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ロシア極東における文化的多様性維持のための課題と取り組み

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危機に瀕した文化的多様性の維持は世界的に重要な課題である。本稿では、研究者がいかに地域社会の先住民専門家と協力しつつ、この責任に応えることができるのかについて、特にその過程で博物館が果たす役割に焦点を当てる。ロシア極東地域における初期のフィールドワークの経験から、我々が一般に、また特に先住民社会に対して適切な情報を提供するために開発してきた多様な方法について論じる。それは、彼らの強いモチベーションと参加が、危機に瀕した文化的遺産を保存するためにもっとも重要だからである。

これらの目的を達成するため、多様なデータに直接さまざまな方法でアクセスできる新たなマルチメディア方式が有効である。それらは、対象の360度写真、先住民言語による適切な情報の録音、それらの製作と使用に関するビデオクリップ、デジタル化した歴史的資料における初期の記録や学術的文献を包含することができる。さらに、この重層的で複雑な情報を、それぞれの目的や異なる比較的視点に沿って整理することができる。例えば、特定のテーマの通時的な評価や、隣接する集団間における特定の文化的慣習の比較などである。

Key Words : Cultural Diversity, Traditional Knowledge, Material Culture, Museum/Internet Exhibitions, Russian Far East
キーワード : 文化的多様性、伝統的知識、物質文化、博物館／インターネット展示、ロシア極東

What Does It Mean to Maintain Cultural Diversity?

Throughout the history of mankind, cultures and specific kinds of knowledge have disappeared while at the same time new cultures have evolved. Therefore, at the center of our concern are the underlying dynamic processes that ensure diversity and the continuous creation of new forms and expressions of culture. That is why maintaining cultural diversity is not seen here merely as preservation or conservation of particular indigenous cultures in some static state.

Particular expressions of culture are not only essential for ethnic, local and individual identities and self-esteem of people or groups of people (Kasten 2005a). But cultural diversity has also been relevant for previous and future developments of humankind. It provides the foundation for innovations and human adaptations to new situations and changing environments. They largely depend on new information that triggers those processes. New cultural practices and knowledge have continually been shared among people by means of migrations or face-to-face contacts, in more recent times through print and electronic media, and at present increasingly via the Internet.

Therefore, cultural diversity should not be understood as mere “ornamentation” of our lives. The maintenance of its underlying principles and dynamics is essential for important processes in the development of humankind.

How Can Science and Museums Contribute to Sustaining Cultural Diversity?

Science and museums as well as the tourist industry draw upon indigenous cultures. This occurs nowadays, at least at first glance, in more beneficial ways for both sides than has often been the case in the past (Kasten 2004). Indigenous experts participate and collaborate as experts in research teams and in the preparation of museum exhibitions. In this function they often contribute to or trigger creative exchanges among team partners.

For example, for the current project “Math in Cultural Context”, implemented by the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, with the support of the National Science Foundation, craftswomen or seamstresses from Alaska, Greenland and Kamchatka have come together at several meetings to share their expertise and knowledge. This served

not only the expected scientific outcomes, but also encouraged exchanges of valuable information between the Yup'ik, Kalaallit, Even and Koryak participants, which will contribute to their future work (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/pro_1274_E.html).

Another example is the exhibition “Shamans in Siberia”. For this, indigenous artists from the Russian Far East entered into a productive dialogue with western artists from St. Petersburg, Germany and the USA on their particular expressions of shamanic themes in fine and video art. Beyond the special exhibition with its catalogue and DVD, now closed, its permanent show on the worldwide web provides an ongoing resource that gives inspiration to artists from indigenous communities in other parts of the world (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/vir_21_E.html).

Tourism also has a long tradition of stimulating the development of unique indigenous art forms. Examples are the carvings in walrus tusk and reindeer horn in the Russian Far East that were first bought by 19th century sailors traveling along the coasts. Later these developed, as elsewhere along the North Pacific rim, into the specific genre of “tourist art”, which provided artists with regular incomes and enabled them to further specialize and elaborate their works. More recently, ethnotourism provides financial gain to many indigenous communities, where it can also encourage especially young people to appreciate the value of their cultural traditions. So they often want to learn more about these traditions in order to develop them further in modern ways. To this aim, international tours by dance ensembles have been organized that give young artists the chance for useful cultural exchanges (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/ver_42_E.html).

Besides such positive experiences, however, one must also be aware of some adverse effects of such interactions. At times, they can produce cultural stereotypes in response to the expectations of foreigners, as well as the loss and change of meaning of what the given cultural activities had expressed heretofore. There is the risk that this can, in the long run, erode the foundations of these cultural traditions and along with them the intellectual and emotional source of the artistic expressions.

Therefore, a particular challenge for museums will be to strike the right balance between commercially oriented presentations – although these might satisfy immediate expectations and needs on both sides – and those that will contribute to maintaining the foundations of these cultures in the long run. To this end, particular attention should be paid to underlying original meanings and worldviews that reflect community perspectives and the aim to preserve the uniqueness of their cultural heritage.

Previous and New Formats for Museum Presentations

Today, many museum exhibitions share the aim of being a place of communication (“Kommunikationsraum”) (Müller-Toovey 2015), which goes back to James Clifford’s concept of the museum as a “contact zone” (Clifford 1997). Previously, generations of cultural anthropologists struggled with the task of presenting in museum exhibitions ethnographic objects that were necessarily detached from their original context (Kasten 1992). Vital contextual information is commonly given in catalogues or videos. By means of new technologies, multimedia installations can, at least to some degree, illuminate the particular cultural environments and practices to which the shown ethnographic objects relate. More recently, the Internet is providing additional possibilities of overcoming previous constraints in this regard. The further development of museum multimedia installations for the worldwide web is consequently opening up a number of promising additional opportunities.

First, so-called virtual exhibitions can remain available on the worldwide web beyond the limited duration of a special museum show. Second, in addition to the real exhibition, the simultaneously shown virtual exhibition can reach a much wider public in distant locations, i.e. those who would not have the opportunity to travel to the museum. This is particularly important for indigenous communities, whose cultures such exhibitions are often about. Most of their residents live in remote places and do not have the chance or the financial means to get to distant (western) cities where such exhibitions on their cultures are often shown. Whereas it is important to share these presentations with them in the first place, as these give valuable incentives, not only to artists to further develop their talents. They also motivate indigenous communities in general, who – with a strengthened sense of self-esteem – may be encouraged to sustain their cultural heritage. Third, virtual exhibitions have the potential to improve the quality of interactivity between museum curators, international scientists and indigenous experts, and indigenous and western artists and the general audience. Here, by means of advanced web-programming, one can expect productive and creative dialogues that might trigger fundamental new cultural dynamics for the future.

Finally, I would like to point out that real and virtual exhibitions should complement each other. They can respond to the various needs, expectations and interests of a wider public, whose aim it is to inform themselves about other cultures and to enter into creative exchanges with them.

Introducing the Foundation for Siberian Cultures

The Foundation for Siberian Cultures has set up a number of exhibitions, as described above, as part of its comprehensive program, which is dedicated to maintaining cultural diversity in Siberia and the Russian Far East. The foundation was established in 2010 and is located near Berlin. Its general aims are: the preservation of the indigenous languages of the North, along with the traditional knowledge expressed in them; and the preservation and further enhancement of the art and craft traditions of Northern indigenous peoples. Learning tools by and for indigenous communities may help to counteract the forces bringing about the loss of cultural diversity and the dissolution of local and ethnic identities. The Foundation for Siberian Cultures produces a variety of these materials in collaboration with indigenous experts. They include documentations of the endangered languages and traditional knowledge of the peoples of Siberia and the Russian Far East.

Beyond exhibitions, which I will focus upon later, cultural exchanges by means of tours of artists and workshops, as well as conferences in Germany and Russia serve to enhance mutual understanding between peoples with different cultural backgrounds, and encourage valuable and productive dialogues between them. In seminars, international scholars discuss specific issues pertaining to the cultures of the peoples of Siberia. This allows indigenous traditions and experiences from many parts of the world to be used in launching initiatives and designing learning tools that help to maintain cultural diversity. The Foundation for Siberian Cultures also hosts researchers from Russia with whom we have been developing ethnological materials. The results of these seminars are made available through online or print editions by the Foundation's publishing house, whose program contains various series and a digital library.

Exhibitions that have been mounted by the Foundation for Siberian Cultures, and since the 1990s for other organizations, illustrate the cultural traditions of the peoples of Siberia and help to educate and inform the broader public. At the same time such exhibitions may encourage artists – especially young ones – to further develop their work through creative dialogues between traditional, western and modern arts (Kasten 2015a). Recent and current projects are presented on the web in alternating photo-video shows. This provides a forum through which indigenous communities can participate and be informed about how their traditions are presented and received abroad. These virtual exhibitions are in an ongoing process of further conceptual development, and they are planned to contain more interactive elements in the future, as has been indicated above.

Examples for Multimedia Presentations of Specific Themes in Exhibitions and on the Web

From its own materials and those of other researchers, the Foundation for Siberian Cultures produces virtual ethnographies of peoples of the Russian North for the worldwide web (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/pro_121_E.html). General views in video form illustrate important aspects of the culture of a given people. From there, additional links lead to more sources for further in-depth studies and particular topics of research. This can be, for example, traditional knowledge in reindeer herding (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/vir_24_E.html) or fishing (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/vir_28_E.html). Another initial example is provided by the recent website on Itelmen language and culture (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/vir_37_E.html). It first gives a general ethnographic view, to which specific sub-themes are then added as supplementary layers. The following examples indicate preliminary outlines for forthcoming multimedia shows, which are currently in progress.

The Itelmen artist Aleksandr Pritchinn introduces us to an almost complete ethnography of his people through his carvings, presented here in a photographic show (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/vir_237_9_E.html). He expresses the most characteristic features of Itelmen culture in his sculptures, and discusses them in his commentaries that were recorded while he was producing them (Kasten 2005b: 7-69). Individual figures in the collection relate to certain activities that he considers to hold particular relevance to the cultural heritage of his people. One of them is, for example, the gathering of tundra plants.

Gathering of tundra plants

In Kamchatka, the gathering of tundra plants has been an important subsistence activity among Itelmens and coastal Nymylan Koryaks, as well as among reindeer herding Chavchaven Koryaks and Evens, although for the former groups it has obviously played a more central role in the broad mix of their subsistence activities. This is shown in the elaborate gathering techniques and special tools, and by the particular knowledge connected to them. These activities have been documented on video, with commentary, especially by the Nymylan Koryaks, where a number of experienced elder women have shared this unique knowledge in Koryak language with us over the past 15 years.

I will confine myself here to the searching and harvesting techniques of black lily root (*sarana*, *Fritillaria camschatcensis* [L.] Ker-Gawl.) and other roots that are taken from the caches where mice have stored them for their winter supply (Kasten & Dürr (eds.) 2005). This important traditional



Figure 1: Searching for the black lily root caches in the tundra with a special pole, Lesnaya 2000.



Figure 2: Aleksandr Pritchinn: "Collecting Siberian spring beauty" Slg. Kasten, Kulturstiftung Sibirien.

staple food is widely mentioned in 18th and 19th century sources (Steller 2013: 66; Krusenstern 2011: 27; Kittlitz 2011: 51; Kegel 2011: 207 f., Ditmar 2011a : 88f., 2011b : 63f.). Later on, it was increasingly replaced by potatoes introduced by the Russians. While the ancient practice of gathering roots could still be documented among the Nymylan-Koryaks in Lesnaya in 2001 (Kasten & Dürr (eds.) 2005) (Fig. 1), it had almost disappeared among the Itelmens by the end of the last century, being practiced then by only very few. Nevertheless, it still lives on among Itelmens who practice it as an important part of their memorized cultural heritage. It is shown here in the carved figure by Aleksandr Pritchinn and in the commentary that he gives on it (Fig. 2) (Kasten 2005b: 32f.). This theme is also elaborated on in the remembrances of Valentina Uspenskaya (Kasten & Dürr 2015b: 31ff.). This once important specific Itelmen cultural practice is – after the wish of our Itelmen collaborators – also included as a particular theme in the schoolbook that we produced with them in the mid-1990s (Khaloimova et al. 2012: 34, 105.), and in respective entries of the recently launched Itelmen Talking Dictionary (http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/itd_21_E.html; http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/itd_S05_E.html).

Among indigenous people, such harvesting activities are generally hardly seen just as work, but usually also as an important social activity. The strong emotions that are connected to women's gathering expeditions in the tundra, to which they usually bring even small children along, are shown in our recordings (Kasten 2015c) and are often expressed in their family songs (V.K. Belousova (2000) in: Kasten (ed.) 2010. http://www.kulturstiftung-sibirien.de/vir_22_1_E.html).

More traditional activities related to gathering will be linked to additional modules in a forthcoming comprehensive virtual exhibition on this theme. For the Nymylan Koryaks this will be the making of the birch bark containers (Fig. 3) and baskets (Fig. 4) that have been used for gathering in the tundra. Interesting to witness are also traditional measuring techniques that are applied in basket weaving, and which have been a special subject for comparative analysis with Yup'ik and Kalaallit seamstresses in the above-mentioned project on indigenous mathematics.

Furthermore, the making of traditional *lepkhe* baskets reveals informative innovative processes of the Nymylan Koryak. The knowledge and sophisticated techniques of preparing and drying sea grasses – from which earlier *lepkhe* baskets had been woven – could still be documented 15 years ago. But these materials have been replaced by others more recently. When synthetic fibers were washed ashore in the form of modern fishnets lost at sea, Nymylan Koryak women discovered the particular durability and strength of these fibers, and even their pleasing colors. Since then they have opted to use these fibers for *lepkhe*-making, instead of the natural materials they had used before. Notably, Itelmens did not use synthetic fibers for their *lepkhe* baskets even though these are of similar style. Evidently this tradition of *lepkhe* making had already fallen out of use by the Itelmens, possibly because they did not make the shift to the new, more practical, materials, as did the Nymylan Koryaks.

Festivals for reconciliation with nature

Another sub-theme to gathering will be the preparation of roots, plants and berries for preservation and for special dishes. Some of these dishes are for ritual uses and are made by women communally when they get together to prepare the day before the fall festival *Ololo* (Kasten & Dürr (eds.) 2005).



Figure 3: Patching a basket made of birch bark with willow roots, Lesnaya 2002.



Figure 4: Collecting mountain ash with the *lepkhe*. Lesnaya 2001.

The ritual dish for the souls of the animals that were killed during the past season, and which have to be sent off to the world beyond in a way that pleases the masters of the game, is at the center of this annual festival that is meant for reconciliation with nature. This may lead to further comparative views of this theme of similar festivals among the reindeer-herding Chavchuven Koryaks and Chukchi. Their main seasonal festival is called *Kilvei* (Kasten n.d.) and is held in spring, the time of the birth of reindeer fawns. The Itelmens, however, once celebrated their fall festival in a similar way to that still done today by the Nymylan Koryak. Since the mid-1980s, under the revitalization movement of Itelmen culture in the wake of perestroika, this traditional festival has come to be re-enacted as *Alkhalalalai* (Kasten 2015b). It is held every fall in the traditional Itelmen village of Kovran on the west coast of Kamchatka, and for the last few years also near the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski.

A comparative analysis of these festivals serves to illuminate underlying specific cultural dynamics in diachronic perspective, and according to shifting political contexts – that obviously affected the Itelmens more directly during Soviet times and recently than other indigenous peoples on the Kamchatka peninsula. In this regard it is informative to have a closer look at the Koryak *Khololo*-festival, as it was held in 2002 in Ossora (Fig. 5) (Kasten & Dürr (eds.) 2005). In a way it illustrates the transition from the *Ololo* festival, as it was documented in 2001 in the village of Lesnaya and where it was still based on traditional worldviews of the participants, in contrast to the re-staged *Alkhalalalai* festival of the Itelmens, which is mostly meant to display Itelmen ethnic identity. During the *Khololo* festival in Ossora, first a knowing elder woman performed the rituals in the traditional way, then later on a younger cultural worker took over and organized dance contests. This led to a controversy between the two participants, with the argument of the younger one “to make the festival more interesting to the youth” being countered by one that it would not be appropriate to turn such a serious event into a disco.



Figure 5: *Ololo* festival, Nymylan Koryaks, Lesnaya, 2002.

For further analysis of the original meanings of these reconciliation festivals with nature we can draw upon the rich database from historical records in the *Bibliotheca kamtschatica* (http://www.siberian-studies.org/publications/bika_E.html) and *Bibliotheca Sibiro-pacifica* (http://www.siberianstudies.org/publications/bisp_E.html), which are also available in the open access digital library of the Foundation for Siberian cultures. For these see, for example, the detailed descriptions by G.W. Steller on the Itelmen fall festival from the mid-18th century (Steller 2013: 200ff.), C.H. Merck’s remarkably unbiased accounts from the end of the 18th century on ritual practices related to the *Kilvei* festival of the Chukchi (Merck 2014: 165ff.), and festivals of maritime Koryaks, similar to the *Ololo*, that were described by W.I. Jochelson around the turn of the 20th century (Jochelson 2016: 106ff.).

It is revealing to discuss those “classical” accounts – with more written ethnographic records from other historical sources – in contemporary perspective against the background of the recent documentaries of the festivals mentioned above, together with the respective information by their participants. Again, this can show the dynamics of important cultural events with regards to changes in their performance and meaning in shifting contexts.

Cultural dynamics through interactions between neighboring indigenous peoples

In the administrative center of Chukotka, Anadyr, I witnessed in 2014 informative ethno-cultural processes in the shaping of common indigenous identities among its Chukchi and Siberian Yup’ik residents – whereas these two groups have very different expressions of their cultures, as we will see later (Kasten 2015d). First, I have to point out that I was deeply impressed by the commitment with which Chukchi and Siberian Yup’ik educators and cultural workers worked together to sustain the cultural heritage of their peoples in new creative ways.

The first kindergarten class reflected the multiethnic backgrounds of the children, so they were taught elementary forms of greeting in Chukchi as well as in Siberian Yup’ik from the beginning (Fig. 6).

In the classes of the art school, the integration of the different cultural traditions of these peoples was further pursued, although the uniqueness of the respective cultural expressions was clearly pointed out and preserved. We follow two young children performing in various lessons in which they learn Chukchi as well as Siberian Yup’ik dancing and singing. This eventually becomes integrated into the multicultural program of the professional dance ensemble “Ergyron”.

First, the girls are made familiar with the characteristic Chukchi genre of family songs, and how these



Figure 6: First kindergarten class in Anadyr, 2014.

originate from real encounters with people and nature. In the next class the same children learn about Siberian Yup'ik dancing and singing, with its characteristic pronounced body language, by which the entire sequence of an activity, such as walrus hunting, is expressed in dance. The two girls then have the privilege of participating in the rehearsal for talented young performers of the well-known ensemble "Ergyron" (Fig. 7).

The program of this ensemble also shows how these two different dance traditions are integrated so as to respect the cultural uniqueness of each while at the same time expressing the common identity of the indigenous peoples of Chukotka. This brings us back to the question that was raised at the outset – how can cultural diversity be maintained in creative cultural processes, even though this may lead to new, more complex forms of cultural expression or certain amalgamations between them?

There is another example of how contacts and cultural interactions between different indigenous peoples caused innovations in their arts and crafts. Starting in the beginning of the 19th century, Even groups migrated from the North to central Kamchatka, where they eventually formed a compact indigenous population cluster in the area which is now the Bystrinski district. Close contacts with Koryak reindeer herders (Bergman 1926:149) and necessary



Figure 7: Learning Siberian Yup'ik dances at the Art school, Anadyr, 2014.

adaptations to new and changing environments induced a gradual shift from their original livelihood based on hunting to one of reindeer herding.

Another forthcoming show on the web will highlight how their particular art traditions triggered innovations in decorative designs among the original indigenous peoples of Kamchatka. First, the full process of manufacturing the traditional festive costume of the Evens, the parka and apron, is demonstrated on video, with commentary by Even seamstresses in Even language, with added Russian and English translations.

The following show will focus on the design of Even ornaments, which applies characteristic geometric forms that are in contrast to the mostly floral motifs of the Koryaks. Jochelson had noticed this striking feature during his thorough study at the beginning of the 20th century and discussed it properly with regards to variations in contacts with different neighboring peoples during their respective cultural histories (Jochelson 2016: 715). By then Koryaks had already adopted Even designs in addition to their own ornaments, and Jochelson was frustrated that they could not give him more detailed explanations of their meaning.

The same occurred to me during my recent studies of the measuring and drawing of the ornaments on Koryak festive winter coats (*kukhliankas*). Even here the combination of Koryak floral motifs with the geometric patterns of the Even tradition was apparent. While inquiring about the meaning of the Even patterns I got exactly the same answer as Jochelson more than 100 years ago: "We just use them because of their beauty!" (Kasten 2014: 109, cf. Jochelson 2016: 715). Another Chukchi seamstress in the same village Achaivaiaam who was married to an Even became so excited about Even ornaments that she drew her inspiration from a book on Even culture that she had borrowed from the local library. I noticed the same with other artists who often look for traditional concepts and designs in ethnographical monographs, which they then further elaborate in their art work (Kasten 2005b: 85).

Similar characteristics were also apparent in the coats of a Koryak woman with whom I worked in the late 1990s. She was married to an Even and lived most of her life in the Bystrinski rayon in a predominantly Even environment, where she switched almost entirely to using Even designs. Although she was otherwise well-informed about indigenous culture, she could not explain to me the meaning of the ornaments that she used.

Among Evens, however, the meaning of the complex designs, i.e. the stories connected to them (M. Lomovtseva, recorded 21.09.2014, Archiv Erich Kasten AEK-14-24), is still handed down to the next generation, as

when a daughter is repeating the design while sitting working with her mother or grandmother. Clearly, a particular design in combination with the story that goes along with it, expresses the identity of the given family, whereas foreign peoples or families adopt these designs in different ways without their inherent meaning, and for other purposes.

This also sheds light on the significance of traditional ways of transmission and learning indigenous knowledge – and the consequences in terms of occasionally blurred contents, if the knowledge is learned in other, non-traditional ways. In a recent DVD we have compared how those important processes take place in different cultures (Kasten & Dürr (eds.) 2015a).

Certainly, the public can be given a better understanding of these complex cultural processes through the use of visual media in the form of videos, in which they are demonstrated and explained by the artists themselves and in their own languages. Furthermore, these new formats in which such themes are presented can integrate links to relevant historical sources that are useful to explain and better understand the development of particular art traditions.

The given examples of forthcoming shows on the worldwide web point to the potential of new exhibition formats to demonstrate important cultural dynamics in even more plausible ways.

Conclusions

The Foundation for Siberian Cultures makes an effort to respond to the challenge of exploring and identifying ways that indigenous communities are becoming more involved in sustaining their cultural heritage, as they are definitely the main protagonists in this process. To this end, initiatives are launched to generate indispensable motivation among them. Additional exhibition formats such as shows on the worldwide web can facilitate their more outright and ongoing participation and new forms of interactivity in the presentation of their cultures.

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