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THE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAST SOCIETIES: SOME THEORETICAL BACKGROUND ON CULTURAL HERITAGE AND PEACE MUSEUM

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ABSTRACT

In human history, no task has been solved without turning to culture. My proposal is being developed mainly in the field of cultural understanding of heritage management that appears as a cultural practice and a strategy for change. Accepting the wide-known proposal that museum practice can serve as an important tool for the rapprochement of cultures and social reconciliation, I consider it necessary to make some clarifications with regard to that and proposal of the communicative creativity's model in museum. The task posed is to re-qualify the concepts of heritage and memory in the context of cultural knowledge. Researchers, in general, emphasize the need to progress to new communicative strategies in designing the commemorative process, and to utilize the actual relevant technologies of visual modeling in the creative experience of representation of peace as a cultural value. The passive meaning of the concept of peace, which contraposes it to war and conflict, often prevails in the activities of peace museums. Meanwhile, peace heritage can be considered an area of creativity and as a driver of sustainable development. All that makes us look at peace heritage more broadly as a lifestyle and transformational social practice. I consider visualizing peace heritage in contemporary culture through implementing the creative-communicative museum practice, and show the need for transition to creative experience of representation of peace heritage as a participation cultural practice.

KEYWORDS: heritage, peace museum, memory, war and peace, transformation, creative practice, sustainable development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Value of knowledge of the past societies is largely conditioned by understanding cultural and historical experience, managing peace heritage and effective museum policy. War and peace as presented in modern museums often appears to be rather boring, the memorable artefacts being detached from real life. History however does provide ample knowledge about the reality of periods of war and peace, and consequently offers sufficient information for it to be understood that humanity must rid itself of the evil of war and so make the world a better place. Making an appeal to one's culture can enliven the museum artefacts and encourage a source of inspiration from their projection. The past can be considered as an area of creativity simply because it existed and from the lessons learned can be drawn solutions to end the scourge of war. All this makes us look at peacebuilding more broadly as a lifestyle and transformational social practice. The active concept of peace as a creative and life-affirming strategy or as a culture of world order makes a peace museum a real participant of social transformations.

In this article, I appeal to the cultural possibilities of visualizing war and peace in the activities of contemporary peace museums. It significantly pushes the boundaries of museum heritage and constitutes this process as an area of creativity and a communicatively rich cultural practice. The cultural turn to visualizing peace has been an urgent topic of recent debate (Engelkamp, Roepstorff & Spencer 2020).

Historiography of the issue of museumification of peace is not as extensive as it deserves to be. Museum practices of peacemaking are considered by researchers primarily in the context of social violence, conflict and military history (Anzai 2012; van den Dungen 2016; van den Dungen & Yamane 2015; Yamane 2009), but in some works the issues of theory and practice of museum design are raised (Anderson 2012; Crooke 2006; Golding, Modest 2013; Hein 2012; Ionesov & Ionesov 2015; Lindauer 2006; Yamane 2006). The task is posed to re-qualify the concepts of war and peace in the context of cultural knowledge (Apsel 2016; Barrett & Apsel, 2012; Bedford 2014; Ionesov 2018a; Ionesov & Kurulenko 2015; Jenkins 2006; Pachter & Landry 2001; Schirch 2014; Simon 2017).

The study of peace heritage – museum's collections, projects and achievements are covered in the works of I. Anzai (2019), A. Ionesov, V. Ionesov (2015), Sh. Khateri (2008), S.S. Mehdi (2005), K. Yamane (2006; 2009), etc. At the same time, the scope of their research includes issues of peace preservation in regional communities, general problems of disarmament, commemorative activity, experience of social design and volunteer movements. The peace museum

acts in this perspective as an educational platform, enlightening and supporting people in need of knowledge (Anzai 2019; Ionesov & Ionesov 2015; Norris & Tisdale 2013; Thao & Van 2019; Yamane, 2006).

Researchers of peacemaking practices offer various museum scenarios of uniting people around socially significant values, as well as outlining the prospects for the solution of urgent tasks of prevention of social injustice, poverty and violence in the region. Nowadays, it is becoming more obvious to turn to *peace heritage as a driver of sustainable development*.

2. GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE FUTURE WE WANT

The establishment of the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) was mandated in 2012 by the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), "*The Future We Want*". The format and organizational aspects of the Forum are outlined in General Assembly resolution 67/290. As outlined in the Rio+20 outcome document, one of the functions of the Global Sustainable Development, is to "strengthen the science-policy interface through review of documentation, bringing together dispersed information and assessments, including in the form of a global sustainable development report". Therefore, the general task is "documenting and describing the landscape of information on specific issues that are policy-relevant in the field of sustainable development" (Global Sustainable Development Report 2014).

In this work, peace museums, which document, describe, recycle, cultivate and publicly demonstrate the best examples of the peacemaking heritage of culture, occupy an important place. In human history, no task has been solved without turning to culture.

The 17 goals that were identified and supported by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, can be implemented only by relying on culture. Culture will fully determine and "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (goal #4); "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (goal #16) and "strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" (goal #17). The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development is entitled "*The Future We Want*".

But what kind of future do we want? "*The Future We Want*" is not possible without the Past that we have. It is the Past that becomes recognizable through

heritage. Heritage saves culture from losing its face. Culture goes forward, mastering the heritage. Meanwhile, it is culture that is undergoing the greatest pressure and attack from increasing globalization and war conflicts.

As UNESCO proclaims: Our Culture is Our Future. UNESCO announced the Culture as the Key to Sustainable Development Placing Culture at the heart of Sustainable Development Policies (from the brief project description: UNESCO Culture booth to be organized during the 2013 ECOSOC ARM High Segment (1-3 July 2013, Palais des Nations, Geneva) (Culture, 2013).

Herewith, the four urgent tasks are set:

- a) Promoting heritage, cultural infrastructures and sustainable cultural tourism as a driver of local economic growth and social inclusion;
- b) Creating enabling environments for the diversity of cultural expressions, vibrant cultural and creative industries;
- c) Global partnership for cultural cooperation;
- d) Post-conflict and disaster operations in the field of culture and peace building (Culture 2013).

Implementation of these tasks is impossible without rapprochement of cultures and intercultural reconciliation. Therefore, the highest priority for sustainable development is promoting peaceful, safe and inclusive societies, based on dialogue of cultures, links of times and cultures of peace and non-violence.

There are several fundamental positions that make it necessary to turn to the peace museum heritage in promoting the concept of a globally sustainable and safe world.

1. Sustainable development is impossible without peace and peacebuilding.
2. The sustainable development of a society is always measured and maintained by its connection with the past (the degree of mastering of heritage).
3. Heritage can act as a field and resource for creativity, knowledge management and fostering innovations.
4. Peace is the art of combining the experience of the past with the most urgent tasks of the present and, thereby, maintaining unity in diversity.

Thus, sustainable development is positioned as a peaceful process of creative transformation and representation of diverse heritage, through the links of times, dialogue of cultures, knowledge management and fostering innovations. All this is the basis of the peace museum heritage, its public activities and the forms of its creative exhibits. It is no coincidence that 2021 was the UN *International Year of the Creative Economy for Sustainable Development*.

Indeed, heritage is really power. The modern era can be described as a *time of resistance of cultures in the battle for heritage*. Can we create and promote peace and sustainable development by breaking away from heritage?

It has become a necessity to transform museum exhibits into a lively dialogue using the present communicative practices and expand the boundaries, knowledge, experience and sheer determination of the peace-making effort. To achieve this, there must be a shift from the routine acceptance of peace artifacts as museum specimens and symbols into a lively cultural design for the world order, in other words, to that culture of peace which was enshrined in the UN documents as a strategy for change (UN/UNESCO 1997-2010).

What are the concrete actions that need to be taken in order to integrate peace cultural heritage into the sustainable development debate? What measures are needed to promote the peace museum in the global development agenda?

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3. PEACE AS SUBJECT OF STUDY AND MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

An overview of currently existing peace museums allows us to provide a general classification. There are several types of peace museums that stand out in contemporary culture: 1. Universal museums; 2. Museums of weapons; 3. Museums of wars and victims of violence; 4. Museums of peacebuilders.

Researchers are increasingly rethinking the social role of museums and especially of *museums for peace* in the transformation strategy of culture (Anzai 2019; Golding & Modest 2013; Hein 2012; Ionesov 2018a; Norris & Tisdale 2013; van den Dungen & Yamane 2015). Established in 1992, the International Network of Museums for Peace (INMP) has greatly contributed to the study of peace museums worldwide (van den Dungen & Yamane 2015).

In the literature, there is no unambiguous definition of a peace museum. Japanese scholar Ikuro Anzai, General Coordinator of the International Network of Museums for Peace, asserts that a peace museum is an institution with the mission of empowering people to "positively work on peace making". He suggests three imperatives for peace museum activities: "(1) not being "a grudge generator", (2) facing the

past faithfully, and (3) avoiding exhibitions which make people feel distrust of human nature" (2019, 171). Thao and Van define a peace museum as a venue for peace and development, which makes it a public learning environment – a 'school of peace' (2019).

In very general terms I define a peace museum as a social institution for the preservation, commemoration and public representation of the artifacts of war and peace. A culture of peace is the way of social reproduction and retransmission of patterns of peacebuilding, whilst a culture of war is the cultivation of social practices of violence, intolerance, and enmity. A detailed analysis of these concepts is given in Ionesov & Ionesov (2015).

Surely the peace museum should be viewed as a cultural reality in which the artefacts of peacemaking are promoted as definitive memorials and specific visual compositions. The compositions are constructed in such a way as to encompass and present in a logical manner the text, stories, events and pictures. They serve as ways of publicly demonstrating and promoting socially significant messages. A peace museum is also a specific social institution for the cultivation of knowledge and experience plus the values of peacebuilding, as well as instructive examples of how historical and modern wars and conflicts could have been avoided.

4. FROM A CULTURE OF WAR TO A CULTURE OF PEACEBUILDING

There are two concepts of peace: 1) peace as an anti-war movement, focused on reconciliation, non-violence, conflict prevention, deterrence of war, act of resolving disputes, and 2) peace as completeness of life and augmentation of life, the way of its reproduction and harmonization. So, it turns out that modern peace museums in their majority are still expressing the *first* mentioned above cultural projection of peace as a concept and as a type of public practice. And this is understandable. Because historically, peace museums have been developed on the traditions of anti-war orientation. Such signs are more applicable to them as "Beware of the War!", "Caution: Violence!", "The Executioners and their Victims", "Faces of the Tragedy" and so forth.

Activities of such museums are certainly important, justified and socially useful. But this is only one anti-war projection of peace, where in fact peace itself (in its second meaning) is almost none. In order to really expand the space of peace in culture, making it the principle of everyday life of society, it is necessary in every possible way to promote peace in the *second* sense of the given concept. In other words, to introduce and develop life-affirming practices of peacebuilding as such. Not instead of the first institutions of the museum, but as a necessary

complement to them. We should move to the new forms of peacebuilding activities based on cultivation of creative ideas, communicative innovations and visions.

5. RETHINKING KNOWLEDGE OF WAR AND PEACE REPRESENTATION IN MUSEUMS

Peace is often associated with a memory about the victims of wars and violence, perpetuation of knowledge about the past through the public presentation of documentary evidence and the reconstruction of war-related and historical events. However, in recent years, a growing number of publications focus on the social and cultural aspects of the museum's techniques of its relationship with society (Anzai 2019; Ionesov 2018b; Ionesov & Ionesov 2015; Yamane 2009).

The issues under discussion also include the differences between peace museums, museums for peace and other types of anti-war, human rights, anti-slavery museums. A peace historian, INMP founder Peter van den Dungen, once observed in a conversation with me that there are numerous Holocaust and war memorial museums dedicated to peace but not actually peace museums. A noted expert on the subject of war and peace commented that to view peace and anti-war museums at concentric circles was to see anti-war museums at the center and museums for peace at the periphery.

Taking this into account, I differentiate between *peace* and *anti-war* museums. Bearing in mind that peace museums in this gradation are mainly in their current form museums of war, memory, memorial centers. Meanwhile, I propose to highlight another type of museum – a museum of peacebuilding (culture of peace). Since both types of these museums are on the same axis of binary opposition: peace and war/violence. After all, nothing emphasizes peace and its significance more than war.

Three types of museums should be distinguished here: 1) Classical museums as depositories of historical, art, and other artifacts etc.; 2) Memorial museums (anti-war museums) commemorating victims of war, violation of human rights etc.; and what I propose 3) Museums of a Culture of Peace as a platform for peacemaking, demonstrating and cultivating the experience of peace-affirming practices, rapprochement of cultures and social participation.

All three types of museums are necessary and perform important social and communicative functions, but, in my opinion, only one of these types can precisely match the name *peace*. These are the museums that show and cultivate peace as such in all its living and very concrete and specific peace-affirming practices. Peace has its own recognizable and attractive

face. There is no need to visualize peace every time, referring to images of war and violence.

It is extremely detrimental for the notion of peace to be transformed into a dogma, a mummy, a shrine, but this is the tendency in contemporary culture. It is not surprising, whilst looking at modern conflicts, how sometimes easily and freely violence captures the minds of people. Violence has a shorter and unimpeded path to life and consequently that is another serious challenge for the peace movement. The famous Bob Dylan song *"Man of Peace"* (1983) speaks about this most eloquently with a tough, frank and fair warning to be aware of the cynical, hypocritical forces that promise peace but prepare for war ("*... You know sometimes Satan comes as a man of peace*").

6. PEACE HERITAGE AS FOSTER INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Three imperatives make it possible to successfully promote the activities of a peace museum: 1) functional relationship with the best historical and contemporary examples, experiences and practices of social reconciliation; 2) advanced creative practices of cultivation of ideas of peace and nonviolence; and 3) formation of a new communicative environment.

At this point it is necessary to take into account two contexts of social-communicative involvement of the museum: 1) The influence upon the public through the viewing of exhibited artifacts and the impressions gained will be reminders to them beyond the realm of the museum itself, and 2) The influence of the environment upon the museum together with cultural and social reality that includes the peace movement itself encourages the museum and determines methods of its creative activities.

Creative peacebuilding has the capability of promoting the museum into the broader field of public life by increasing its capacity and capability for encouraging socially important transformations alongside peacebuilding. Visitors to the museums actively engage with the various memorable artefacts and become participants in a widening debate about the urgent demands of humanity, its culture and social existence. Based on this participation and from experience of the information gleaned from the various examples of reconciliation and non-violence at the museum, visitors are encouraged to visualize the broader concept of not only the possibility but the reality of a peaceful world. Such a communicative shift could move peace from the narrow confines of showcase exhibits to real-life projects of peacebuilding.

An example of where the contemporary museum has successfully introduced promotion of interest in other fields of society is that of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum in Geneva, Switzerland. Its project titled *"The Humanitarian Adventure"* is an exceptional example of how the modern peace museum can be an active stimulation for social transformation¹.

Peace is not the only theme exhibited, there are other themes such as aesthetic landscapes, the interaction of people and objects, color palettes, planning solutions, thematic routes and even properties of construction materials. Visitors themselves become participants of a large conversation and action in the museum thanks to communication mobility.

The museum offers its visitors a possibility to get involved in symbolic art-emblematic communication full of hope and peacemaking. For example, Yoko Ono imagined a magnificent olive Tree of Wishes in 1996. It has since been exhibited all over the world. All the wishes are returned to Yoko Ono and continue on in connection with her IMAGINE PEACE TOWER, a 2007 installation in Reykjavik, Iceland, dedicated to the memory of her late husband, John Lennon. An appeal to museum visitors reads: *"More than a million people have shared their wishes, come and write your own!"*².

To put it simply, any peace museum (center, workshop etc.) becomes a peacebuilding one only when it creates this peace. It is important not so much to preserve peace as to cultivate it, that is, to turn peace into a culture. The examples of such creative practices of peacemaking can be: *Windows for Peace* (Peace Museum in Vienna)³; *Peace Mask Project* (International group)⁴; *What Color is Peace?* (Kyoto Museum for World Peace)⁵.

There are many instructive examples of the creative visualization of heritage in various museums of the world. One of them it is Museum of wood (wooden buildings) in town-island Sviyazhsk (near Kazan-city, Tatarstan, Russia). There is created a unique interactive screen-panorama with visual reconstruction of historical village (for five hundred years), with streets and houses and four hundred moving figures (persons).

7. VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PEACE HERITAGE IN REGIONAL MUSEUM PRACTICES

Along with the positive experience of representation of peace heritage, Asian museum practices are

¹ <https://www.redcrossmuseum.ch/en>

² <https://www.redcrossmuseum.ch/en/wish-tree-yoko-ono/>

³ <https://www.peacemuseumvienna.com/>

⁴ <http://www.peacemask.org/>

⁵ <http://www.ritsume.ac.jp/mng/er/wp-museum/english/>

also interesting and instructive. Where the creativity of action and communicative involvement are combined with the traditional values of each specific region, peace as an object of museumification becomes an attractive, accessible, in-demand and useful tool for transforming the everyday life of people.

In the modern Asian space, there are many examples of how this can be effectively implemented in practice, and when peace, as an abstract concept, is successfully transformed into an actual cultural policy.

The Samarkand Peace Museum can be considered as a visual and communicative space of cultural patterns of interaction and mutual understanding of peoples and citizens of the planet. The projects promoted by it show that the modern museum is not just a collection of documentary artifacts, but also the transformation of these artifacts into participants of live peace-building practice. The museum also appears as a creative laboratory for generating ideas and attributes of the culture of peace. In its peacemaking art projects, the place of a new birth of an artifact and the way of its entry into the world is designed and arranged. In fact, it is an object-oriented space in which the history of a thing as an event and a character of social drama is modeled and experienced. The thing in this perspective acquires the status of a social object or "socialization tool, the content around which conversations are tied up are introduced" (Simon 2017: 167) and with the help by which the cultural shift is carried out. Thus, in the co-participation and co-creation of people and artifacts of the museum, a new reality is generated, filled with signs, tags, labels, hints, cues and other narrative and visual articulations.

Here is one example of object-oriented practice. In the project "Domestication of Peace" the museum visitors are invited to create peace promoting artifacts from handy materials, bring it closer to themselves, give it a name, artistically constructing something that was devoid of form, beauty, value and name. The author of the peace-building design acts as the creator of this reality. This project not only directly includes a person in the cultivation of peace, but also forms the responsibility for what he/she has done personally. It is also important that, independently creating artifacts of peace, museum visitors begin to understand: with their specific creativity, their thoughts and hands, here and now they multiply and transform culture, expanding the boundaries of the ordered, beautiful, kind and eternal...

One of the large-scale international projects of the Samarkand Museum of Peace and Solidarity has been the Peace Autograph, which enabled not only to museumification of the diverse attributes of a culture of

peace, but also to include them in communicative practices of citizen diplomacy and in various types of educational activities in Uzbekistan and neighboring regions. More than 1,500 participants from all over the globe have joined the Samarkand peace initiative. The aim of the project is to collect personalized artifacts and messages from the world's citizens and turn them into the service of culture and the universal human values. So, with the help of the Peace Autograph, bridges were built between outstanding contemporaries, who became co-participants of an open and relevant dialogue, accessible to everyone regardless of their social status, gender, age, profession... The project demonstrated that the world is one, and all of us are its citizens, whether it be a Nobel Laureate, a great writer, a scientist or a researcher. As it turned out, the Peace Autograph is also an invaluable source of knowledge, advice and wisdom – after all, any autograph is the most individual, unique, extremely specific, sincere and the best example of human creativity. In each autograph there is a symbol of cultural identity, a seal of time, a sign of personality, a paradigm of diversity. The museum's representation of these artifacts turns the autograph into an informative and emotionally rich transponder of personal messages, that openly, understandably, and personified contains something that can change the world for the better.

Internationally known for its versatile activities, the Kyoto Museum for World Peace (Ritsumeikan University, Japan) demonstrates that it is possible to change the world for the better in a particular region by means of modern technologies and a communicative culture of museumification of samples of universal human values and national memory. Actual project seminars and exhibitions of the museum with eloquent titles such as "What is PEACE?" (August 1-2, 2009) and "What Color is Peace?" (October 27 - November 3, 2005) demonstrate that peace-building is increasingly filled with cultural content and appears as a creative experience and communicative strategy.

It is in this cultural perspective that developments of the Tehran Peace Museum (Iran) are being carried out. Here are just some of the names of its peacemaking projects "Random Act of Kindness", "Oral History", "Peace and Smile", "Phoenix" ... As the organizers of the "Act of Kindness" note: "In this project we are trying to promote the culture of peace and kindness through different available means in our society. Examples of what we plan to do are: visiting patients and seniors; handing out food and clothes to homeless people; smiling; offering our skills to people who need them; cleaning public places; giving away ice cream/small toys to children..."⁶

⁶ <http://www.tehranpeacemuseum.org/index.php/en/>

Within the “Oral History” project our Iranian colleagues preserve interviews with victims of exposure to chemical weapons in order to create an archive of their candid stories, memories and testimonies. Each story is accompanied by sound and video clips with transcripts available in the Persian original and English translation.

The participants of the project “Peace and Smile” are invited to create a peace tour or a road map to areas torn by conflicts and wars, to battle sites and at the same time to visit spiritual centers, wise teachers, mentors and environmental sites. All this in order to learn from the past and better understand the present. Each developed tourist route is accompanied by information and educational materials.

The “Phoenix” project prepares and sends volunteers (including survivors of the horrors of the war) to their communities as ambassadors of peace. They develop special guides for peacemaking, using them to teach other people and offer to conduct a self-guided tour of the peace museum. It is important that the project participants develop their own design of a peace-making culture, which is reflected in clothing, printed materials, symbols, decoration of exhibition halls and even in the form of invitation cards.

The cultural focus of peace-building activities is clearly evident in the art-social and educational projects of the Children's Museum for Peace and Human Rights (Karachi, Pakistan). Here, peace-building practices, through simple steps and small actions, promote valuable ideas and accomplishments – the construction of a socially just and stable society where children and young people grow as informed, active and engaged citizens who are able and willing to make a significant positive contribution to their communities. The exhibits of the museum seem to encourage people to share their stories, experiences and decorations about the culture of peace, tolerance and nonviolence, with the help of specialists and volunteers. Such a museum not only lays the traditions of peacemaking, but also actively promotes them in society through various socially significant projects. This makes it possible to make a real difference in life, especially for children, by providing them with the necessary knowledge, introducing them to cultural values and helping them to understand the world. But the main thing for the museum staff is to make sure that every child can develop social responsiveness in relation to human rights, peace, social justice, tolerance and diversity, and consequently make a positive contribution to their communities. The culture of peace formed in this way, according to the museum's experts, serves as the largest initial investment

to create the basis of a socially fair and tolerant society in Pakistan⁷.

In this regard, the project activity of the Cambodia Peace Museum and the Center for Peace & Conflict Studies (Siem Reap, Cambodia) appears to be a very useful. The programs promoted by these organizations involve in the peacemaking process people directly affected by a dramatic situation, and therefore namely they often possess the necessary knowledge, understanding and experience to determine the best solutions to the problems facing their community. Participants in courses on the prevention of conflict and stressful situations caused by violence learn the methodology of the peace-building service in the context of their life experience of overcoming and survival. The courses prepare the leaders of the new peacemaking, creating the so-called “multiplier effect” – influencing not only those who are trained, but also those that can be affected by the ideas, programs, and political scenarios put forward by the project participants...

A distinctive feature of this peace-building practice is the appeal for information and contact from direct victims of violence. The experiences and recorded voices of living witnesses of war are gathered in a special collection, which is used not only in scientific and educational peacemaking activities, but also in practical work for the prevention and treatment of post-traumatic syndromes of victims of violence. The project, “Listening to Voices”, in the opinion of its authors, contributes to the formation of the so-called trusting movable construction of peace, and prepares for this process leaders who are able to process cultural contexts, social changes and ultimately transform the world and be responsible for it. The organizers of the project also believe that “investing in the leadership capacity of local actors and peace practitioners is essential to carry forward the lessons learned, new attitudes and networks, and to ultimately reducing the possibility of a return to violent conflict. Engaging key individuals in long-term leadership development increases the sustainability of peace as they apply skills to their own contexts, while also creating a network of strong Asian peace leaders who will carry efforts forward”⁸.

The diverse experience of peacemaking of the Japanese Citizens’ Network of Museums for Peace deserves to be mentioned. An important initiative we should also recognize is the new project of Professor Ikuro Anzai’s “Fukushima Project Team” as an example of a living connection of the past (power plant accident) with the present. It is very significant, and not

⁷ <http://cmphr.org/our-vision/>

⁸ <http://www.centrepeaceconflictstudies.org/peace-museum/>

at all accidental, that Japan that has the largest number of peace museums in the world.

Another promising platform where new peace-building practices are successfully cultivated is the Kanagawa Plaza for Global Citizenship (or "Earth Plaza") in Yokohama (Japan). In the very name of this institution two words are combined: "Earth" and "Tomorrow" (*asu* in Japanese), as if offering a reason to ponder about what will occur to our planet in the future. "Global citizens" are people who think daily about solving global problems, such as peace, the environment and poverty. However, by thinking globally and acting locally, they not only transform the life of their district (prefecture), but also influence the global processes, because in the modern world everything is interconnected. "Earth Plaza" in its projects cultivates the experience of positive interaction between society and nature, the local and the global, and the national and the universal in the context of the connection of time and current relevant challenges of our time⁹. An important idea is that the past matters to us only in its connection with the present and with an understanding of what humanity can expect in the future if it fails to protect peace by means of culture.

Another important imperative of the museum's communicative strategy is to provide the general public with access to artifacts in order to use them in their creative activities. The sense of this approach is to allow museum visitors to become involved in co-creation, express what they are concerned about, give themselves the opportunity to change what they want, and eventually be able to see and implement it in the context of their most serious (vital) individual experiences.

This appears to be relevant to the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience (Seattle, USA), which functions as a public platform. The exhibitions are designed here according to the method of co-creation, thus maintaining a sense of co-participation, belonging and co-ownership. In this museum, the process of co-creation begins with the creation of an open model of the exhibition. Initially each visitor to the museum offers his/her own project, that the museum staff then consider from the aspect of their virtues of importance and social significance. The main thing is that the final product of museum design should represent a social value, and be accessible and useful for the widest possible audience (Simon 2017: 322-326). We are referring to the so-called open museums (using the practice of visual-communicative scaffolding), in which the artifacts of co-creation acquire their status of museum exhibits by means of their transfer from the present (made by the hands of visitors) to the past (museum piece). In other

words, here the artifacts do not translate history into modernity (the practice of conventional museums), but the modern, actually created – into a field of the memorative, valuable, socially important, life experience that needs to be preserved in order to be then passed on to others.

It is obvious, that peacemaking as a social practice has its own recognizable and attractive attributions – lines, contours, colors, shapes, smell, style, manners, experiences, in other words, its social-artistic language, its own culture. Why not deploy all these benefits (opportunities) and resources in the sphere of museum design? The culture of peace is not a process of passive contemplation, but an active life-affirming practice. Its mission is to generate new values: a word that acts; a smell that has a shape; the color that sounds... In this regard, there is a need to create new peace museums that could capture the most diverse social and aesthetic values of human life. For example, such new peacemaking platforms could be museums of charity, museums of virtue, or goodwill, museums of generosity and hospitality, museums of universal responsiveness... provided that they will function not as sacred memorial objects, but as open laboratories of creativity of action, co-participation and co-creation for solving urgent problems of our time.

With regard to this, I recall the message of one of the former senior UN officials, a well-known tireless advocate of peace, Dr. Robert Muller (1923-2010) addressed (13.03.1995) to the Samarkand Museum of Peace and Solidarity, in which he drew attention to how important it is for the museum to express clearly the living experience of non-violence and in every possible way to promote through culture the best examples of peacemaking. In this message, Dr. Muller noted that the UN Secretary General U Thant, having returned from a trip abroad, said to him: "In every capital I visit, they take me to a monument of the unknown soldier, but never to the monument of an unknown peacemaker." Being later the Chancellor of the United Nations University for Peace in Costa Rica, Robert Muller recalled that comment and he wrote: "I remembered this remark of his, and we have now at the University for Peace the first monument to the unknown peacemaker. It would be wonderful if the second place on earth where such a monument would be erected would be Samarkand. Please fulfill this dream of mine, if possible... Let us remain in close touch. A great dream is being born in Samarkand. It will spread to the entire world. May peace bless this entire beautiful planet and all its people".

⁹ <http://www.earthplaza.jp/english/about.html>

8. HERITAGE AS A FIELD OF CREATIVITY AND NEW KNOWLEDGE: CENTRAL ASIAN CULTURAL CONTEXT

It is important to consider some specifications of polyethnic creativity and value perception using communication practices and the experience of involvement in dialogue with the heritage.

Everywhere there is its own specificity, and ignoring the stereotypes of the ethnic perception of values can have opposite from the given intention disappointing results. The specificity of perception is an extremely serious thing, it can greatly hinder or help to bring peoples and cultures closer. The perception of what is good and what is bad in every culture is different (Triandis 2005). Substitution of meanings in understanding and assessment of cultural values can change the sense of an important event beyond recognition. At the same time, a prerequisite for the promotion of traditions in modern culture is their involvement in the most relevant social practices and the creativity of action, connecting the past with the present (Ionesov 2018b).

Samarkand can be considered one of the main points in Central Asia for promotion of peacekeeping practices owing to the historically established traditions and realities of today. This city serves as a certain model or an example of how the peacemaking paradigm is asserted in the communication of multilingual peoples and in their multi-ethnic creativity through the principle of intercultural participation. Heritage and modernity in the dialogue of cultures serve as a source of mutual enrichment of Turkic, Iranian and Slavic-speaking peoples inhabiting the region. As the "Samarkandiana" museum-encyclopedic project (2007-2018) shows, the experience of attraction and mutual influence of the Samarkand cultures extends not only to the everyday life of the city, but also to neighboring regions and even distant countries. It became obvious that the stories, images and events relayed by the ancient city find their own life far beyond its borders, being embodied in a variety of art projects, museum installations, social forums and creative practices (Ionesov 2014, 2015).

What does the identity, originality and recognizability of the culture of the Eastern world consist of? In study of specifics of cultural perception and transcultural relationship in Central Asia, the following cognitive guidelines are of central importance.

- At the heart of the world perception of Central Asian culture is *ornamentation*, i.e., cultural space acquires a socially significant status only when it is properly decorated. Everything here is framed by the aesthetics of dress, ornament, and custom.

- Another feature of East is *ceremonialism*. Individuals of Oriental culture usually arrange their connection with the community through ritual-symbolic actions, ethnic stereotypes of behavior, ceremonial procedures, in other words, in solving socially important tasks they need role models and the collective recognition of their value.

Ceremonial mediation provides the necessary detachment and distance from life's vital problems and thus softens for people a direct confrontation with conflicting reality.

Thus, everyday cultural reality of the Orient, surrounding a person is not perceived directly, but through images of the world – by means of metaphors, allegories and symbolism. For the Eastern person, peace is what pleases and inspires here and now. There is no way to peace, peace is the way (M. Gandhi). Peace appears to the Eastern individual not as something purposefully transformed, but as something immutable, recognized and protected. All this must be taken into account when promoting transcultural practices of peacekeeping in the Eastern community.

The promotion of peace in polyethnic culture is an extremely specific and sensitive process. Here it is impossible to ignore the specifics of each individual region, national mentality, value preferences, ethnic and aesthetic stereotypes of behavior of people. Role patterns unite people, consolidate society and cultivate new values.

Sometimes it happens like that.

*"Once you begin to analyze a five-colored ornament –
your eyes will be dazzled,
Once you begin to distinguish the sounds in five-toned
music –
your ears will buzz,
Once you begin to tease apart the five senses –
you will be torn apart".*

Lao-Tze (VI-V century BC)

However, exercises with symbolic and aesthetic artefacts of past in transcultural communication are exceptionally delicate and responsible matters – replete with innuendos, intrigues and allusions. In the practice of promoting a culture of peacemaking, it is necessary to take into account possible provocative syndromes of visual screening of artifacts. The artifact of culture enters into an effective communicative exchange only in contextual-narrative form, in other words, it is necessary to stage a live dialogue-comparison and to include it in the current socio-cultural content of the observer.

Reasoning about the peculiarities of the perception of peace in the East, I recall one instructive story of

my meeting in Samarkand with the well-known literary scholar and translator (from the Persian language) Cecilia B. Banu-Lahuti (1911-1998), the widow of the classic of Persian-Tajik literature, the poet Abulqasim Lahuti (1987-1957). Being a woman of European culture, C.B. Banu, nevertheless, entirely devoted herself to translating and studying and researching the poetic legacy of the classics of the medieval literature of Central Asia – Firdousi, Rudaki, Omar Khayyam, etc.

Once in 1986, while working on the translation of the sixth final volume of the epic poem “Shahnameh” (Firdousi 1957). C.B. Banu shared with me the difficulties of translation. She told me how difficult it is for Europeans to understand the literary texts of Eastern culture. And she cited as an example an episode from her translation practice. Cecilia Banu recalled the incident that happened during her work on the first volume of Shahnameh. She translated from Persian into Russian one of the couplets of Firdousi's poem “Shahnameh”:

*“Once you see the branches, you will understand one thing:
That knowledge can't reach the roots”.*

After that she asked her husband Abulqasim Lahuti, whose mother tongue was Persian, to assess the accuracy of her translation. It seemed to her that she had missed something. Lahuti studied the text and after a while returned it to C. Banu with his amendments. He told her: “Your Russian translation is literally correct, but the Persian, reading the text, will understand it differently. In your literal translation of Firdousi's words there is a certain gesture of despair and disbelief (in knowledge), a misunderstanding. But Firdousi was a luminary of wisdom, he glorified the power of knowledge and inspired others by knowledge”. And Lahuti handed the piece of paper with the translation he had just edited. “In such a way, I believe, Cecilia, the translation will be more accurate. That's how the Persian hears and understands the same couplet:

*“Once the light of the first knowledge will shine upon you,
You will discover: there is no limit to knowledge”.*

This example shows that even an impeccable knowledge of another culture does not always allow the correct emphasis and understanding of specific values and perceptions of its nature and quite often may lead to semantic distortions and false conclusions. I believe that, according to this principle, artistic and communicative transposition, all cultural reality is formed, that brings together, unites and pleases people, inspiring them for social transformation and reconciliation. The communication practices of the aesthetic transposition, to some extent, are likened

similarly to the process of gathering and representing culture in the Orient. As the ancient Chinese wisdom teaches, “things, having reached their limit, undergo transformations”.

Indeed, heritage can be a field new knowledge. The artifacts of traditional culture can also successfully inspire innovations and discoveries, cultivate a new experience of creation and creativity. Here is an example. Ten years ago, I bought in Samarkand a suzani – a traditional hand embroidered tapestry with exquisite patterns and colorful ornaments. I decorated with it a wall in my office in Samara.

A few years later, when I was back in the ancient city, at Registan Square I met a merchant who had sold me a suzani and asked him: “Why the suzani is so popular?”. To that the merchant replied: “Suzani keeps the memory of generations and connects people with their customs. Wherever they are in Samarkand, Moscow or New York, suzani will always remind them of their native land, their roots and their home”. I agreed, but asked him to explain: “Does the suzani only belong to the past and only helps us not to forget our traditions? Is just in this its attractive force?”. The trader began to tell me about weddings, folk festivals and traditional rituals, in which people, thanks to suzani, strengthen their national identity... I thought, yes, of course, that's it. But suzani has also another function – a special property to transform the present and design the future. And I told him how suzani, for many years now, has been constantly helping me in every possible way. When I work at my desk and look at suzani, I often become inspired creatively for solving complex problems – colors, associations and patterns of artfully embroidered decorative panel that foster cogitative thinking and activity.

It helps me to focus on my daily work, whether it is writing a scientific article, preparing for lecture classes, thinking about new ideas, solving creative problems and so forth. The dialogue of an artifact with an observer builds a new communicative space of culture with its artistic subjects, social values, and creative possibilities. Such an experience of human interaction with the world of objects expands the boundaries of creativity and makes it accessible for innovative design. After all, it can be reproduced at any venue – in a museum, classroom, lecture hall or even at home.

Here is another revealing story of creative insight through contact with an exquisite oriental artifact, told by a well-known Samara Professor Valentin N. Mikhelkevich. During one of his trips to Tashkent (Uzbekistan), he managed to purchase a beautiful colorful album of the architectural monuments of Samarkand. At that time, he was completing his doctoral

thesis on two particular subjects that concerned algorithms and automation with regard to grinding machines.

As V.N. Mikhelkevich recalls: "On the flight home, whilst relaxing in the aircraft seat, I began to look through a prospectus of Samarkand and evaluate the contents. And suddenly, looking at one ornamental geometric pattern on the wall of the Ulughbek Madrasah, I clearly saw the image of the algorithm for controlling the speed of removing a surface layer of metal work-piece in the function of the removable allowance that I had not been able to describe for many months. I immediately took out a pen from my briefcase, a notebook, and sketched this algorithm, and upon my return to Samara, I checked the result through mathematical calculations and transferred it to the temporal plane. So, this work has been quickly and successfully finished" (Mikhelkevich 2017).

Thus, our surroundings influence our behavior. That is why it is so important to understand "what we see and what is looking at us" (Didi-Huberman 1992). In the wrong arrangement of objects wrong thoughts emerge. In museum communication it is important to be able to distinguish, interpret and transform the world of objects entering into a dialogue with the viewer. After all, the artifact of peacemaking, becoming a museum exhibit, acquires a different status than just a material substance, a thing. Exhibits are like speaking characters, broadcasters of important social messages, inviting museum visitors to think, compare, connect and create. Of course, the role of trans-cultural practices of co-participation and co-creation in communication strategies will further increase in the future.

As it has been shown above – the Eastern society paves the way to peace by means of decoration and ritualizing culture. At the same time, it is important to understand that the communication strategy is fully dependent on the creativity of the action and cultural practice, that connect traditional life experience with urgent challenges of modernity.

In this way, a cultural understanding of past societies' experience and knowledge of heritage can be device of creative communication and peacemaking that appears as a specific cultural practice and a strategy for change.

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9. CONCLUSION

Thus, the peace museum becomes an effective institution for social transformations only under certain conditions and only in the case if the two existing principles of museum activity – protective-memorial and public-knowing – are supplemented by a third principle – a creative-communicative one. The model of the creative-communicative strategy allows the peace museum (without abandoning the two other principles) to successfully become a peace building museum. That means to construct a new interactive space and fill it with actual messages, stories, events, characters, dramaturgy, aesthetic experience, scenic images, symbolic practices, etc.

After all, peace has its own culture. This culture has its attributes, experience, knowledge, practices, that is, its own life substratum. Consequently, peace museums are primarily gatherers and cultivators of this particular culture – of the samples of peace-affirming experience, concrete social reconciliation and multicultural creativity, etc.

But since the theme of war and peace is the most sensitive part of museum activity, I considered it necessary to draw attention to the museums that have the word *peace* in their names. It is clear that any museum, in one way or another, is always striving to demonstrate beauty, goodness and knowledge. But what I'm trying to show is the need for transition (while preserving other models of museums for peace with anti-war history) to specified museums of peacebuilding or culture of peace. The museums where the best examples of experience of peace cultivation as a positive practice and lively participation are collected, screened and connected. A museum of peacebuilding neither denies nor replaces an anti-war museum or memorial, as well as a human rights or anti-slavery museum. All of them perform different and important tasks, but at the same time they share one common goal – to make the world a better place.

I believe that this topic deserves further discussion and, to some extent, it will contribute to making peace museums an important cultural institution of social transformation.

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