World Cultural Heritage In The Context Of Globalization: Trends, Issues And Solutions

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Abstract: Rapid globalization poses threats of destruction to cultural heritage sites and requires comprehensive preservation efforts. The purpose of this article is to examine the impact of globalization on cultural heritage, to identify the current issues and trends, as well as to suggest new approaches to the governmental policy of preserving cultural heritage. This article discusses the problem of preservation of cultural heritage in general and digital cultural heritage in particular. New trends in cultural heritage preservation are considered. The current system of protection of the world cultural and natural heritage sites still requires clarifications on regulatory rules, requirements and procedures. This study can be useful in the sphere of international relations and in cultural diplomacy in particular. The article can be also useful for international organizations, which act in the sphere of culture, international humanitarian cooperation, diplomacy etc. We believe that this study promotes the interest to the intercultural communications, especially in post-USSR countries. There are a lot of modern studies which related with the issues of globalization or cultural diplomacy. The authors first combined these topics and analyzed them in this work.

Index Terms: globalization, cultural cooperation, the World Cultural Heritage, cultural heritage preservation, UNESCO.

1. INTRODUCTION

Many international organizations define cultural preservation as their priority for action because they see cultural heritage as the spiritual value of humanity. As history shows, the destruction and loss of cultural and natural heritage sites is often irreversible, so it is better to protect and preserve them. Domestic and international laws define the protection of historical and cultural heritage as an important task of the states, international and domestic organizations, and individuals. International organizations like UNESCO make a significant contribution to raising awareness about risks of losing cultural heritage, promote international cooperation, encourage the exchange of experience, seek solutions for the problems, fund scientific research, and employ advanced technology to protect historical and cultural monuments [3]. Globalization changed the world: it simplified cultural forms and expressions. The problem of preserving authentic cultural heritage in its unique diversity is ever urgent. The purpose of this article is to examine the impact of globalization on cultural heritage, to identify the current issues and trends, as well as to suggest new approaches to the governmental policy of preserving cultural heritage.

2 METHODOLOGY

The research is based on the intersectional approach to cultural heritage from the legal and axiological perspectives. In 1972, UNESCO adopted the fundamental document “Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage” [24]. The methodology is derived from the works of famous cultural theorists: P. Howard [12], E. Baller [1], M. Kagan [13], D. Likhachev [15], Yu. Lotman and B. Uspensky [18], B. Piotrovsky [21] and M. Flier [9]. The authors employed the methodological vision of M. Falser [7] and C. Sandis [22], who viewed cultural heritage as a defining aspect of human civilization and ethics. The problem of cultural values in the information society is considered in the context of the works of A. Toffler [25], D. Bell [2], Z. Brzezinski [4], H. Kahn [14] and M. Castells [5]. The authors studied supporting legal documents in the field of cultural heritage and conducted the comparative chronological and comparative typological analysis to employ a systematic approach to the problem of protection of cultural heritage. There is a terminological problem defining cultural heritage: most theorists generalize valuable cultural contributions and achievements, artifacts of spiritual, physical and digital culture created by past generations. The axiological approach allows combining the traditional understanding of cultural heritage with postmodern in the context of globalization.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the context of globalization it is challenging to define cultural heritage because it transforms the understanding of culture itself. Unfortunately, often globalization has a negative impact on the world cultural heritage. For example, the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites keeps expanding because human industrial and military activities put many sites at risk in recent decades. Compared to natural disasters, an anthropogenic factor is a more feasible threat to cultural heritage. In the context of globalization, “the wars between cultures” lead to a deliberate destruction of cultural achievements. Examples abound including the terrorist bombing of the Old City of Jerusalem in Israel and the Orthodox monasteries in Kosovo, and the destruction of Bamiyan Buddha statues by Taliban in Afghanistan. Because of the wars, Timbuktu and the Tomb of Askia in Mali, the cities of Ashur and Samarra in Iraq, as well as all historical sites in Syria also fell on the list. Raging and dragging wars and ethnic military conflicts threaten to destroy the world cultural heritage. Expanding economic activities also threaten the world cultural heritage sites. Often industrial developers and corporations put profitability over cultural value. That is why UNESCO expressed concerns about preservation of the city of Liverpool in Great Britain, Abu Men in Egypt, Zabid in Yemen.
Humberstone and Santa Laura Salpeter in Chile. In Russia, rapid economic transformations of the 1990’s threatened to destroy St. Petersburg’s historical center. The same happened to the river Elbe Valley in the vicinity of the Dresden. The Arabian Antelope Re-serve in Oman was removed from the World Heritage List because of extensive oil production. Other places under concern include ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Manara in Tanzania, forts of Porto Belo and San Lorenzo in Panama City, Church of the Nativity in the West Bank of the Jordan River, the city of Mtskheta in Georgia, Dzhamsk Minaret in Afghanistan. Human ignorance and neglect, aggression and greed put many cultural sites under threat. Climate changes also negatively influence the preservation of cultural sites and monuments. It can lead to the destruction of the city of Coro in Venezuela, the ruins of Chan-Chan in Peru, and many other natural heritage sites on the List of World Heritage Sites. Experts draw attention to the "endangered" world heritage sites in the urgent need of legal protection and financial support. However, despite the collective efforts of the global community, there is a shortage of funds and interest. Despite the lack, there are some examples of successful restoration that include the city of Bam in Iran, Shrivanshah Palace and Maiden Tower in Azerbaijan, and many others. However, the positive examples are rather exceptions to the rule. In general, international efforts in the preservation of global cultural heritage leave much to be desired. Unfortunately, there are too many negative examples when monuments are excluded from the List of World Heritage Sites because of irreparable damage during reconstruction. The Bagrat Cathedral in Georgia was removed in 2017 when botched reconstruction damaged the integrity of the masterpiece of architecture of the X-XI centuries (Gelati Monastery (Georgia)) removed from UNESCO’s List of World Heritage in Danger [16]. Today, the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger includes 54 monuments in 33 countries. Syria has 6 objects on the List; Libya and Congo have 5 objects (List of World Heritage in Danger, accessed April 2, 2019). The List started in 1978-1979, but most sites turned up on the List in the late 1990’s - early 2000’s, and during military conflict in Libya and Syria (2011). UNESCO has been criticized for its declarative nature and insufficient performance regarding cultural heritage protection. However, it is not always the case. There are many examples of success in legal and practical fields: including Convention for the Protection of Monuments of History and Culture, protection of historical center of St. Petersburg. In 1988, the World Heritage Committee granted the request of the city authorities of Leningrad (St. Petersburg) to include the historic center of the city and its suburbs on the World Heritage List. In 2005, the St. Petersburg authorities adopted the “Specification of Borders and Protection of the historic center of St. Petersburg” to stop commercial development in the city center after UNESCO recommended to introduce protective zoning and to reinforce “the preservation of St. Petersburg with its outstanding historical significance and bridges” [23]. In 2010, UNESCO warned the city authorities that if the aggressive development continues, the World Heritage Committee would exclude St. Petersburg from the List of World Cultural Heritage Sites. Public concern and international pressure forced the administration of Petersburg to stop the number of construction projects. At the same time, the problem of cultural heritage sites preservation is far from being solved. Despite significant and systematic efforts to preserve the monuments of history and culture in St. Petersburg, private developers caused irreparable loss to the city center. There are many architectural, construction and engineering problems associated with new apartment and office complexes. Many irresponsible city officials neglect the uniqueness of St. Petersburg’s historical center and continue to issue construction permits. The same trend takes place in Austria. In 2017, UNESCO warned the authorities of Vienna and recommended to stop high-rise development in the city center. Preservation of privately owned monuments of cultural and natural heritage remains to be problematic. Many valuable privately owned monuments cannot be included in the World Heritage List and therefore, they are out of control of UNESCO. Many private architectural buildings are reconstructed and rebuilt without concern for their artistic and historical value. There is a growing public disappointment about the governmental neglect of the problem. Creation of an international controlling body could partially address the problem, but it seems like the plan remains on paper for many years contingent on international cooperation with UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee. The new century brought postmodern challenges and shaped a new understanding of cultural heritage with digital cultural forms that can be intangible and with no physical borders.

In 2003, UNESCO developed a concept for the protection of the intangible cultural heritage and adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage [7; 17]. As of 2018, the List includes the intangible cultural heritage from 93 countries, including the beer culture (Belgium) added to the List in 2016. UNESCO also adopted Proclamation of the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity that includes two Russian cultural objects. The first was inscribed in 2008 – Cultural space and oral culture of the Semeiskie. It is a settlement of the religious community originating from the time of the Instigation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the seventeenth century. The second is Olokhno, Yakut heroic epos, which is one of the oldest epic arts of the Turkic peoples. At the same time, Armenia declared the instrument duduk as the intangible cultural heritage, Uruguay and Argentina - tango, France - French cuisine. After 2003 Convention, the masterpieces are under protection at the international level [11]. Article 2 of the Convention defines the intangible cultural heritage as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith—that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history.” The Convention includes oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; traditional craftsmanship [7]. Paradoxically, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage does not contain the term “universal.” The criteria for the protection of an object of the intangible cultural heritage, in contrast to the material one, is not its universal significance, but its significance for individual communities, groups or even individuals. Russian Federation could benefit from implementing the same approach; moreover, there is a strong tradition. An example is the collection “Library of World
Literature" undertaken by Maxim Gorky in the revolutionary years, and then repeated in the 70-ies of the XX century [18; 20]. The Academy of Sciences of the USSR established a publishing project “Literary Monuments”, which promoted and popularized world literature. The project continued within the framework of the Commonwealth of the Independent States and led to creation of the electronic library “Epics and Literature of the Peoples of Eurasia”. The list of the intangible cultural heritage expands dynamically. In 2017, it added 12 new items: Kazakh traditional game asyk, Greek musical tradition rebetika, Irish bagpipe, culinary tradition of Malawi Nsimia, etc. Attention to intangible cultural forms is the most powerful trend of development of the world cultural heritage process at the beginning of the XXI century. The Internet era offers multiple creative possibilities of instantaneous communication and exchange of cultural object in digital forms. Some cultural forms are created for the Internet like the underground “cyberpunk” [10]. Taking into account the rapid technological development, a digital form of the world’s cultural heritage has emerged and expanded. In 2003, UNESCO developed a Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage [6]. Technology that creates digital objects of cultural heritage also needs protection and preservation. The Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage is the first step in that direction. Digital preservation is a developing area of expertise that still has to answer the question: what needs to be collected and preserved as cultural heritage for future generations? It also requires legal regulations and intellectual property laws, copyright in the field of software. The Charter defines the digital heritage as unique “cultural, educational, scientific and administrative resources, as well as technical, legal, medical and other kinds of information created digitally, or converted into digital form from existing analogue resources.” It also emphasizes the need for the preservation of digital heritage and calls for legal and institutional protection mechanisms. The central idea of the Charter is that the digital cultural heritage must be preserved for future generations. Digital objects can age and deteriorate fast. The preservation requires financing of digital resources and equipment.

4 CONCLUSION
If you are using Word, use either the Microsoft Equation Editor or the MathType add-on (http://www.mathtype.com) for equations in your paper (Insert | Object | Create New | Microsoft Equation or MathType Equation). “Float over text” should not be selected. In the context of globalization, cultural heritage remains a major strategic resource and requires collective efforts of countries. We suggest that maintaining the centralized registry of cultural heritage is crucial. The idea of common “cultural heritage” appeared in 1972, and it keeps expanding and transforming to include new forms like intangible and digital cultural objects. The UNESCO World Heritage List includes only material historical monuments and natural sites. Application for the inclusion of digital objects would create a precedent and change the world cultural heritage. The confluence of tangible and intangible cultural forms is inevitable. Evolving social practice shapes the concept of cultural heritage.

Lists, resolutions, conventions, and warnings increase attention to historical heritage. The practice of removing sites from the list due to destruction, loss or damage poses a serious problem to international prestige of the state, which did not protect cultural and natural heritage. It requires a new approach to the very formation of the World Heritage List and the idea of the objects of this heritage included in the List. Being on the List of World Cultural Heritage comes with the following advantages: protection of the integrity of cultural and natural sites; increased prestige and tourism appeal; additional financial support, access to the World Heritage Fund that supports the World Cultural and Natural Heritage sites; monitoring and control. Cultural heritage is an integral part of human spiritual and material culture. From our perspective, it seems like the division into tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the documents of international and regional organizations requires new theoretical and practical approaches and requirements. Recent developments and trends make us believe that in the context of modern complex and explosive international relations, it is culture that can become the basis of dialogue and the guarantor of stability. It is a shared responsibility of different nations to protect cultural and natural heritage for future generations. Under globalization, attitudes to the cultural heritage undergo significant changes. On the one hand, there are new threats, risks and negative factors. Anthropogenic and climate factors remain potent threats to the protection of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage. On the other, there is a lot of progress in the digital field. In future, we can expect the inevitable emergence of new forms of cultural heritage, which will be recognized as a significant socio-cultural phenomenon.

REFERENCES


