical side of establishing friendly relationships and cooperation between our country and Russia, however those English-

speaking people who submitted hundreds of responses on Quora just see V. Putin for the way he really is: a strong, mighty and brave “man of the word”.

Looking closer into President of Russia’s personality, Chinese often say that his personality traits come from his origins. Russians are called “fighting nation” (战斗民族) in China and its strength and fierceness are well-known here. I believe that’s why American view on him as “authoritarian” shows that he can hold authority and responsibility for the biggest country in the world in his hands, which is one of the prominent features of mightiness for all who are in charge.

Since childhood Chinese parents would teach a kid: “be tolerant to diversity, tolerance is a virtue” (海纳百川，有容乃大). Same idea was uttered by V. Putin quite many times during formal meetings and political negotiations. I remember when I was a high-schooler I would listen to some interviews broadcasted on school cafeteria TV screen. It was that time when it first struck me how traditional Chinese virtues (self-respect, politeness, quietness, respect for others) can be adapted by a representative of a Western world. Since then, I started learning more about Russian culture in general and Vladimir Putin in particular. First thing I examined was the Head of Russia is rarely smiling on TV and it seemed to be natural for other Russians too, it turned out that: “laughter for no reason is a sign of a fool” for Russians, while in most of English-speaking countries it’s a sign of politeness, meanwhile Chinese believe that “a smile is the most beautiful language of mankind”, it embodies the sincerest mutual respect and closeness of people, and also, we believe that often smiling benefits strengthen immunity, relieve pressure, etc. Thus, now I’m positive that having a not-often-smiling-President is a sign of seriousness and strength of the whole country.

Despite being an excellent representative of a “fighting nation”, V. Putin finds time for cultural enrichment. He spends leisure time attending theaters, tours and art activities. Moreover, he likes ballet as much as Chinese do!

As ‘common folk’ we are preoccupied with living ordinary lives: work “9 to 5” (朝九晚五), it means we going to work before 9 am and getting off at 5 pm. Regardless of having same routine every day, we feel worn out after getting back home. That keeps me wondering... as Presidents don’t have rest, vacations or regular work hours...are

they so different from us? Are they superhumans? Do they have an unending energy supply?

After acquiring much information about 'the Strongest Man in Mother Russia', it came to my realization that being great for your people and being recognized around the world is a huge responsibility that consumes all the time you have. One doesn't just become 'big' on a fluke, but one has to pay utmost efforts to make oneself 'big' and the President of 'fighting nation' succeeded in doing so, setting an excellent example for people around the world!

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Annex



May 15, 2017. V. Putin is visiting China



May 15, 2017. V. Putin and Xi Jinping are walking around the park in Beijing, China



June 5, 2019. Negotiations between China and Russia