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New Approaches to the Problem of Actualization of the Historical and Cultural Heritage

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The article is devoted to the problem of the historical and cultural heritage, the main research approaches related to its study. The authors of the present work on the original concept of the actualization of the heritage focus on the mechanisms for integrating heritage into a modern cultural context and principles of its representation.

Keywords: Actualization, historical and cultural heritage.

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The end of the 20th and the beginning of 21st centuries were filled with a variety of international, interstate, state and regional projects and programmes for the conservation of the cultural heritage, a significant part of which focus primarily on the digitalization of the cultural heritage and the granting access to the "virtual cultural sites". This reflects the formation of a new mechanism for the transmission of culture, when the basic, dominant material of representation of cultural objects becomes their "digital images" such as text, visual and audio presentations.

The important way to preserve, restore and ensure the availability of the historical and cultural sites is a scientific analysis and objectification of the philosophical-anthropological and socio-cultural foundations of the existing approaches to

the historical and cultural heritage. The common paradigm of "the cultural heritage preservation" should be expanded and supplemented with the paradigm of "actualization of the historical and cultural heritage". The new paradigm must meet a number of philosophical and methodological issues and, thereby, formulate scientific and methodological foundations for a new generation of projects and programmes in the field of conservation, restoration and inclusion of the existing the historical and cultural heritage into the "living environment" of a human.

The subject area of the historical and cultural heritage is presented in the scientific literature very extensively.

The issues of the cultural heritage essence, functions and mechanisms for its inclusion in the

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life of the modern society are discussed in the studies by E.Ya. Aleksandrova¹, M.A. Ariarsky², T.A. Apinyan³, A.S. Akhiezer⁴, I.M. Bykhovskaya⁵, Yu.A. Vedenin⁶, P.S. Gurevich⁷, A.N. Dyachkov⁸, A.V. Lisitsky⁹, D.S. Likhachev¹⁰, V.M. Mezhuhev¹¹, E.A. Orlova¹², E.V. Sokolov, V.N. Toporov, A.Ya. Flier, Yu.M. Shor and others.

Specific issues related to the conservation of the historical and cultural heritage and its demand in the modern world are explored in the works of a large number of authors. Thus, E.I. Arkanov, Yu.T. Veshninsky¹³, M.E. Kuleshova¹⁴, A.A. Nazarov and P.A. Shulgin¹⁵ consider the historical and cultural heritage as included in the “living environment” of a human through various social mechanisms: a museum, cultural tourism, television, an antique shop. The socio-educational potential of the national heritage is considered by T.I. Baklanova¹⁶, N.D. Nikandrov¹⁷, A.M. Novikov¹⁸, V.A. Razumny¹⁹ and M.I. Shilova²⁰. Yu.A. Vedenin, Yu.L. Mazurov²¹ and P.M. Shulgin developed a geographic (spatial) concept of the cultural heritage based on the idea of the integrity of the cultural and natural heritage. D.A. Ravikovich²², V.I. Revyakin²³, N.F. Fedorov²⁴, E.A. Shulepova²⁵ et al. studied a museum as a social institution to maintain, use and display the cultural heritage. V.I. Goldin²⁶ studied theoretical and methodological problems of historical knowledge and sought for new meanings in the history.

Taking into account the results of the mentioned studies, this paper seeks to review the “fine structure” of the phenomenon of *actualization* of the historical and cultural heritage.

In this regard, two contexts of studying the problem of the historical and cultural heritage should be suggested.

The first context involves *conservation* – preservation of a cultural heritage site, a kind of inventory of the heritage (as it is stated in many

documents of UNESCO, the Federal Target Program “Culture of Russia 2006-2010”). In this case, the **conservation of the heritage** should not be viewed in terms of the terminology of the Federal Law “On Objects of the Cultural Heritage (Historical and Cultural Monuments) of Peoples of the Russian Federation”, but as an approach the guiding principle of which is to *preserve* the heritage.

The second context is aimed at preservation and inclusion of the heritage in the “living reality” of the modern culture, i.e. its *actualization*. It seems that the last context of the heritage study should determine the current practice of protection and use of historical and cultural monuments. That is what will allow us to holistically comprehend the historical past covering both the heritage sites themselves, the environment in which they exist, and a human as the carrier of heritage.

In this context, the problem of studying the historical and cultural heritage and its inclusion in the “living environment” of a human and society remains one of the most complex and important topics of contemporary historical, cultural, social and human sciences and has significance not only for academicians (historians, archaeologists, ethnographers, cultural scientists, sociologists, etc.), but also for the society as a whole, including government and municipal authorities, business, and various urban settler communities, social and political organizations. Historical and cultural heritage is now seen not simply as the “stored past”, but as a specific socio-cultural “capital” of society, the specific socio-cultural reality providing a value orientation and identification of the human, community and people. The historical and cultural heritage happens to be included in the economic production, e.g. as a cultural and tourist potential of the territory, which is the basis of cultural, educational and ethnic tourism.

Of course, as noted above, the use of modern information technology plays a

decisive role here. However, the transfer of the heritage sites to the digital form and providing access to them via the Internet is not yet a way to actualize them. The lack of the worked out philosophical-cultural approaches to the actualization of the cultural heritage increases risks of the formal “conservation” of its objects, i.e. its integration into the “dead knowledge of the past” that is available, but not topical for the modern human.

In 2009-2010 under the Federal Program “Scientific, research and academic personnel of innovative Russia for 2009-2013”, an interdisciplinary team consisting of philosophers, culture scientists, historians, ethnographers, archeologists, dendrochronologists and IT-specialists of the Institute for the Humanities, Siberian Federal University, in the project “Actualization of the Historical and Cultural Heritage” solves the problem of creating a networked information system containing data of historical, cultural, archaeological, ethnographic and other studies on the endangered cultural heritage sites in the Central Siberia.

The key direction of the project has become social and philosophic understanding of the phenomenon of the heritage actualization with successive development of the basis for the future information system. The analysis of the socio-cultural context that was done, as well as the analysis of the existing approaches and practices of the heritage preserving and actualizing allowed to develop the main principles of its presentation. The conception of actualization herewith has 3 levels.

1. *Factual reconstruction* (the “archive” level of actualization). Indication from the background, conservation of the heritage objects, their presentation in textual (description, passport) and visual form (Photo, video, 3D model) in accordance with the standards and formats accepted for fixation and presentation of historical

facts, objects and documents. At this level the data base of the heritage objects is developed, the access of specialists to the heritage is provided. The presented material can be used for doing historical, ethnographic and other research based on evidential or illustrative materials.

2. *Ethnographic, cultural and anthropological reconstruction* (reconstruction of integral systems). At this level several key objects are selected with the successive reconstruction of the integral historical and cultural contexts, inside of which these heritage objects existed. For example, the reconstruction of the merchant’s country estate and the lifestyle in the estate (as a complex of buildings with functional purpose of each building and separate rooms, trade tools; work, routine and leisure activities, chronicles of the everyday life). Reconstruction of architecture monuments (as a complex that includes spatial form, architectural style, construction technology, material, reference to the landscape, social functions). Reconstruction of a lifestyle of a social class (its social functions, labour, everyday life, leisure time, values, mindset, ideologems, standards of life and thematic environment).

The materials presented at the second level are intended for a wide range of the information system users during their studies or professional activities (research, educational, cultural and educational, entrepreneurial (in the field of culture and tourism)), as well as in the framework of a personal interest in history and culture (as a cultural or entertainment resource).

3. *Personalized and notional reconstruction* (*dialogue/polylogue about the heritage*). The materials of the third level of actualization are discourse and reflection texts written from various points of view (professional – from the point of view of a philosopher, a historian, a cultural anthropologist, an ethnographer, an architect, and “personal” – “an involved contemporary,

history inheritor” and others) regarding the heritage objects. Texts should extensively express personal positions and involvement of the authors, their understanding of the meaning of “integral objects” (reconstructed At the second level), express axiological reflection; be “questioning” and “interlocutory” by the form.

The texts of the third level of actualization should have the nature of a “wonder”, “provocation”, “correlation” with one’s life and “compassion”, a dialogue with the past.

In accordance with the declared conception the material of the information system should be organized in the form of a multi-level interactive database, including:

- the base of e-documents (digitalized texts, pictures, standardized descriptions of objects);
- the base of texts-reconstructions of integral systems (a lifestyle of a social class, a country estate and its everyday life, a city at a certain epoch) with hyperlinks to the base of e-documents and the base of commentary texts;
- the base of thematically organized commentary, discourse and reflective texts, “virtual round tables” reflecting professional and personal points of view of the authors with hyperlinks to the base of texts-reconstructions.

The novelty of the approach lies in *the development of a reflective-communicative level of presenting the objects of the historical*

and cultural heritage. Objects should not only be digital and in free access to a wide range of users through telecommunication facilities. Their content is revealed with the help of a complex of accompanying texts (descriptions, historical commentaries, philosophic and culturological commentaries, commentaries of “axiological reflection”). Accompanying texts are not a “closed” library, they are an open communicative space, wherein the users of various categories have a voice: researchers, professors, students, representatives of the local community, business representatives involved in economic development of the territory and so on. Specifically built communicative space is the means of the heritage actualization, its inclusion into activities of contemporaries: research, art, educational activities, search for the life reason, development of ecological and political projects.

The declared conception of the heritage actualization allows to speak about the new meaning it gets. The heritage becomes not only formal knowledge about the past. There is a practical opportunity for the human to “inherit” his historical, cultural past, moreover, this conception of actualization includes the mechanisms provoking the actions of the heritage. Herewith, the problem of inheriting is very important in respect of studying and forming the mechanisms of reproducing cultures and ethnic groups in the conditions of modern global polycultural sensitivity.

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Новые подходы к проблеме актуализации историко-культурного наследия

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Статья посвящена проблеме историко-культурного наследия, основным исследовательским подходам, связанным с его изучением. В представленной авторами работы оригинальной концепции актуализации наследия особое внимание уделяется механизмам включения наследия в современный культурный контекст и принципам его репрезентации.

Ключевые слова. Актуализация, историко-культурное наследие.

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