



MUSEUMS IN MEMORY OF VICTIMS OF REPRESSION: WORLD EXPERIENCE AND PROSPECTS FOR THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL MUSEUM IN UZBEKISTAN

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 28 th August 2024 Accepted: 26 th September 2024	This article analyzes the importance of creating a museum in memory of victims of repression in Uzbekistan, based on the study of the world experience of similar institutions. The paper examines examples of leading museums such as the Holocaust Museum in Washington, the Yad Vashem Memorial in Israel, and the ALGIERS Museum in Kazakhstan. Special attention is paid to their role in preserving historical memory, educational activities, and the formation of civic responsibility. The article highlights the importance of using modern technologies 1993 historical data. Prospects for the integration of archival materials and the creation of a national database on victims of repression are also being analyzed, which will ensure wide availability of knowledge and strengthen the link between generations. The study confirms that the creation of a museum in memory of the victims of repression in Uzbekistan will be an important step in preserving national identity, restoring historical justice and preventing the recurrence of such tragedies. This will not only preserve the memory of the tragic events of the past, but also become a platform for educating an informed and responsible society.

Keywords: *Uzbekistan, international experience, educational platform, archival materials, interactive technologies, civic responsibility, national database, virtual reality, totalitarianism, memorialization, human rights, historical justice.*

INTRODUCTION. The theme of repression and its victims is an important part of historical memory. The creation of museums dedicated to the politics of repression not only perpetuates the memory of the victims but also serves as an educational platform for understanding the lessons of the past. This article examines examples of world museums dedicated to the topic of repression and offers recommendations for the development of similar projects in Uzbekistan. We can see the museums of repression as a bridge between generations. An emotional connection with the past - museums can include not only historical exhibits but also interactive elements that immerse visitors in the atmosphere of that era. It can be a soundtrack, a reconstruction of everyday life or the use of virtual reality. As well as the dialogue of generations, it is important to organize exhibitions here, where the descendants of the repressed can share the memories of their ancestors so that the younger generation feels a personal connection with history.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY. The world experience of museums dedicated to repression if we get acquainted, museums dedicated to the Holocaust are important places of memory, reflection, and learning dedicated to the tragic events of World War II and the

extermination of six million Jews by the Nazi regime. They play a key role in preserving historical memory and preventing the recurrence of such tragedies. Here are the main aspects that are characteristic of these museums. The Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington (USA). Presents a chronicle of Nazi crimes through personal belongings, archival documents, photographs, and multimedia expositions. The emphasis is on the personal stories of the victims. William Herskovitz, a prisoner of the Auschwitz concentration camp who managed to escape and survived the Holocaust, was one of the founders of the Holocaust Memorial Museum. On September 27, 1979, the Presidential Commission on the Holocaust, headed by Elie Wiesel, presented a report to U.S. President Jimmy Carter, which contained recommendations for preserving the memory of the Holocaust in the United States. On October 5, 1988, the foundation stone of the museum was laid with the participation of US President Ronald Reagan. The museum was opened on April 22,



1993 by President Bill Clinton¹. The first visitor to the museum was the Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1989, the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, Ngagwang Lovzang Tenjing Gyamtsho. The architect of the building was a refugee from the Nazi genocide, a native of Essen, James Ingo Fried. The museum's exposition and research are very interesting. The museum's collection includes 18964 artifacts. Each week, the collection is supplemented with about 26 new exhibits. There are more than 95.5 million pages in the documentary archive². The museum's photo library contains 86,000 photographs from all countries affected by the Holocaust³. Researchers at the museum have compiled a list of 42,500 ghettos and concentration camps created by the Nazis in German-controlled territories of Europe from 1933 to 1945. Among the researchers: J. McBride and others. The theme and objectives of this museum are documenting the chronology of Nazi crimes, from Hitler's rise to power to the liberation of concentration camps. The memory of the victims tells the perpetuation of the memory of each deceased through archival documents, photographs, personal belongings and memorials. As well as educational, the mission includes information about the causes and consequences of the Holocaust, its impact on world history and culture. In this, museums highlight the dangers of racism, anti-Semitism and totalitarianism.

You can also get acquainted with the Yad Vashem Museum in Israel. Special attention is paid to the documentation of evidence, interactive technologies and educational programs. Yad Vashem is an Israeli state memorial dedicated to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust and the heroism of the Jewish people. Located in Jerusalem on the Mount of Remembrance (Har ha-Zikaron), it serves as a center for research, education and commemoration of the Holocaust tragedy. Scientific activity of Yad Vashem International Institute for the Study of the History of the Holocaust. This institute supports and promotes scientific research, organizes seminars, conferences and publishes research results, stimulating academic debate and offering new perspectives on key Holocaust topics. Since 1957, the peer-reviewed semi-annual scientific journal Yad

Vashem: Studies has been published, which publishes articles by leading experts on the history of the Holocaust. And the museum also has large archives and databases. Yad Vashem collects and stores documents, photographs and testimonies related to the Holocaust. The Central Database of Names of Holocaust Victims is a unique international project coordinated by Yad Vashem, which aims to collect and preserve names and data about victims. The museum also has educational programs. Yad Vashem International School offers educational programs and seminars for teachers and students from different countries, develops educational materials and holds symposiums on the topic of the Holocaust⁴. Thus, Yad Vashem plays a key role in preserving the memory of the Holocaust by conducting extensive scientific research, educational programs and perpetuating the names and stories of millions of victims of this tragedy.

Museums dedicated to political repression are important cultural and historical institutions aimed at preserving the memory of the victims of totalitarian regimes and analyzing their impact on society. They perform several key functions: Memory and perpetuation: Preservation of names, biographies and testimonies of victims of political repression. Education and information: Coverage of historical events related to repression in order to form historical memory and prevent the recurrence of such tragedies. Research: Support for scientific research on the mechanisms and consequences of political repression. Social significance: Raising public awareness of the consequences of authoritarianism, totalitarianism and human rights violations.

GULAG Museum in Moscow (Russia): It reflects the scale of Stalinist repression through real objects, memories of prisoners and reconstruction of camp conditions. The museum is located in Moscow, dedicated to the memory of the victims of communist repression, founded in 2001. The first permanent exhibition was located in the house on Petrovka, since 2015 the museum has been located in a building in 1st Samotechny Lane⁵. The museum collected and studied materials from state and family archives; memories of

¹ Museum History. Дата обращения: 26 июля 2015. Архивировано из оригинала 3 августа 2015 года.

² Музеи Памяти: Мемориальный музей памяти жертв Холокоста, Вашингтон, США. Дата обращения: 11 ноября 2017. Архивировано 12 ноября 2017 года.

³ Российские педагоги в США. Дата обращения: 3 января 2009. Архивировано из оригинала 30 декабря 2010 года.

⁴ www.yadvashem.org Яд Вашем: сохранение памяти о Холокосте в XXI веке

⁵ Официальный сайт музея. Дата обращения: 2 июля 2018. Архивировано из оригинала 25 июня 2018 года.



participants in the events and their personal belongings; objects found at the camp sites. The museum had a permanent exhibition that showed the stages of the formation of the punitive system in 1918-1956 and its impact on the fate of people, and temporary exhibitions. It is closed indefinitely from November 14, 2024⁶. The exhibition is based on a collection of archival documents and personal files of prisoners, transferred to the museum in 2001-2002 by the Moscow Association of Victims of Illegal Political Repression. The GULAG Museum carries out a key mission to preserve and popularize knowledge about the repressive policies of the Soviet era, providing visitors with access to authentic sources of information: archival documents, photographs, personal belongings of prisoners. His expositions illustrate not only the tragedies associated with the system of correctional labor camps, but also the lives of people who find themselves in these conditions. Archival documents are also considered to be the basis of historical memory in the Gulag Museum. The archival documents presented in the museum are the most important artifacts that form an objective view of Soviet repression. They include prisoners' personal files, NKVD orders, prisoners' correspondence with their families, and official reports on camp activities. These materials allow researchers and visitors to understand the scale of repression, the complexity of the camp system and its impact on human destinies. Archives provide an opportunity to study not only the politics of the state, but also the social, cultural and economic aspects of the era. The museum's exposition includes personal belongings of prisoners, such as clothes made by hand in the camps, wood carvings and other artistic works, letters, diaries and poems. These artifacts have not only memorial significance, but also cultural value. They show how people preserved their individuality and resisted dehumanization. Such objects serve as a reminder that even in inhumane conditions, a person is capable of creativity and spiritual development. It is worthy to say that the GULAG Museum not only stores archival documents and artifacts, but also actively forms a national memory of complex and contradictory pages of history. His work includes conducting educational programs and excursions for schoolchildren and students, organizing temporary exhibitions on various aspects of the history of repression, and collaborating with researchers to create new interpretations of

archival materials. The GULAG Museum is becoming not only a guardian of historical truth, but also a platform for open discussion of complex issues related to the history of repression, ensuring the transfer of knowledge to future generations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS. The Museum of Memory of Victims of Repression can be included in a number of scientific museums covering the policy of repression. To date, this museum has made a significant contribution to the rehabilitation of about 20,000 repressed people throughout the Republic, continuing to study the undisclosed aspects of the history and personality of the victims.

Research shows that the main fund of the museum consists of archival documents and photographs. An important stage is their proper systematization and identification of areas for further growth. In this process, it is necessary to take into account international experience and improve the system of storage and management of funds, which will allow the museum to more effectively fulfill its scientific and educational mission.

The museums themselves, dedicated to the victims of political repression, play a key role in preserving historical memory and understanding the tragic events of the past. Studying the international experience of the creation and functioning of such museums can be useful for Uzbekistan in developing its own Museum in memory of the Victims of Repression. Let's look at some examples and lessons that can be learned.

After the declaration of independence of Uzbekistan, one of the noble deeds carried out in the country was the restoration of historical justice through perpetuation of the memory of those who became innocent victims during the years of tsarist and Soviet colonialism, were repressed as an "enemy of the people" in the 30-50s of the last century, and whose names were erased from the history of the Uzbek people and culture.

On May 12, 1999, a commission was established to commemorate the victims of the colonial period⁷.

In July of this year, by decision of the Government, the Memorial of Martyrs Charitable Foundation was established. As a result, the creation of the exhibition tools of the future museum began. A great event in the social, cultural and spiritual life of the country and the people was the grand opening on May 12, 2000 of the memorial complex "Memorial of Martyrs", established in

⁶ Музей истории ГУЛАГа закрыт. Формально — из-за пожарной безопасности. Уникальная площадка искала

новые способы говорить о трагическом прошлом — пока власти были готовы это терпеть — Meduza

⁷ <https://lex.uz/ru> Постановление Кабинета Министров Республики Узбекистан, от 22.07.1999 г. № 358



the Yunusabad district of Tashkent. to educate in the spirit. On the basis of the Decree of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov dated May 1, 2001 "On the establishment of the Day of Remembrance of victims of Repression" in Memorial complex "Memorial of Martyrs"⁸ The grand opening of the museum took place on August 31, 2002 – on the "Day of Remembrance of Victims of Repression", which was celebrated for the first time in the country. The place where the memorial complex and the museum were built, from the 20s of the XX century until the beginning of the Second World War, served as a place of execution of the prison authorities of the Soviet state. Victims of repression in Tashkent were buried here in three slaughterhouses. The memorial complex unites the territories of these three former slaughterhouses. If the symbolic sagan is considered the memorial center of the monumental complex, then the museum building serves as its educational center. The museum building is located on the banks of the Bozsu River, in a sunny place, one-storey, height 20 m from the ground. The original building was a single 400 m² exhibition hall with a single dome. The building was surrounded by a porch supported by 28 decorative columns. Its total area is 784m². The building was built taking into account the traditions of Uzbek national architecture. The first exposition of the museum consisted of 6 sections. On May 5, 2008, Resolution No. PQ-861 "On further improvement of the activities of the Museum of Victims of Repression" was adopted. As a result of the implementation of this Resolution, serious changes have taken place in the museum.

The museum's exposition consists of 10 sections. In the process of organizing a new exposition of the museum "Memorial of Victims of Repression", the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Archival Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Cartography Department, the Press Agency of Uzbekistan, the National Television and Radio Company of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Culture and Sports, the Ministry of Communications of Uzbekistan and the information Agency, the University of Vesmister, the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Defense, the company "Coincidental". At the same time, documents stored in the funds of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Security Council, and the Supreme Court are on display.

Potential thematic areas The State Museum of the Victims of Repression Memorial under the Cabinet of

Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan the history of repression in Uzbekistan stages of political repression, the fate of victims, and their role in cultural and public life. The role of archives and personal stories is to integrate the personal memories of the repressed and their descendants. The international context is the connection of Uzbek events with the general processes of Soviet repressive policy. This museum consists of formats and exposition solutions as follows: Interactive expositions use multimedia, holograms, and sound installations to engage visitors. Personal belongings and documents - items preserved from victims of repression, their diaries, letters. There is also a memorial area - a space for memory, where visitors can leave their comments or symbols of respect.

A separate stock department has been formed in the museum, the main fund of which is occupied by archival documents. Archival materials play a key role in restoring the historical picture of repression, its scale, mechanism, and consequences. The analysis of these documents allows us not only to preserve the memory of the tragedies of the past, but also to comprehend their significance for the present and the future. Let's consider the key aspects of the analysis of archival materials related to repression. The archive contains Orders of the NKVD and other bodies related to arrests, deportations, and executions. Interrogation protocols, decisions of the "troika" and other punitive bodies. Statistical reports reflecting the scale of repression. As well as personal documents - letters from prisoners and their families, diaries, notes, memoirs of victims and personal files of the repressed. You can also see photographs and visual materials in the Foundation - pictures of prisoners (for example, prison photos), maps of camps and places of exile, and visualization of the social and cultural context of the era. Works of modern art on the theme of political repression - graphic and pictorial drawings, wood carvings, poems, and modern sculptures are in the museum's collection.

The museum is a research institute. The scientific staff of the museum is working with archival documents related to the history of repression, collecting factual material. The research results are regularly published in the form of monographs, and journalistic and artistic publications. The museum staff is also preparing to print the works of outstanding Uzbek writers and thinkers who have been subjected to repression, and

⁸ <https://lex.uz/ru> Указ Президента Республики Узбекистан, от 01.05.2001 г. № УП-2837



educational events are being held among the population⁹.

However the foundation needs to create a national database of the repressed, with their integration into museum exhibitions, an important step in preserving historical memory and restoring justice. Such a database can serve as a source of information for researchers, descendants of victims and society as a whole. The integration of this data into museum exhibitions will ensure that knowledge is accessible to a wide audience and strengthen the link between archives and cultural and educational institutions. In this area, you need to take examples for inspiration -Memorial (Russia) is a database of victims of repression in Russia, which includes thousands of records with detailed information about the repressed¹⁰. Shoah Foundation (USA) is a database of Holocaust victim testimonies available to researchers¹¹ and educational institutions and can also be found at the ALZHIR Museum (Kazakhstan)-A partially integrated database of wives of "enemies of the people" used in exhibitions¹².

It should be borne in mind that the national database of the repressed, integrated into museum exhibitions, will become a powerful tool for preserving historical memory and fostering civic responsibility and educational activities. It will strengthen the link between the past and the present, reminding society of the value of freedom, human rights, and justice.

The creation of a museum dedicated to repression and its victims in Uzbekistan will be an important step in preserving historical memory and shaping national identity. World experience proves that such museums not only tell about the tragedies of the past but also help society avoid repeating mistakes, serving as an important tool for education and upbringing.

A museum dedicated to repression can become a powerful tool not only for perpetuating memory but also for educating a conscious civil society. The example of world museums shows that understanding the past helps to build a future without fear, injustice, and violence.

Uzbekistan, with its rich but complicated history, has every opportunity to create a unique museum that will unite the world and national memory. The exposition should not only highlight the tragic events of repression but also explain the causes, mechanisms, and consequences of this policy. It is important to show how

mass repression affected various segments of the population and led to the destruction of the social structure. To prevent distortion of facts, it is necessary to involve professional historians and use various sources, including international archives. This will help create a credible, unbiased narrative. Modern multimedia installations, virtual reality, and interactive maps can help visualize data. For example, you can imagine camp routes, maps of places of detention, and the scale of repression. The museum can develop interactive history lessons, including working with documents and discussing events with experts. This will allow visitors, especially young people, to analyze the past and draw conclusions. As well as holding temporary exhibitions devoted to certain aspects of repression (for example, the role of women or the fate of intellectuals), they will help to deepen knowledge of the topic and maintain interest in studying history. The museum will become not only a place to preserve and study history, but also a powerful tool for fostering civic responsibility and awareness that human rights and freedoms must be protected at all levels of society.

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¹¹ <https://sfi.usc.edu> Фонд Шоа Университета Южной Калифорнии |

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