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Museologica Brunensia. 2021, vol. 10, iss. 2, pp. 89-95

ISSN 1805-4722 (print); ISSN 2464-5362 (online)

Stable URL (DOI): https://doi.org/10.5817/MuB2021-2-7

Stable URL (handle): https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/144837

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Access Date: 28. 11. 2024 Version: 20220831

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METHODICAL AND INFORMATIVE TEXTS/METODICKÉ A INFORMAČNÍ TEXTY

REFLECTIONS ON A MUSEUM EXHIBIT

ANTONINA A. NIKONOVA

Modern reality forms the epistemological codes used in an exhibit and its visual, verbal and semantic experience, something which should be taken into account when creating a museum exhibition and attempting to communicate with visitors. However, the analysis of forms and methods of modernization of exhibition practices indicates the need to rethink the role of the museum's scientific and research activities with regards to exhibitions.

Conventionally, all museum activities can be divided into two types: "hidden" and "visible" to the public. The communicative approach in museums has actualized the "visible" areas of activity (exposition and exhibition, cultural and educational), which is confirmed by the modern practice of creating open funds in many museums of the Russian Federation. However, the development of forms of communication with the visitor has not contributed to the expansion of the methods for showing the results of research concerning museum objects.

One of the main reasons for this phenomenon are the antinomies of the museum space, which were identified and justified by the founder of the Darwin Museum in Moscow, Alexander Fedorovich Kots.¹

One of the main contradictions, he believes, is that the tasks of research

1 KOTS, Aleksandr F. *O nauchno-issledovatelskoj rabote muzeev*. Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Darvinovskogo muzeya. Vypusk IV. Moskva, 2001, p. 15.

and exhibition activities are different (the completeness of the historical and cultural information of the museum object and its accessibility to the perception of the visitor). As a result, the exhibition remains a "secret behind seven seals" for the visitor.

In addition, the visitor's current level of knowledge of history and culture is insufficient to understand and interpret fragmentary historical and cultural content, since information about the past is always fragmentary.

The desire to democratize the museum space and focus on the tastes of the visitor require a constant search for new methods of translating the properties of the museum object and seeking new technical and visual means of expression. However, neither the achievements of museum design nor the use of theatrical and multimedia means of communication, do not cancel the basic rules for building museum expositions which were developed by domestic museum specialists at the beginning of the XX. century.

In the works of N. F. Fedorov, then F. I. Schmit, L. V. Rosenthal, N. I. Romanov, M. D. Priselkov and later, in the 30–40s, in the reports and articles of A. S. Kots, all the activities of the museum that contribute to the formation of human self-consciousness in this world are analyzed.²

https://doi.org/10.5817/MuB2021-2-7

They formulated an important statement that the main task of the museum is to study the visitor's perception of authentic museum objects that become exhibits on display. And as modern exhibition practice has shown, this statement is especially significant for museums possessing historical and/or memorial profiles.

It is the analysis of their practices that allows us to outline the methodological problem of an adequate display of scientific achievements of the humanities through a museum object, since different cultural and historical events have different "exposure capacity", i.e., different cognitive coefficients from the point of view of an ordinary visitor.³

This expositional difficulty is most clearly manifested in modern exhibitions-blockbusters or anniversary exhibitions. A significant number of exhibits in them create a polyphony of meanings and images, on which it is difficult for the visitor to focus their attention and fully perceive historical and cultural information. For example, at the exhibition "This is Potemkin Himself!" in the State Hermitage Museum, more than 200 exhibits were presented.⁴

² FEDOROV, Nikolaj F. *Sochineniya*. Moskva: Mysl, 1982, p. 711; SHMIT, Fedor I. *Muzejnoe delo. Voprosy ehkspozicii*. Lenigrad, 1929, p. 248; Puti izucheniya muzejnogo zritelya.

In ROZENTALYA L. V. (ed.). Sbornik metodikoprosvetitelskogo otdela. Moskva, 1928; ROMANOV, Nikolaj I. Mestnye muzei i kak ih ustraivat. Moskva, 1919; PRISELKOV, Mihail D. Istoriko-bytovye muzei i zadachi postroenie, ehkspoziciya. Lenigrad, 1926.

³ KOTS, Aleksandr F. Sobranie sochinenij. Tom 5. In KLYUKINOJ, A. I. (ed.) Muzeevedenie. Iz zhizni Darvinskogo muzeya i ego osnovatelya. Moskva, 2018, p. 119.

⁴ Film o vystavke "Ehto sam Potemkin" [online]. [accessed 2021-10-02]. Available from www:

Many visitors, as a result of visiting the exhibition complexes, ended up with only superficial impressions and general memories of several exhibits and nothing more

In such projects, it is impossible to maintain the relationship between the content, the internal scientific significance and external demonstrativeness of the exhibit, when showing the semantic significance of the museum object and its "museum" expressiveness. In other words, the attraction, expressiveness and associativity of an exhibit should not dominate its informativeness and representativeness. Therefore, the widespread opinion among museum specialists that the knowledge presented at the exhibition through the exhibit is so valuable in itself that it will be assimilated by the visitor in any form and with any method of display, is a mistake.

The paradox of modern museum practice is that when museum practice is focused on the needs and demands of the museum audience, in practice, the researcher is indirectly involved in communication with the visitor. Direct communication of the visitor in the museum is carried out only with guides, employees of cultural and educational departments and employees of auxiliary services, meaning specialists who are not involved in the design of the exhibits or the exhibition.

The lack of meaningful communication with museum researchers has led to the development of the current practice of the "culture of participation".

One example of the modern epistemological paradox of the museum space is the exhibition "Halls of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire" in the Main Headquarters of the State Hermitage Museum.⁵

The exhibition presents diplomatic gifts presented at different times to the Russian Imperial Court by monarchs and ambassadors of European states and ambassadors of the countries of the Near and Far East. The semantic core of the exhibition is undoubtedly the reconstruction of the Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the XIX. century, using the ensemble methodology.

The furniture and household items presented in the cabinet's exposition complex do not have annotations or information stands that reveal the history of the exhibits. It is difficult to understand from the name of the exhibits what topic it is dedicated to or even whether it is permanent or temporary.

In the process of adapting the General Staff building into a museum, these halls were restored and visitors can see the interior decor made by K. I. Rossi in the Empire Style. However, there is no information about the results of restoration studies at the exhibition although there are preserved and exposed architectural soundings. These can only be noticed and understood by a specialist restorer.

An inquisitive visitor might certainly question: "Where can we learn about the history of these The question remains unanswered and thus a kind of cognitive dissonance arises. The exhibition intertwines two themes: one theme indirectly related to the history of the Ministry – gifts (items presented to the royal personages by foreign rulers and ambassadors) and the second theme, the history of decorative and applied art of the XIX. century, which confirms the way the museum objects are displayed.

All the exhibits are exceptional in their artistic execution and unique because they were made to order. There is no additional information on the exhibition that explains the connection of the exhibits with the history of the premises and/or the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire, although these are presentation items that reflect a very important and interesting, ancient tradition of giving valuable items to rulers. We will also learn nothing about the peculiarities of this tradition anywhere at the exhibition itself. The labels of the exhibits contain brief information about the objects and equally brief information about the event that was the reason for the donation.

The exhibition groupings are formed by the type of museum object (porcelain, metal, household items, etc.) and by the nationality of the donors and are placed in glass showcases that create the most comfortable viewing of the exhibits. It is also difficult to understand by what principle the subjects are selected.

Perhaps the curators of the exhibitions had determined the purpose of the concept was to show gifts as objects of decorative

The Paradoxes of Exposure Practice.

halls, about the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and about the historical figures whose portraits hang on the walls?"

https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/ portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>.

⁵ Sajt Ehrmitazha [online]. [accessed 2021-10-02]. Available from www: ">https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H333/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/explore/buildings/locations/room/B60_F3_H33/?lng=ru>">https://www.hermitage/exp

and applied art? However then it would be necessary to tell about the technological and aesthetic properties of each type of art reflected in every exhibit.

At the exhibition, the emphasis is placed on the emotional perceptions of the visitors of the visual information of the exhibits, the beauty and uniqueness of the exhibit itself, and all the content information remains "behind the scenes", or "does not matter", for the perception of the exhibit. However the completeness of visual information is only part of the perception of the museum object. Moreover, it should also be noted that causing an effect can not be a guarantee of recognition and/or the understanding of provided visual information, the insufficient depth of perception of visual information does not allow the formation of a visual image, which later becomes the basis for recognizing the subsequent visual information.

In the exhibition we are analyzing, the restored historical interior of the premises of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as simply a background for the exhibits of decorative and applied art. Although the expositors did make two attempts to link the context of the historical past with the theme of the exhibition. In the halls we see two portraits of the famous ministers Count Karl Nesselrode and Prince A. M. Gorchakov. More detailed information about them and their role in Russia's foreign policy is not presented at the exhibition.

The informational and cognitive sterility of the exposition is so great that it excludes any intrusion of "additional explanations" with even tour services in these halls being difficult, since the halls have such a small area. You can call such expositions "chambered", created

for inspection by single visitors and very small groups of visitors. This method of display exhibits can be referred to as the "aestheticization" of the visual image of the museum object as an exhibit. In addition to the dominance of the visual image of the exhibit, this exhibition captures another modern practice, the "mimicry" of the museum object as a historical source of knowledge under the visual image.

In one display case with items from the royal service, there are unique historical items, such as a goose feather, which was used to sign the Paris Treaty of 1856, and glasses with oval lenses in a gold frame that belonged to Prince A. M. Gorchakov. The paradox is as follows: they are also displayed as objects of decorative and applied art, and their "ordinary" nature does not attract the attention of visitors. These exhibits are unique and relate directly to the activities of their owners, but as they are displayed in a showcase together with gifts, they become "invisible" and insignificant to the visitor. The inconsistencies and strangeness of the exposition solution is not iustified.

What Does the Visitor See at the Exhibition?

If we analyze the behavior of visitors in the museum halls, we can see that most of them slowly pass through the "Halls of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire", and while "on the move" examine the exhibits in the display cases. Sometimes they stop at some window but most often they do not get acquainted with the entire exhibition.

This method of aesthetic visualization of museum objects on display forms the visitor's habit of being a "museum flanker" who comes to the museum in order to enjoy the visual image of the

museum halls as a whole, or, in the terminology of Polyakov, sees expositions as a kind of "work of art".⁶

Both the halls and the exhibits in them are perceived as "pictures". However, "a picture is the strangest thing that affects us but does not penetrate us. You look at a picture but it cannot enter you, it may make changes to your consciousness, but it does not enter you."

Further, "untruth" is one of the main ontological qualities of an image. An image often lies and is always capable of lying. Any image, any pictures thus raises doubts. During their processing, we need a "lie-not-lie" evaluation device. Thus, the museum's exposition, as well as contemporary art, creates an alternative reality of seductive translucent images intended for the mass consumer.

The result of this "sliding" on the surface of objective reality is the "reformatting" of the traditional practice of perception of the phenomena of the past and the transfer of images from the sacred, axiological and cognitive spheres to the sphere of entertainment, roleplaying computer games or special programs.

New forms of consumption of the image of the past and, together with it, the visual information of the historical source are coming into force. The problem is that today we do not have a universal method for in-depth analysis of visual information and visual images.

Researchers note "the limitations of our ability to talk about the

⁶ POLYAKOV, Taras P. Muzejnaya ehkspoziciya: metody i tekhnologii aktualizacii kulturnogo naslediya. Moskva: Institut Nasledija, 2018.

⁷ YAMPOLSKIJ, Michail. *Izobrazhenie: Kurs lekcij.* Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2019.

images of the modern world, which are fundamentally media, ultrafast and elusive". A new discipline is emerging – the economy of impressions and entertainment, which takes into account the consumer needs of the public, who looks at what is happening, but does not see its meaning, and various manipulations with historical memory can also be attributed to them.

The event of the past is represented as a set of pictograms, when the meaning is predicted before a complete picture of the visible is formed. In the context of such an understanding of a historical event, even visual authenticity loses its meaning. This method can be called a "presenting of the past". I will give another example, one of a rare exhibition dedicated to an ancient Russian literary monument The Word About Igor's Regiment in the Yaroslavl State Historical, Architectural and Art Museum-Reserve.9 The Word About Igor's Regiment is a unique monument of ancient Russian history and culture with a tragic fate and an exceptional history of acquisition, loss and study.

Undoubtedly, this is an outstanding monument of ancient Russian literature, which is dedicated to a separate exhibition. About the history of the exhibition, about several concepts of its reexhibitions, you cannot find out on the museum's website, where there is a brief summary of the existing exhibition.

The exhibition in the refectory of the former monastery was opened in 1985 and since that time the museum has collected a unique collection of objects. Only on the exhibition itself there are 1,500 exhibits: archaeological and historical artifacts of the XI.-XIII. centuries (weapons, women's jewelry, amulets and household items), copies of old Russian book monuments, authentic items from the estate of A. I. Musin-Pushkin, scientific publications about the discovery and study of The Word About Igor's Regiment and illustrations by modern artists. But the text of the literary monument itself is not on display (apart from a few lines reproduced on the walls of the refectory).

During the tour, the visitor will learn in detail about the initial period of ancient Russian culture, everyday life, architecture, book culture, military campaigns and the campaign of Prince Igor, etc. In the historical and cultural context of the exposition in the middle of the show some background information about literary work is introduced, followed by a story about the history of the monastery and its way of life (where the monument was found), then A. I. Musin-Pushkin and the tragic story of the loss of the monument and the last section is devoted to a brief history of the study (several names and the complexity of interpretation of the text).

In the bookstall at the entrance to the exhibition, you cannot buy an edition of *The Word About Igor's Regiment* that is accessible to the mass visitor, but there is an expensive album with drawings by the artist P. Tatarnikov. In this case, can we talk about the preservation of a literary monument as an object of intangible heritage in a museum exhibition? The answer is obvious. The status of literary heritage in the museum is reduced to the maximum. There is no word about *The Word About Igor's Regiment* at

the exhibition. Visitors' reviews of the exhibitions which were found on the Internet, are also indicative.

Basically, this is a repeat of the annotations and reviews of the tour: "there is a lot to see that is not available in any other place"; "weapons, protection, guns"; "friendly staff"; "you can take photos for free without a flash". ¹⁰ Then there are the enthusiastic impressions about the "dummies" of old Russian books. Such an expressive perception of copies of monumental books indicates the levelling of the value of the original and its reproduction.

On the other hand, what would be the perception of the exhibition among visitors, if they had the opportunity to walk through it with the text, "Words About Igor's Regiment" in their hands, if the guide during the tour would ask to open the text of the monument on a particular page and read aloud a few sentences?

Dialogue Between Contemporary and Conservative Methods.

There is a widespread opinion that reading under the conditions of a museum space is difficult. The exhibition is difficult to show more than one turn of books, fine print, etc. So at the last re-exhibition, an interactive multimedia book was displayed but it did not last long. In any case, we must agree that for a literary museum, the verbal component is dominant. In the current situation, when printed books and reading as artistic processes take less and less place in everyday life, and when almost all classical works have now become screened, the Museum practice of reading and comprehension of literary text becomes unique.

⁸ SHETININA, Svetlana. Vizualnye media v multimedijnoj installyacii. *Vestnik kemerovskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta kultury i iskusstv*, 2016, no. 37, pp. 188–193 [online]. [accessed 2021-10-02]. Available from www: https://www.elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=27296866>.

⁹ Sajt Yaroslavskogo-muzeya-zapovednika [online]. [accessed 2021-10-02]. Available from www: https://yarkremlin.ru/museum/slovo-o-polkuigoreve/.

^{10 &}quot;Otzovik" [online]. [accessed 2021-10-02]. Available from www: https://www.otzovik.com/review_4594386.html>.

It is necessary to recall a detailed study by A. F. Kots on the connection between the book and the museum exhibition.11 Perhaps, in literary museums, it is necessary to invite the visitor to read poems or excerpts from novels and short stories of the classics before getting acquainted with the exhibition, and then, and only then go to the exhibition. A successful method of museum display/story telling in a literary museum, which is beginning to be widely used, is the use of audio archives (author's recordings of reading literary works or recordings by outstanding actors) throughout the exhibition.

Anyone who has heard the author's reading of poems by Bella Akhmadulina will always remember them. Today perceiving the visitor as a potentially equal interlocutor, the museum more than before, must take into account the need to find the most understandable language for the visitor to interpret the exposition with the help of modern museum technologies. However, the desire for the "intelligibility" of the exposition should not be accompanied by simplification of methods of knowledge of historical events and facts, especially when modern visual technologies are used.

Since the exposure represents a complex text, therefore, the visual nature of the exposure space will only be a part of this text. In addition, it is necessary to distinguish between productive cognition and reproductive cognition which contributes to the development of human cognitive abilities.

We cannot deny the importance of the visual image in the expositional space as the basis of new knowledge, but this knowledge is static, based on observation, it is productive only for the accumulation of knowledge, but it is not enough to move to the next level of reproductive knowledge. This suggests an analogy with the hypothesis of R. Barthes about the existence of an open meaning, which cannot be described, since it does not represent anything. 12

The Exposition as a Synthesis of All Areas of the Museum's Activities

Returning to the forms of activity of the museum, it is necessary to emphasize that scientificstock, research and exhibition activities are based, first of all, on the results of the scientific research of the museum object. The tasks of scientific recruitment should be interrelated with the tasks of research and exhibition activities. Then arising from the acquisition's difficulties, the fullness of the reflection of reality and the complexity of collections, granularity and dispersion of personal and family archives, the study of the environment of the existence of the subject and the accuracy of the reflection of the historical process, will be compensated museologically and through scientific searches and finally in the overall fullness and completeness of the end display.

At the stage of registration of accounting documentation, it is already necessary to set the task of studying the properties and features of the museum object as an exhibit. For this purpose, the scientific methodology used for obtaining knowledge from and analyzing the perception of

artifacts by the visitor should be integrated. This is especially true since the exhibit at the exhibition is included in a modern social process and its heuristic properties become significant for specific, rather than abstract visitors. Therefore, at least the results of all studies of a museum object(s) must be presented in one form or another at expositions or exhibitions.

The question arises: "Is it possible, and is it necessary, to broadcast the completeness of the information field of the museum object on the exhibit?"

I'll give you an example. In the exhibition opened in 2019 at the State Memorial Museum of the Defense and Siege of Leningrad, a small doll is displayed in one of the showcases dedicated to the blockade which contains children's toys raised from the bottom of Lake Ladoga. The doll is question is made of celluloid and measures 16 cm in length. The same doll happens to be stored in my own house, a doll from my childhood in the 1950s and 1960s that were called "pebbles".

In the 1930s and 1960s, celluloid toys were produced by the Okhta Chemical Plant in Leningrad. All the toys were branded with the stamp of the factory. The brand of the 1930s and 1940s differs from the later brands on identical products. My copy still bears the stamp of the 1950s and 1960s.

I then began to remember how the doll came to me. My parents came to Leningrad in 1960. I didn't have many toys, so I remember the history of each of my toys. Dolls were my childhood passion. They were a part of me, my friends and my "children". I remembered

¹¹ KOTS, Aleksandr F. Sobranie-sochinenij. Tom 5. In KLYUKINOJ, A. I. (ed.) Muzeevedenie. Iz zhizni Darvinskogo muzeya i ego osnovatelya. Moskva, 2018, pp. 113–234.

 $^{12\,}$ ROLAN, Bart. Tretij smysl. Moskva: Ad Marginem Press, 2015.

¹³ Sajt Muzeya oborony i blokady Leningrada [online]. [accessed 2021-20-01]. Available from www; http://www.blokadamus.ru.

that this doll was given to me by a person who lived in our apartment. She was a very old woman, and she was ill, and she lay in her room all the time and I sometimes went to play with her dolls.

My doll is a personal thing, isolated from the world of everyday things and endowed by me with additional meanings - a memory of my childhood, of my parents and life in Leningrad in the second half of the XX. century. However, the same doll in the museum window has a different meaning, a different sense. It is, and has become, a witness to a historical event, the evacuation of residents of besieged Leningrad over the "Road of Life" across Lake Ladoga, but in the showcase window, along with other toys, it merely an exhibit. Is the brand marking still on this museum doll? Is it possible that the doll sank to the bottom of the lake after the war?

Its material uniqueness, its informational field is hidden by the explication common to all the exhibits in the showcase, namely the reference to the fact that the toys were found by researchers at the bottom of the lake. Displayed under the same label in the window, all the exhibits become nameless and informationally "neutral". The children's toys thus have simply become no more than dead signs and tokens of a largescale historical event, having lost their unique "biographies" and their "material faces". From the world of culture, the doll was transferred to the world of impersonal signs, to the sterile space of museum culture where the cultural codes of the object were "erased" and made inaccessible to the visitor.

During a conversation with the museum staff, I shared my thoughts and asked to see the stamp on the exhibit, which should accurately date this museum item. The staff assured me about the compliance of the exhibit with the pre-war time, but the annotation in the window was left the same. For me, as a museum visitor, this exhibit "spoke", but for other visitors it remained a silent sign. I am convinced that it is necessary to make an extended annotation under each exhibit in this showcase, to add a photo of the dating stamp, photos of Leningrad children with toys, to supplement the information with at least links to the personal stories of Leningrad residents. The need to reconstruct the lost meaning of the things and the search for historical information will make the exhibition part of the visitor's biography, teach them to see the connection between the subjective world of personal property and items, individual memories and museum objects.

Most recently, I read on the Internet an amazing story of a girl and a doll, which will close my thoughts about the "anxiety of meanings" that has existed in me for a long time with regard to the interpretation of museum objects, hidden in the series of transformations of a "thing" into an "exhibit". This is the story of a little girl who was evacuated from Leningrad and it is similar to other stories of children who were left without parents and found themselves alone on our "Big Earth" in an orphanage.14 Many of them died of dystrophy. This particular girl, exhausted by the disease, refused to eat, talk or play. Then someone from the staff of the orphanage (in the story it was the stoker) made a doll out of an old towel which turned out to be an ugly rag doll with painted eyes and a mouth. The girl was given the doll and told that she should be rocked and taught to eat, because the girl was now a mother for the doll. The girl took the doll, hugged it to herself and began to say something affectionate to it and at dinner she tried to feed it and gradually began to eat with the doll. The girl survived because she understood that she could not die, she had to take care of the doll. The girl survived, she was saved by a doll!

This story cannot be read without tears, it concerns each of us who at least once in our lives has found themselves in a difficult situation such as losing loved ones and has gone through the "purification" of caring and worrying about children and relatives. The doll in the museum window and the doll in the story are different dolls, but they are united by one historical event, removed from the present and more importantly by one deep and unarguable human value – the value of human life.

Museum Item or Exhibit?

An artifact, a thing, and a museum item are sources of information. Part of the information is revealed to us, visible, the other is "read" by us due to the formed ability to recognize cultural meanings. Confronting the factual ignoring of the semantic transformations of a thing into an object of museum significance and then into a museum object should today, is not only a prerogative of museum specialists, but it also related to the overall museum literacy of each contemporary as one of the components that help create the general cultural character blocks inherent and necessary in every person.

A museum item or exhibit may remain simply a sign of a historical event, or as already stated it may become part of the visitor's biography, or even part of

¹⁴ LentaChel [online]. [accessed 2022-02-02]. Available from www: https://lentachel.ru/news/2020/12/23/devochka-vyzhila-potomu-chto-ee-nelzya-bylo-umeret.htm.

an individual or family memory. Therefore, it is not enough to disclose only the information that is necessary for the accounting documentation when studying preparations for the display of a museum object. The study of the museum object with regard to the acquisition of museum funds is the first stage in the development of future projects related to expositions and exhibitions and is necessary in order to interpret information about the past in the context of cultural impact and value.

The museum needs to create exposition complexes that will not be focused so much on the aesthetic value as on the epistemological historical and cultural value they communicate. The museum object as an exhibit should become the basis of a new historical "hypertext" in the sense of a system of hyperlinks familiar to the visitor, but in translated and made tangible in the real-time exhibition space. In the annotations under the exhibits or electronic labels next to the exhibit, you should place links to articles and research materials, photos and videos, memories, etc. Then the authenticity of the museum object as a translator of memory and culture treasure cannot be replaced by any kind of reproduction; thus the understanding and attitude of the modern individual to the things and artifacts in the museum, and then in reality, will undergo tangible change.

This approach will allow us to find other forms of communication with the visitor, other ways of forming the historical consciousness and retrospective vision of the museum going audience. One has to go to the museum to see an exhibit and learn to reveal and uncover its cultural and artistic subtext, and learn to "see" and "recognize" its unique aura, authenticity and value with regard to current culture. The result will be a noticeable increase in the status of not only historical science, but also of all humanitarian knowledge. Such a synthetic digitized and interactive museum space, which has already absorbed the cultural codes of tradition and is ready to share them, is the new basis for the spreading of culture in the modern museum environment.

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