CULTURE, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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The first part of this paper asks how European art education traditionally positions itself despite an ever-changing world, mainly in respect to the question how to teach cultural heritage. Focussing the history of art we can see that teaching the canon connected with development narratives is still dominant. But some trends can be observed that open the chance to further develop those traditions, e.g. focussing intercultural entanglements, transcultural understandings of 'objects' and including the issue of power. These trends try to provide answers to today's challenges. The inquiry finally leads to an analytical grid as a model to understand contemporary complexities in a better way.

In the middle section, this is discussed in more detail using a concrete example, the political demands for the return of cultural heritage, the Benin bronzes that were stolen by British colonialists in Nigeria in the 19th century and are now mainly in European museums. It gets clear that the application of the model – developed in the first part – to this example reveals its limits, as unsolvable problems occur. The case study of the Benin bronzes triggers a set of new questions that are becoming increasingly important for art education – at least in Germany – but which have hardly been asked so far. Examples are: Who speaks? In which language? With whom? Who owns? Is negation a model for intercultural dialogue? Etcetera.

In the last part, this set of questions is posed to a concrete international project with partners in Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa that the author is co-ordinating at the Art of Fine Academy in Munich. The set of questions is used to critically explore this project in a way that could also be transferred to any other project in the field of art and cultural education in formal and non-formal settings.

Keywords: Art Education, Decolonising, Restitution, Transculturality, International Cooperation.

A changing world

There is a lot happening right now that is of burning interest for arts education in Germany and in the international context: Nationalist politics are taking art and culture into their service. The Indonesian collective 'ruangrupa' is

curating the next documenta fifteen (2022) with the concept of "lumbung", which subverts the Western concept of "art". Monuments are toppled, colonial street names renamed. New interpretations are tried out in theatres, museums, concert halls. Representatives of African states demand the restitution of looted property. Even a glance at these few examples shows that the world is changing dramatically. And connected to this is a paradigm shift in cultural education (of lay people such as schoolchildren) - at least in Western democratic societies.

Access to Cultural Heritage

If one examines which subjects have been given priority in European educational programmes up to the present day, it quickly becomes clear that in the (mostly latent) canon, one area in particular dominates, that which corresponds to the European-Western claim to art. At best, this is supplemented by phenomena of global popular culture (especially in the fields of music, dance and street culture). Tentative openings beyond the Western horizon can be noted, but they usually fail because there are no selection criteria for the objects outside the familiar realm: What of it would be worthy of education in schools in Europe, what not?

However, not only the selection of objects, but also the way of accessing them remains deeply committed to Eurocentric traditions to this day: On the one hand, it is usually a matter of understanding the history of the arts, their development, which - quite in the spirit of evolutionism - is usually conceived of as starting from a primitive, magical origin to a differentiated, autonomous, modern art. On the other hand, the examination of individual works[1] is usually conceived as a balance between scholarly interpretation and enjoyable contemplation (disinterested pleasure). The educational ideal behind this concept is the civilised, educated and appreciative connoisseur.

But this seems lost in a world hinted at above. The debates about the postcolonial heritage of recent years signify a radical change for cultural education. In a polyfocal globalised world, neither the selection of objects (i.e. the latent canon), nor the traditional modes of access, nor the educational goal can continue to endure.

New approaches

If one observes the current approaches that - at least in the German-speaking context - are already correcting the bourgeois-western paradigm at the moment, two specific questions are of particular interest. And these actually also have the potential to reopen the field in a different way.

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[1] Access to the works is best done in the cultural institutions themselves (opera houses, museums, concert halls, theatres, galleries, etc.).

Transculture and cultural interaction

The first question starts from the premise that all objects of cultural education (e.g. works of art, objects of everyday culture) are ultimately transcultural, i.e. they have always carried a history of cultural contact within themselves. This contact transcends differences. The quality of the transcultural constitution then depends in the concrete case on the one hand on how the difference is understood (Jullien, for example, speaks of distances), and on the other hand on the quality of the contact, the interaction. This interaction ranges from destruction (e.g. monument collapses) to mutual, productive resonance in transcultural, third spaces (e.g. Daniel Barenboim's West-Eastern Divan Orchestra).

With this idea of a culture that is always thoroughly interwoven with all kinds of influences, the interest of education also shifts, which is now directed more strongly from individual objects to interactions. There is a whole bundle of fruitful concepts for framing these interactions that have been developed in cultural studies, but also in the new reference discipline for cultural education, ethnology. These include, for example: Compartmentalisation, destruction, defence, clash, hegemony, global culture, cosmopolitanism, universalism, separation, parallel worlds, cultural diversity, idealisation, exoticism, palimpsest, bricolage, exchange, touch, encounter, elective affinity, imitation, masquerade, mimicry, mirroring, anverwandlung, assimilation, import, diffusion, integration, takeover, superimposition, mergers, creolisation, hybridity, syncretism, translation, intertwining, re-formation, third space, transmigration, metissage, transformation, resonance ...

This diversity of interaction possibilities shows the potential for education, and at the same time it corresponds to our contemporary experience, which are shaped by migration on the one hand or tourism on the other. Even identitarian assertions (e.g. of national, pure cultures, borders or stereotypical assignments) she understands as always already related to the respective "other". In other words, even the assertions of purity and othering postulates already carry transcultural mixing within them, since they draw their identity from the respective "other" that they want to banish. Understood in this way, it makes sense to note the simultaneity of globalisation and local assertions of identity, of cultural exchange and isolation, of musealisation and destruction in our time.

Power

The second question that is relevant in our context focuses on the question of power, which is not a cultural issue to begin with, but is interwoven with it. Obviously, we perceive cultural issues today more and more in the context of power relations. Thus, the gaze, which in cultural education – if at all – has so far

been directed rather generally at broadly conceived, social contexts, focuses on a specific aspect. Perhaps we can also see this as a response to the increasingly strong polarisation in Western societies as well as in the world structure.

For example, the introduction of the Western educational and cultural system (in the first missionised or colonised territories and its implementation until today) can no longer be seen as "innocent", exclusively cultural acts that help countries at a lower level of the "Human Development Index" to finally move forward in their own development; rather, these processes must also be seen as a means to maintain the hegemonic order.

Systematics

It now makes sense to summarise the two new perspectives on the content of Arts Education in a system with two axes (see Fig. 1). The horizontal axis represents the specific quality of the respective cultural contact, ranging from destruction (left) to mutual resonance in transcultural spaces (right). The second dimension (on the vertical) then deals with the second question, that of power, spanned between hegemonic domination (below) and negotiation processes at eye level (above).
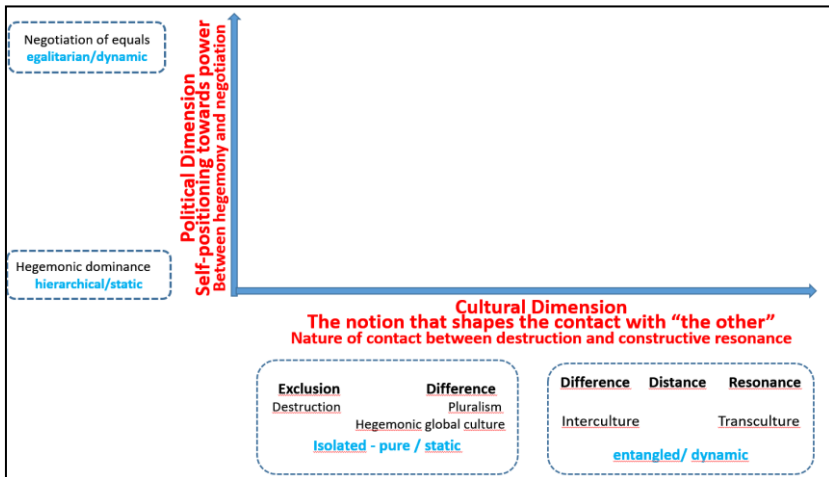

Fig. 1. System to discuss cultural objects

Such a system can help to discuss individual objects or approaches of Arts Education, such as the destruction of the Buddha statues of Bamiyan, the global brand of Coca Cola, the painting "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" by Picasso (1907), a folk dance group or the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra in a criterion-led way. It

seems extremely dangerous (this should be pointed out separately) to make concrete assignments, since all placements in the field, as tentatively made in Fig. 2, could look like immovable determinations. It therefore seems extremely important that such a classification is used exclusively as a starting point for controversial discussions and processes of negotiation, discourses that, however, name their criteria in a transparent manner: Is it justified, for example, to put the destruction of Buddha statues and Coca Cola in the same corner? From which standpoint, from which perspective is the argument being made? Are such localisations correct in every temporal and spatial-cultural context or are there differentiations? Where can productive approaches be identified that are relevant to education?
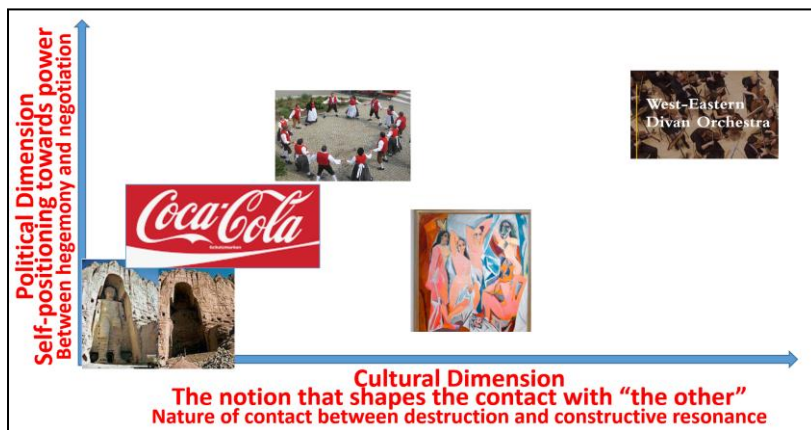

Fig. 2. Applying the system to specific examples

Learning from the Benin Bronzes

However, we can also use this grid in relation to a temporal process, also in order to avoid the prescriptive effect and to be able to take multi-perspectivity into account. Here is a very recent example from the German discourse, the restitution of the Benin bronzes. For this we do not locate the bronzes "per se" but their history and observe the dynamics. This has two advantages: (a) The objects can be viewed in terms of reception history, i.e. in terms of time, which overcomes a one-dimensional attribution of meaning. Meaning is transformed by the different perspectives in the respective contexts. There is no one reading. (b) With this temporal dimensioning, new questions emerge that are so far new for cultural education and that have the potential for a readjustment of cultural education.

To begin with, and in a simplified way, the history of the Benin bronzes: in 1897, British troops conquered the Kingdom of Benin in present-day Nigeria and looted thousands of works of art that had adorned the royal court there since the 15th century. At their auction in London in 1899, many European museums acquired objects; the best pieces remained in London, today the British Museum. Thirty years later, representatives from Nigeria demanded their return for the first time, which all museums worldwide refused to do until April 2021, when at least Nigerian and German representatives agreed to return the more than 1000 objects in German museums. To this end, a museum will be built in Benin City by 2030. A joint group of experts is now working on the question of how the history of these works can be told as a common one, among other things.

In the context of Arts Education, this history can now be visualised as a temporal process with the proposed system (Fig. 3) in order to better understand and - controversially - discuss it, to negotiate its adequacy.
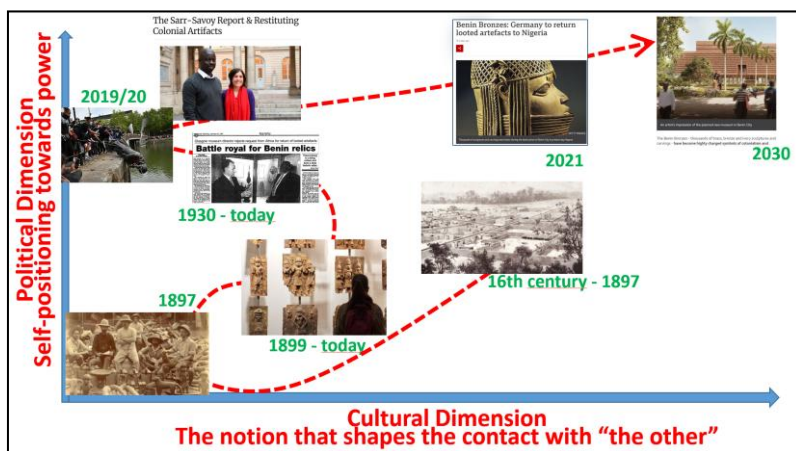
Fig. 3. The biography of the Benin bronzes

Questions for a new approach in Arts Education

From such a discussion, we can now observe processes in this example that are not covered in the systematics, which we can develop highest relevance for a contemporary education. These include:

– **Who owns** the works? Can works, but also bodies of knowledge, be shared?

– **Who speaks** about these works? From which perspectives?

– **What narratives** are told in different contexts? Are such works also **sensitive 'non-objects'**, i.e. independently acting subjects?

– **Which language do** we use, German, English or Ẹdó? Where does the chosen language limit the recognition and handling of the objects? Which cultural pre-concepts does the respective language convey?

– Can the works be **negotiated**? Can we negotiate interpretations?

– What would be the **task of this negotiation**? Is it also about reconciliation, healing?

Transfer: What it can mean for the practice of cultural education

The questions can be used to take a closer look at specific projects. This is not to be elaborated on here, but the project that was constantly in the background while writing this text is the project Exploring Visual Cultures" (EVC), which has been implemented since 2018 by partners mainly in Ghana, Germany, Cameroon, Kenya and South Africa (www.explore-vc.org).

In this project we start from the fact that perception through imageries shape our collective memory, and likewise, cultural memory shapes how we perceive and imagine the world. Thus we wish to

1. take a closer look at visual objects, asking quite simple questions: How can they develop meaning in the respective local context? How are they influenced and how do they influence?

2. The aim is to look for answers in transnational dialogues between artists, (art) educators, (art) historians, (cultural) anthropologists, students.

3. Finally, we intend to share the results with a worldwide community of researchers and educators through conferences, publications, and a website.

Together with our partners guidelines for contributions to a joint 'archive' (a database) were defined, the "Cape Town Model" (Fig. 4). On the base of international academic standards we suggest the following principles:

This model understands an *object* as either tangible (e.g. an artwork, architecture, design, craft, media, …) or intangible (mind images; visual representations of an idea, scientific concept, believes … or visual representations of social practice).

As the main *criterion for selection* of such an object the partners have defined *relevance for education in the respective country.* The coordinating expert panel decided that the decision about the selection of an object is made by the respective local team, as they are best placed to judge the relevance. Nevertheless, "educational relevance" should be related to the current and future society in the context of global development – within the normative framework of UNESCO's '*Education for Sustainable Development*'. Discussion of examples led to the conviction that 'quality of the object' would be the second criterion: does the image communicate the meaning in a convincing way?
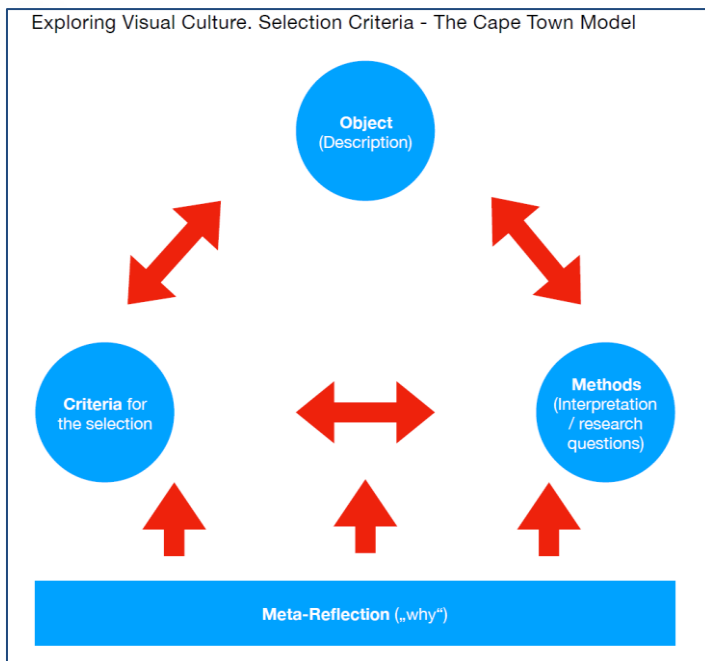
Fig. 4. The Cape Town Model

The ***methods*** used to understand the meanings of the object in its specific context(s) were not specified, but they should offer a deeper insight into the transcultural aspects (i.e. entanglements, trajectories of the object in the context of globalization, in the context of migration, and of decolonization). This should lead to sensitivity towards cultural interactions guided by tolerance and respect.

An important aspect you might not have expected here: It is what we have called ***meta-reflection***, this means: answering questions like why exactly this specific object had been chosen (and not another one). Or reflecting how the object is interpreted and negotiated.

In the meantime EVC's international partners have developed and launched a joint database of more than 60 objects (July 2021). These are explained and interpreted by peer reviewed chapters. More entries are in process. The goal is to have a critical number of more than 200 items in 2023.

The website of course is much richer. E.g. it offers didactic material how to work with the database and also a virtual gallery for local or international exhibitions. I invite you to visit the website and to explore it.

Critical discussion of the EVC Project

– **Who owns**? Where are the archives? Can bodies of knowledge be shared?

The EVC website, having the database as the core issue, is understood as a joint 'body of knowledge', a joint archive. It can be considered as the shared possession of the entire network, as shared intellectual property. This can perhaps best be seen through the many joint activities or the number of authors.

But, we have to take into account that it is yet hosted, funded, managed, and maintained by the German partner.

– **Who speaks**? From which perspectives? Whose voices are heard?

To avoid exclusion of perspectives, the ideal is a multi-perspective approach, this means contributions written in dialogue. That already works every now and then, and it has to be intensified in the future. There are successful examples on the website like – just to mention one – the writing about El Anatsui's work 'Rising Sea', where Patrique contributed in a wonderful way. In these contributions two voices from different regions and different cultural backgrounds are heard, one from the region the work is from.

– **What narratives** are told?

As each narrative responds to the specific local educational context there cannot be one basic pattern. It is interesting to observe how the narratives show different functions of the objects, e.g. what I would name a call for social cohesion (Ghana), the role of the object in the context of nation building (Cameroon, Kenia), the relevance of the objects for collective memory (Ghana, Cameroon), or for political agitation (South Africa) – just to mention a few.

We are currently experimenting with a filter function in the database. This includes content-related aspects, such as function of the objects and their possible connection to the Sustainable Development Goals (UN). The latter should above all facilitate the development of narratives that are particularly relevant pedagogically: How can an object be understood and used for education in the context of ecological, economic, cultural or social future issues.

– Are **sensitive 'non-objects'** represented?

No, not as such. In this respect, the project works with a claim that is still indebted to the European Enlightenment, separating art and magic, work and viewer, ultimately the separation of subject and object. Nevertheless, a change in the format of writing contributions resulted in a surprising change: The colleagues from Ghana were asked to approach objects from the Museum Fünf Kontinente in Munich - without using the Cape Town Model. This immediately resulted in alternative forms of contributions. In single cases, these are now rather narratives that bring up a close personal connection with the object. They thus no longer place it at a distance as a scientific object, but allow it to become alive and

meaningful, as for example in the connection with the personal experience of death.

Something similar can be indicated in connection with political activisms, when, for example, objects first have to be worn as a T-shirt on the body in order to unfold their effectiveness. Or when it is about one's own body as a site of decolonization. (This will be the example at our workshop with Esther tomorrow.)

– **Which language** is used?

English is used within the transnational collaboration, there was no alternative. Even Paul from francophone Cameroon had to use English. In one case, Fante is used for naming a stool and parts of it. (Funtumfunefu). But it is not reflected whether there are differences between the word of origin and its translation into English.

The question of limitations in respect to the recognition of the objects and which cultural pre-concepts are conveyed through the chosen language could not be reflected up to now. A meta-research would be needed to understand what is lost or transformed through translation into English.

– Can knowledge, can interpretations be **negotiated**?

At the moment any proposal delivered by a team is accepted. A peer review process allows the author to understand how his/her text is perceived by a reader. Just one example in which a negotiation was done in extensive way.

– What is the **goal**? Is it also about reconciliation, healing?

Ultimately - at least on the German side - it is also about overcoming colonialism, i.e. coming to terms with one's own problematic past, analogous to coming to terms with the Holocaust after the liberation from the Nazi regime in Germany (Vergangenheitsbewältigung) – as a form of self-healing.

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КУЛЬТУРА, ОСВІТА ТА РОЗВИТОК В ГЛОБАЛЬНОМУ КОНТЕКСТІ

Ернст Вагнер

У першій частині статті автор замислюється над тим, як європейська художня освіта традиційно позиціонує себе, незважаючи на мінливість світу, і як у зв'язку з цим викладати культурну спадщину. Зосередивши увагу на історії мистецтва, автор зазначає, що викладання канону, пов'язаного з наративами розвитку, як і раніше, домінує. Але можна спостерігати деякі тенденції, які відкривають можливість подальшого розвитку цих традицій, наприклад, через

зосередження уваги на міжкультурних зв'язках, транскультурному розумінні «об'єктів» і розгляд питання про владу. Ці тенденції спрямовані на пошук шляхів вирішення сучасних проблем. Висновки автора відображені у вигляді аналітичної матриці як певної моделі, що дозволяє краще зрозуміти сучасні складні проблеми.

У середній частині статті ці питання розглядаються більш детально на конкретному прикладі: політичні вимоги про повернення культурної спадщини, бенінських бронзових виробів, які були вкрадені британськими колонізаторами в Нігерії в 19 столітті і зараз перебувають в основному в європейських музеях. Стає очевидно, що застосування моделі, розробленої в першій частині, до цього прикладу виявляє її межі, оскільки виникають нерозв'язні проблеми. Тематичне дослідження бенінських бронзових виробів викликає ряд нових питань, які стають все більш важливими для мистецької освіти (принаймні в Німеччині), але які до сих пір майже не задавалися. Наприклад: Хто говорить? Якою мовою? З ким? Хто володіє мовою? Чи є заперечення моделлю міжкультурного діалогу? І так далі.

В останній частині статті цей набір питань задається учасникам конкретного міжнародного проєкту з партнерами в Камеруні, Гані, Кенії і Південній Африці, який автор координує в Академії образотворчих мистецтв у м. Мюнхен. Набір питань використовується для критичного вивчення цього проєкту таким чином, щоб його можна було перенести на будь-який інший проєкт в області мистецтва і культурної освіти в формальній і неформальній обстановці.

Ключові слова: художня освіта, деколонізація, реституція, транскультурність, міжнародне співробітництво.

КУЛЬТУРА, ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ И РАЗВИТИЕ В ГЛОБАЛЬНОМ КОНТЕКСТЕ

Эрнст Вагнер

В первой части статьи автор задается вопросом о том, как европейское художественное образование традиционно позиционирует себя, несмотря на постоянно меняющийся мир, и как в связи с этим преподавать культурное наследие. Сосредоточив внимание на истории искусства, автор подчеркивает, что преподавание канона, связанного с нарративами развития, по-прежнему доминирует. Но можно наблюдать некоторые тенденции, которые открывают возможность дальнейшего развития этих традиций, например, сосредоточение внимания на межкультурных связях, транскультурном понимании «объектов» и рассмотрение вопроса о власти. Эти тенденции направлены на поиск путей решения современных проблем. Выводы автора отражены в виде аналитической матрицы как некой модели, позволяющей лучше понять современные сложные проблемы.

В средней части статьи эти вопросы раскрываются более подробно на конкретном примере: политические требования о возвращении культурного наследия, бенинских бронзовых изделий, которые были украдены британскими колонизаторами в Нигерии в 19 веке и сейчас находятся в основном в европейских музеях. Становится ясно, что применение модели, разработанной в первой части, к

этому примеру обнаруживает ее пределы, поскольку возникают неразрешимые проблемы. Тематическое исследование бенинских бронзовых изделий вызывает ряд новых вопросов, которые становятся все более важными для художественного образования (по крайней мере, в Германии),но которые до сих пор почти не задавались. Например: Кто говорит? На каком языке? С кем? Кто владеет языком? Является ли отрицание моделью межкультурного диалога? И так далее.

В последней части статьи этот набор вопросов задается участникам конкретного международного проекта с партнерами в Камеруне, Гане, Кении и Южной Африке, который автор координирует в Академии изобразительных искусств в г. Мюнхен. Набор вопросов используется для критического изучения этого проекта таким образом, чтобы его можно было перенести на любой другой проект в области искусства и культурного образования в формальной и неформальной обстановке.

Ключевые слова: художественное образование, деколонизация, реституция, транскультурность, международное сотрудничество.

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