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Appendice

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Documentation of the Ethnographic museum Zagreb

Museum documentation is cultural heritage covering all areas of museum activity. It is the source and support for every professional, scientific and cultural activity and it is intended not only for a narrow professional circle, but for all interested researchers. Besides being a source of knowledge, museum documentation material is also the custodian of original document, and is thus kept permanently.

Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb is one of the rare museum institutions that soon after it was established in 1919, founded the first documentation holdings and collections. Vladimir Tkalčić, the first museum curator paved the way to a contemporary ethnographic documentation by bringing together museological, historical and ethnographic approach to material. Aware of the importance to collect all kinds of data on ethnographic heritage, he founded and shaped the first documentation holdings and linked the primary and secondary documentation, as they are called today. Thus he raised the quality and quantity of data on museum material and resources on a higher level.

Documentation Holdings of Ethnographic Museum

Documentation holdings of Ethnographic Museum include professional, scientific and accompanying material relating to the collections of objects, field investigations and professional work. Archival material connected with the establishment of the Museum and collections and development and activity of the Museum is also an important segment of museum documentation.

Museum activity is a complex process in which museum staff contributes to the creation of documentation holdings. Documentation collects and stores the results of that activity, which is more and more complex given the new demands the museums are faced with. This instigated the creation of new registers and holdings. With regard

to the types and way of evaluating collections and documentation, material was nominally divided into primary, secondary and tertiary documentation.

Primary documentation holdings

When the Ethnographic Museum was founded the holdings were created by several collections that included national material and material outside Europe, which led to introduction of inventory books and creation of card files for each collection of objects.

Museological principles commit to protection of material at several levels. This resulted in the introduction of the Book of accessions and Book of deaccessions already at the end of the 1920ies.

In addition to the documentation about the museum holdings, the primary documentation includes important written material registered in field researches in the first decades after the Museum was founded. Initial documents about the founding of the Museum and the lists of the first collections are also important documentary material.

Methodological framework in the organisation of primary documentation did not change significantly through the historical development of the Museum. The card file of the museum objects underwent the greatest change. Only in 1967 the so-called *old cards* were replaced with bigger cards formatted according to high quality models.

Holdings and collections of secondary documentation

Holdings and collections of secondary documentation, today valued as cultural heritage, are accompanying and supplementary holdings of primary documentation, that is independent holdings in the function of knowledge spreading, protection of museum holdings and follow up of museum development.

Photographic material (negatives, slides and photographs), phonographic recordings, ethnographic films made at the beginning of 1920ies during field investigations were the first registered holdings of secondary documentation. They were entered on inventory books and card holdings of photographic records were kept up to the introduction of computer technology.

Already from 1925, records were kept about exhibitions; hemeroteque follows museum activities published in newspapers and other publications. Few years back hemeroteque underwent a complete change and was transferred to another record carrier. All thematically searched articles from publications are stored on digital carriers, specifically to CD and DVD formats which are stored in documentation.

During time museum activity imposed the establishment of new documentation units. Today Documentation records the work of educational department, events in the Museum, restoration of objects and lectures.

All the mentioned holdings are located on Documentation premises.

Documenting material

Documentation methods applied at the foundation of the Museum were inevitably changed during the last ninety years of the Museum activity.

Until 1989 there was no law regulation about the standards and rules of the systematic development and processing of museum documentation. *Instructions about the Basics for the Organisation of Documentation about Museum and Gallery Objects* defined to a certain extent the processing of objects, microfilming of documentation for safety purposes and possibilities to process documentation by computer.

The application of information technologies opened new approaches to material not only in the method creating inventory of cultural heritage, but also in protection, use and exchange of data.

In the period from 1989 to 2008 the Museum used two programs (MODES and PROMUS), and then it switched to M++.

Instructions about the Basics for the Organisation of Documentation about Museum and Gallery Objects, passed in 2002, defined documentation holdings and methods of documentation work.

In accordance with the Instructions, database was structured and terminology standardised in the M++ program, which enabled integration of primary and secondary documentation.

Considerable number of descriptions of museum objects that were entered on inventory during the years by using the PROMUS program were converted into M++ program database. By choice of data the program was adapted to ethnographer's needs. Adjustment of headings in the database according to specific needs of the Museum is still going on.

Besides digitisation of objects related to documentation, Museum staff digitise material for other needs. For the time being, digitised images are stored in the Museum repository available to all Museum professionals.

Digitisation of secondary documentation has also started. The so-called professional material and field investigations were converted to M++. The conversion of other data is under way, and the material input earlier in Word is available to Museum staff in the Museum repository.

In addition to new objects, the already entered holdings of primary and secondary documentation are entered on inventory gradually once again.

Protection of material

The advent of new media, as carriers of museum documentation in the last ten years created an issue for storage and protection of data. New technologies enable higher quality of storage and protection of material and resources. However, persistence and sustainability of records during time is questionable. Numerous audio and video records stored on carriers like CD, DVD and the like will have to be transferred to other media in order to protect data.

The already mentioned holdings of secondary documentation include holdings that are in need of special protection because of their importance not only for documentation, but the Museum holdings as well. Negatives on glass from the end of 19th and the beginning of 20th century are not only carriers of data about materials, but because of their museological and museum value they have become cultural heritage and are stored as museum objects. Their digitisation has started to protect them for future. Over 1,700 out of 4,500 negatives on glass were digitised. Their physical usage stopped with digitisation.

Digitisation of audiovisual records stored on VHS started during 2010. Already 30 records stored on VHS were digitised. Digitisation is performed in Documentation.

Growth of material and resources

Collections of objects are acquired by purchase or gift. Museum documentation records a growth of holdings by 365 objects in 2010. The total number of objects entered on inventory in holdings of Documentation is 66,897 objects.

The growth of material in secondary documentation is performed in several ways: by purchase, gift and collection of documentation created as a result of the work of professional staff of individual Museum departments.

Holdings of secondary documentation that grow in number include:

- Photo archive (negatives, slides, photographs) that grew by 129 inventory numbers, and has a total of 74,007 units,
- Hemeroteque that grew by 1,482 articles, and currently holds a total of 15,051 units, and
- Exhibitions – 17 were organised, a total of 529.

Conclusion

Creation and maintenance of museum documentation is a long-lasting and never ending job. It includes all segments of museum activity and demands systematic updating and moves and follows activity related to quality recording, storage, protection and communication of stored museum knowledge.

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