

THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS AND ITS EMPLOYEES IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD: BETWEEN POLITICS, PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND ART

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INTRODUCTION

The Museum of Arts and Crafts is a key national cultural institution in terms of space, number of collections and number of museum objects. Established through the efforts of the Art Society and its prominent representatives in 1880, over the course of several decades of museum service, it has transformed into a museum house that is an important participant in the national heritage area in terms of size and significance. When the Second World War began, the Museum *celebrated* its 59th birthday under the leadership of Vladimir Tkalčić. The idea of what the future of the Museum would look like probably did not include war or the significant political, social and cultural changes that would occur at the federal and national levels and that would affect a large part of the country's population when the world war ended. Given the position of a state institution with a large area, number of collections and employees, the Museum of Arts and

Crafts and its employees could not separate themselves in their activities from the socio-political dictates of the time.

At the heart of this paper is an attempt to evaluate the work of the employees of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in the post-war period,¹ that is, in the first years immediately after World War II, in the context of the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities (KOMZA).²

POLITICAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PERIOD: TWO DECISIONS

“One of the essential components of the overall changes that took place in Croatia, as part of the Yugoslav state union, after the end of the war from 1941 to 1945, was the creation of new ownership relations. The focus then became state ownership. It has its roots in the events of the war, and the legal regulations adopted immediately after the war mostly constituted the final stage of the process of changing ownership relations. Admittedly, during the war the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, as the dominant political force in the national liberation struggle, did not emphasize slogans about changing ownership relations. But it did implement them in practical action.”³

The processes that took place in Croatia, as a federal unit of the former state, in the post-war period, related to the issue of ownership and its changes, were complex, and their indirect and/or direct *repercussions* persist.

Over time the state⁴ (meaning the state of Yugoslavia), gradually became the primary owner of previously private property. However, the changes in ownership rela-

tions that occurred in the post-war period cannot be analysed without establishing links with the processes that began during the war, as well as with certain political bodies that participated in them and had an imperative function in the former state. Therefore, certain normative acts adopted in the former state are indispensable elements in the analysis of the political-social and cultural *puzzle* whose formation began during the war. Although the number of federal acts adopted during 1944, 1945 and later years was greater,⁵ key documents that related to the cultural field and had political, legal, social, and cultural *gravity* must be mentioned.⁶ These are the *Decision on the Transfer of Enemy Property to State Ownership, on State Administration of the Property of Persons Who Have Fled or Been Forcibly Taken Away and on the Sequestration of Property Forcibly Alienated by the Occupying Authorities*,⁷ and the *Decision on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities*.⁸ At the same time, the most important political bodies of that time,⁹ referential for the federal level and consequently for the adoption of these normative acts, were the Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ)¹⁰ and the National Committee of the Liberation of Yugoslavia (NKOJ)¹¹.

The former, the *Decision on the Transfer of Enemy Property to State Ownership, on State Administration of the Property of Persons Who Have Fled or Been Forcibly Taken Away and on the Sequestration of Property Forcibly Alienated by the Occupying Authorities* is the one that determined what falls under state property and becomes state property,¹² and "the concept

of property is defined in the broadest possible way in that decision, so as not to leave out any form of ownership."¹³

The latter, the *Decision on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities*, was composed of six articles, the most basic of which was the first article, which listed everything that the former state would protect: "All artistic and scientific objects: buildings of historical and artistic significance, public monuments, busts, paintings, libraries and archives of state and former self-governing institutions, scientific collections, museums and the like shall be placed under state protection [...]. The administration of the objects listed in paragraph one of this article shall be taken over by the educational authorities of individual federal units."

When it comes to the federal level, i.e., the acts that were passed in the territory of the then called People's Republic of Croatia, and are relevant to the topic, these were: *Decision on the Establishment of the Commission for Ascertaining War Damage Inflicted by Occupying Forces on Cultural and Historical Objects and Natural Landmarks of the Federal Republic of Croatia and Their Return to the Country* (1945), the *Decision on the Education of the Commission for the Collection and Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities Alienated in the Former Independent State of Croatia* (1945)¹⁴ (Fig. 1) and the *Act on the Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Natural Rarities* (1949). The political body that was relevant for Croatia as a federal unit is the National Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Croatia (ZAVNOH).¹⁵

The two decisions are just some of the acts passed from at a time that had complex issues, and the role that AVNOJ and NKOJ played in their adoption was decisive. All these elements of the political-legal and social-cultural narrative permanently influenced the change in the ownership status of the population of the then called Federal Croatia, i.e., the People's Republic of Croatia.¹⁶

LAND ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL GOODS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND NATIONAL PROPERTY DEPARTMENTS

Land Administration of National Goods of the People's Republic of Croatia (ZUND) was a body created based on the decision of the Presidency of ZAVNOH of January 29, 1945, and the official date of the body's creation was March 22, 1945.¹⁷ Zagreb, the capital of the federal unit of Croatia, was chosen as the seat of the body.

According to the regulations on the organisation of the body,¹⁸ "ZUND Croatia is an organ of the State Administration of National Goods of the Federal Yugoslavia and operates within the framework of the AVNOJ Decision of 21 November 1944,"¹⁹ which means that, although the body was established for the needs of regional work and activities in Croatia, ZUND NRH was under the jurisdiction of the former state²⁰ and protected its interests.²¹ The following is relevant: "ZUND also retained under its administration those goods that, due to their purpose, did not pass under the professional management and administration of individual professional ministries, or authorities and institutions (cash, valuables, various movables, etc.) and

could sell or lease them based on existing regulations."²²

The following year, the *Decision on the Establishment of the Department for National Property* at the Presidency of the Government of the Republic of Croatia²³ and the national committees²⁴ followed, and on the liquidation of the ZUND of the Republic of Croatia on 1 March 1946, which actually meant that the termination of its work did not result in the termination of the function that the body itself had.²⁵ Property (here referring only to the segment of cultural and artistic objects and antiquities and objects of artistic crafts) that had been owned by private individuals became state property through further methods and procedures at different *paces*.

How did the *Decision on the Establishment of the Department of National Property* affect the Museum of Arts and Crafts and its employees?²⁶ The decision meant a continuation of the process of maintaining authority over private property that had begun with the ZUND NRH, i.e., the City Administration of National Property (GUND) of the City of Zagreb, which meant that political and socio-cultural institutions and bodies of the federal unit were in varying proportions *responsible* for implementing command, operational and other segments of post-war policy: the Presidency of the Government of the People's Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of Croatia for the entire unit, and the City People's Committee for Zagreb. In this *organisation*, the *position* of the Museum of Arts and Crafts and its employees played was central.²⁷

ABOUT THE COMMISSION FOR GATHERING AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL MONUMENTS AND ANTIQUITIES ALIENATED IN THE FORMER NDH AND THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS: THE BEGINNING

The *Decision on the Education of the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities Alienated in the Former Independent State of Croatia*²⁸ is one of the acts that were created in the final year of the World War II and were related to Croatia. The decision was made by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of Croatia on June 1, 1945, less than a month after the German capitulation, and was to come into force on the "day of nationalisation"; at the same time, the same body was competent and in charge of the Commission throughout its work.

The museum took note of the *Decision on the Education* of the Ministry of Education on June 3 of the same year, and its official establishment took place at the end of the same month, on June 28, 1945, while its independent constitution occurred the following February in 1946.²⁹

Although the Commission was territorially and constitutionally connected to the federal unit of Croatia, the decision to create it was an integral element of a broader, federal picture; the establishment of the Commission was, among other things, connected to the NKOJ. The *Decision on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities*, which had been adopted a few months earlier by the same political body of the former state, was, in fact, the decision

to establish the Commission. Also, the *Act on the Gathering, Preservation, and Distribution of Books and Other Cultural, Educational and Art Objects that Became Government Property According to the Resolution of the Antifascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia*³⁰ bears mentioning as the next stage of legislation regarding the protection of cultural monuments, this time in the form of a law, whose adoption placed the *Decision on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities* out of function.

According to the source from the Museum, from early June 1945, the Commission's inspection included "public, self-governing and private buildings, already taken over by the people's military and civil authorities of federal Croatia, premises in which enemies of the people lived, warehouses and collection points for materials of the Commission for Confiscation, and repositories of stored cultural monuments and antiquities in state and self-governing institutions."³¹

The Commission was to take over for the state institutions "objects of museum, archival or library value, for which private ownership with all rights of possession cannot be proven [...]. For objects that remain in private possession, the Commission is obliged to determine their condition, take all protective measures for their preservation, make an inventory of them, and submit it to the Department of Culture and Arts, Ministry of Education of the People's Government of Croatia."³² Various institutions were included in the work of the Commission – museums, archives, libraries, music schools, institutes, etc. The structure of the institutions³³ that were its integral part was divided into two

basic segments according to geographical criteria: the city of Zagreb³⁴ and the province.³⁵

In addition to the names and surnames of the Commission members, in most cases the position or professional title, ID number and date were listed (it is assumed that this marked the beginning of work in the Commission, AN). Although this data structure was not consistently implemented for all members, we can read the member's names and how many people were involved at the level of the Federal State of Croatia, subsequently the People's Republic of Croatia.³⁶

The Museum of Arts and Crafts, given the institution's long-standing location in the centre of the Croatian capital, belonged to the first group, the city of Zagreb. There were nine museum employees³⁷ who participated as members of the Commission, which was by far the largest number of personnel of all institutions that the Ministry of Education included in the work and activities of the Commission. However, the fact that the Museum of Arts and Crafts was the largest state museum of the Independent State of Croatia, and consequently of the Federal State of Croatia, could explain the inclusion of its nine employees, given that this number was not small even in relation to the number of all Museum employees (i.e. not only professional ones) who worked in the institution after the war.³⁸

At the same time, given the number and the fact that the National Collection Centre, which was founded the following year (1946),³⁹ had its headquarters in the Museum premises, a certain equalisation of the activities of the Museum of Arts and Crafts with the work of the Commission is not unexpected.

Also, what *can be read* from a review of early documents is the simultaneous use of the names of the Museum and the Commission, that is, the mention of both bodies on the same document. Accordingly, as today's analysis of official memos leads to certain ambiguities in terms of who sent them and why, at the time of their writing there may have been an *overlap* of jurisdiction and/or work. Thus, it was the case that Vladimir Tkalčić, as the director of the Museum, was the signatory of memos that were obviously related to the Commission in terms of content, especially during 1945.⁴⁰ Instead of exclusively mentioning the position of the president of the Commission, the position of director was used. Such situations were repeated several times, with the exception that during the later period of the Commission's work, a reversal occurred: Vladimir Tkalčić, as the President of the Commission, asked the head (in the specific case, it was the head of the District Collection Centre in Varaždin) to be generally more *careful* in managing the administration of the Centre, i.e. in his signature on official (AN) documents, for the sake of its "proper functioning."⁴¹ He also insisted on accurate documentation of the cases kept by the District Collection Centre (i.e. its head) so that it would be clear what was included in it and what the Centre was actually responsible for, thus trying to minimise arbitrariness in the listing (Fig. 2).⁴²

Each list of the Commission had the members who participated in the listing and moving of materials and objects named at the end, however, apart from the form, previous research has not identified any instructions on how to compose the content of the memo. This leads to the assumption

that the co-signatories of each document/list were also jointly responsible for its entire content. What role the Commission's president Vladimir Tkalčić played in creating the content of the documents/lists remains to be determined.

QUESTION OF COMPETENCE AND COORDINATION: ZUND, GUND, GNO

When the Commission was established at the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of Croatia during June 1945, its duties became standardised.⁴³ The bodies involved in the processes of listing and moving objects and cultural monuments, most often by private individuals, included Land Administration of National Goods of the People's Republic of Croatia, the City Administration of National Goods, and later the City People's Committee (GNO) in Zagreb.

According to sources, the Commission and the Museum staff involved in its work most often received the addresses of private individuals from ZUND/GUND (later GNO).⁴⁴ At the same time, ZUND was the body that most often *approved* the transfer of objects to the Museum of Arts and Crafts, i.e., to the National Collection Centre of the Commission, which was located at the same address.

However, ZUND also had a different practice of dealing with objects taken over from private individuals: "After that, the president [Vladimir Tkalčić] notes the difficulties in the work of the Commission, the biggest obstacle being that the Commission and GUND or ZUND have not coordinated their work to date. He also explains the position of ZUND or GUND, which implies that the members

of the Commission are either completely or incorrectly informed when working in the field, and moreover, they do not have the possibility of direct protective intervention. While for ZUND or GUND this is a question of legal norms, previous practice has shown that due to the attachment of the members of the Commission, objects within its competence have either been lost or destroyed [...]"⁴⁵

Also, ZUND needed cooperation with the Commission "because the members of the Commission can also evaluate those antique and artistic objects that are left to ZUND for objective reasons, and since it sells them, it is understandable that in the case of unprofessional appraisals, national property is lost [...]"

The issue of jurisdiction remained relevant even in 1947, when the Ministry of Education sent protest memos related to the passing of the scope of work of the already active City People's Liberation Committee. Laws, decisions and regulations are sent in connection with the issue of competence of the work of the Ministry of Education, i.e., the Commission, in terms of improving mutual communication and more proper work, with the fact that the Ministry even proposes a complete audit of the work of GUND to see how the body functioned (Figs. 3a and 3b).⁴⁶

POZNANOVEC, BEŽANEC, LEPOGLAVA: BETWEEN POLITICS, PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND ART

The work of the employees of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in the context of the Commission is recorded in the sources, i.e., in the Commission's archival fonds, and currently kept in the Croatian State

Archives and the archival materials of the Museum itself.⁴⁷

Given the scope of the sources, two different cases of museum staff work were selected as examples of practice.

The Poznanovec and Bežanec castles in Hrvatsko Zagorje were converted into homes for abandoned children after World War II, which means that their purpose changed significantly. The Commission toured that part of the country in October 1945 and, after visiting the sites, reported to the Ministry of Education that they had “transported antiquities from the castles in Belec, Zaježda, Bežanec and Poznanovec to Trakošćan,” however, due to technical problems, four antique stoves were not. The report signed by Vladimir Tkalčić states that “both technically and artistically the thing is at such a high level that it should definitely be preserved.”⁴⁸

However, the premises where the stoves were located⁴⁹ already housed children in numbers that greatly exceeded the housing reality and capacity, while the situation was further aggravated by the coming winter. Without going into the conditions in which the beneficiaries of the children’s home lived, it is obvious from the memo that the old-fashioned stoves were not suitable for the new functions that the castles were given.

At the same time, it is likely that the stoves of both castles, which were supposed to maintain the heat of entire spaces, were already in such a condition “that they would certainly be damaged with the necessary rearrangements and adaptations to a modern method of circulation, and with further use, they would completely burn out and crumble.”

Vladimir Tkalčić proposes a solution to the entire situation and states the estimat-

ed amount⁵⁰ that would be needed to replace the existing stoves with new ones for heating the space in the children’s home. However, the entire process goes beyond the scope of the Commission’s work, given that Tkalčić involved not only the competent Ministry of Education, but also the Construction Department of the Ministry of Social Policy, which was conducting an expert review of the functionality of the stoves: “[...] these stoves could be adapted for modern circulation for the time being, but due to their old-fashioned construction, they do not correspond to the volume of the space they are supposed to heat, and can only continue to serve a practical purpose with significant modifications and high fuel consumption.”

The entire communication with the competent authority ends in a way that also shows a certain social aspect of the entire procedure (Fig. 4): “The Construction Department of the Ministry of Social Policy is willing to transport the new stoves from Krapina to the installation site at its own expense if the Ministry of Education could, in the interest of preserving these rare stoves, provide 15,000 for the purchase of new ones, either from a loan from the Ministry of Education or by advocating for this matter with the Ministry of Social Policy. The undersigned management asks the competent authority to take the necessary steps as soon as possible, because due to the imminent onset of winter, the issue of stoves in children’s homes must be resolved.”⁵¹

In the case of the parish church in Lepoglava, this is an object of a different nature. The Commission was on site in 1945 and, following a decision, took over three objects for storage in the Museum: “The undersigned management informs You

that during the stay of the Commission for the Gathering and Protection of Artistic, Cultural and Historical Monuments in Lepoglava, it took over several objects from the church itself for storage in the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb, due to the fact that they were so damaged and unprotected that they had to be stored in a safe place until further notice.”⁵²

The objects were returned⁵³ to the parish church in early 1949, after the protective work⁵⁴ carried out on them by the museum’s conservators/restorers had been completed.

However, the correspondence related to the topic clearly shows the overlap and involvement of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in the work of the Commission: both correspondences bear the museum stamp on their letterhead and are signed by the museum director, which means that the issue of involving employees in heritage issues outside of their assigned roles as members of the Commission had not been resolved even in 1949.

CONCLUSION

Since this was an extremely complex time that brought issues the clarification of which required research into a large volume of archival material, this paper attempted to draw attention to the challenges of the post-war period and the position of the employees of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in the context of the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities. The Commission established immediately after the World War II was created based on the *Decision on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities* issued by the NKOJ. Its

functions were standardised, subject to the socio-political dictates of the time and directed towards cultural monuments, antiquities, and heritage items in several ways, mainly inventory, most often owned by private individuals.

Although it was created by a federal political body, it operated at the federal level with the help of employees from the cultural ranks of Zagreb and the province from 1945 to 1950.

The President of the Commission was Vladimir Tkalčić, who also served as the director of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb, an institution which officially housed both the Commission and the National Collection Centre, while the museum employees were members of the Commission. This sometimes made it difficult for the director and employees of the Museum of Arts and Crafts to function due to the overlapping scope of museum work and the formative competences of various institutions and bodies.

Also, the functioning of the employees of the Museum of Arts and Crafts within such politically controlled conditions, in which knowledge of the rules of the museum profession, concern for national heritage and professional ethics had only secondary value, was demanding.

Precisely because of the characteristics of the Commission’s work and activities in the post-war period, at the same time emphasized by the perspective of museum workers, attempts at a relevant description represent a real difficulty.

In describing the cultural situation in which Croatia found itself after 1945, one can generally use *Promemoria – situation and understanding of the needs of the museum and conservation sector*,⁵⁵ written in 1947 from the perspective of

conservation by Zdenka Munk, later director of the Museum of Arts and Crafts. The museological issue of that time was formulated at the Department of Museums of the Ministry of Education as follows: “At the end of the war and after liberation, and especially during the request for the restitution of objects taken from the occupiers, we found ourselves in a situation where we knew what was left in individual museums or collections, but without basic lists or inventories of these monuments, these collections or individual monuments, which were also located in smaller museums themselves, we do not know what was taken from us. Although we can determine the group of objects taken away, we cannot identify them abroad and prove that they are ours, because we lack a basic description / material, size, shape and especially a photograph or a drawn document [...]”

In conclusion, the work of the employees of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in the post-war period was conditioned by a strategy intertwined with federal-level politics, which excluded the possibility for professionalism. Individual examples could not be numerous due to the same circumstances, therefore, in some future cultural vision, the possibility that includes the activities of heritage institutions, without restrictions on external elements but with care for heritage, is welcome.

NOTES

¹ The approximate period covered by this paper is from November 1944 to December 1947.

² Hereinafter, except in citation and titles: Commission.

³ Marijan Maticka, “Zakonski propisi o vlasničkim odnosima u Jugoslaviji (1944 – 1948),”

Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta Zagreb 25, no. 1 (1992): 123, <https://hr-cak.srce.hr/file/78319> (accessed October 21, 2024).

⁴ “The goal of nationalisation and sequestration of property was to ensure ‘maximum utilisation of that property for planned production in order to achieve victory in the war of liberation as quickly and successfully as possible and to create conditions for the successful economic reconstruction and development of Yugoslavia as a whole and all its federal units.’ With the transfer of property to state ownership, the right of disposal of the previous owners ceased.” *Ibid.*, 126–127.

⁵ During 1945 and 1946, the following acts were passed in the former Yugoslavia: *Act on the Gathering, Preservation, and Distribution of Books and Other Cultural, Educational and Art Objects that Became Government Property According to the Resolution of the Antifascist Council of the People’s Liberation of Yugoslavia* (1945), *Act on the Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Natural Rarities of the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia* (1945) and *Basic Act on the Protection of Cultural Monuments and Natural Rarities* (1946). More in: Naida-Michal Brandl, *Oduzimanje židovske imovine u Hrvatskoj: Zagreb kao studija slučaja* (Zagreb: Leykam international, 2022), 97.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁷ The *Decision* was passed by the Antifascist Council of the People’s Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) on November 21, 1944. *Ibid.*, 67.

⁸ The *Decision* was passed by the National Committee of the People’s Liberation of Yugoslavia (NKOJ) on February 20, 1945. More in: Martina Juranović Tonejc, *Institucionalni razvoj zaštite pokretne umjetničke baštine u Hrvatskoj od 1850. do 1990. godine* (Zagreb: Ministarstvo kulture i medija Republike Hrvatske, 2021), 251.

⁹ After the war “these regulations are then supplemented by regulations and laws that were adopted after the end of the war in the Provisional National Assembly of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia, or after the adoption of the Constitution of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia in the National Assembly. Since these regulations had general validity for the entire territory of Yugoslavia, the legislative bodies of the Federal Croatia, or the People’s Republic of Croatia, generally did not

pass regulations in this area at that time.” Maticka, “Zakonski propisi,” 125.

¹⁰ Generally regarding AVNOJ see: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013–2024), s. v. “AVNOJ,” <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/avnoj> (accessed October 14, 2024).

¹¹ Generally regarding NKOJ see: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013–2024), s. v. “Nacionalni komitet oslobođenja Jugoslavije,” <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/nacionalni-komitet-oslobodjenja-jugoslavije> (accessed October 14, 2024).

¹² “Property, within the meaning of the Decision, is considered to include immovable property, movable property, land holdings, houses, furniture, forests, mining rights, enterprises with all their companies, associations of all kinds, funds, rights of use, various means of payment, claims, participation in companies and businesses, copyrights, industrial property rights.” Tomislav Anić, “Normativni okvir podržavljenja imovine u Hrvatskoj/ Jugoslaviji 1944.-1946.,” *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 39, no. 1 (2007): 34, <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/24485> (accessed January 10, 2024).

¹³ More in: Iva Pasini Tržec, “Osnutak, organizacijski ustroj i djelovanje Komisije za sakupljanje i očuvanje starinskih spomenika i starina,” *Peristil* 62 (2019): 124, <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/347708> (accessed October 21, 2024).

¹⁴ The first name that exists in the archival sources of the Museum of Arts and Crafts is used here. It is the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities that will be inextricably linked to the *Decision on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities*. More on this below.

¹⁵ About ZAVNOH see: *Hrvatska enciklopedija, mrežno izdanje* (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013–2024), s. v. “Zemaljsko antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Hrvatske,” <https://www.enciklopedija.hr/clanak/zemaljsko-antifasisticko-vijece-narodnog-oslobodjenja-hrvatske> (accessed October 14, 2024).

¹⁶ Due to the large scope of legislation passed from the end of 1944 onwards at the state (Yugoslavia) and federal levels (Croatia), emphasis is placed here

only on those acts that were necessary to address the topic.

¹⁷ “The Land Administration of National Goods was established by an unpublished decision of the Commission for Industry of the Presidency of ZAVNOH dated March 22, 1945 [...]” Ivanka Magić, *Zemaljska uprava narodnih dobara Narodne Republike Hrvatske: 1945-1946.: sumarni inventar* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2008), 7, http://arhinet.arhiv.hr/_Pages/PdfFile.aspx?Id=4829 (accessed October 1, 2024).

¹⁸ The rulebook on the organisation of the Land Administration of Croatian National Assets was adopted on the same day that ZUND was founded. *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 7–8.

²⁰ “The Land Administration of National Goods was subordinate to the Commissioner of Industry of Federal Croatia, to whom it submitted monthly reports in two copies. The Commissioner kept one report for himself, while the other was delivered to DUND.” *Ibid.*, 9.

²¹ “The Land Administration was responsible for protecting the property and legal interests of the state, recording and legally enclosing property,” and an important function was also “keeping records of all property that, in the territory of Federal Croatia, was transferred to state ownership or state administration by the aforementioned AVNOJ decision.” *Ibid.*, 8.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ “At the Presidency of the Government of the People’s Republic of Croatia, the Department for National Property is established. The competence of that department includes, a) coordinating the work of the Department for National Property at the People’s Committees in terms of legal inclusion, property-legal protection and records of national property, b) keeping central records on property included on the basis of the Decision of AVNOJ dated 21. XI 1944, c) liquidation of unfinished business of the Land Administration of National Property and its regional bodies that cannot be transferred to the Departments for National Property at the People’s Committees or to the professional bodies listed in point 5.” MUO Archives, Central record, no. 258-1946.

²⁴ “On March 1, 1946, the activities of the Land Administration of National Goods of the Republic of Croatia and its regional bodies, the District and City Administrations of National Goods, ceased. 2. The previous operations of the Land Administration of National Goods and the District and City Administrations of National Goods shall be transferred to the bodies specified in points 3, 4, and 5. 3. A Department for National Goods shall be established within the Regional People’s Committee for Dalmatia, the City People’s Committee in Zagreb, and all District People’s Committees, headed by a member of the executive board [...].

The competence of these bodies shall include, a) legal coverage of property falling under the AVNOJ Decision of 21 November 1944, b) property-legal protection of property covered based on the AVNOJ Decision of 21 November 1944, c) records of property covered on the basis of the AVNOJ Decision of 21 November 1944.” MUO Archives, Central record, no. 258-1946.

²⁵ One of the few documents found so far in the museum archives mentions ZUND after the time when the body ceased its official work and activities. An analysis of whether this is colloquial usage or not is beyond the scope of this paper.

²⁶ “The business management, administration, utilisation and, if necessary, liquidation of the property are carried out, according to their economic significance, by the same competent professional ministries, professional departments of the People’s Committees and the institutions listed below: [...] k) books, archival and museum objects, artistic paintings and busts, scientific collections, musical instruments and all other objects of historical, artistic and scientific importance by the Ministry of Education, or rather, the District Collection Centres for the collection of the aforementioned objects.” MUO Archives, Central record, no. 258-1946.

²⁷ By the time of the *Decision*, the members of the Commission, including the Museum’s employees, had objections to their work: “It is further noted that the Commission has recently been more concerned with protecting collections or apartments, and less with collecting and protecting cultural and historical objects that are exposed to decay. It is necessary, first and foremost, to collect and protect cultural and historical objects that become state property or fall under sequestration and under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.” Croa-

tian State Archives, 2117 fonds, Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities (hereinafter: HR-HDA-2117), no. 61-1945, “Komisiji za sakupljanje i zaštićivanje kulturnih spomenika i starina – podjela rada.”

²⁸ The first name found in the archival documents of the Museum of Arts and Crafts at the beginning and then during the month of June 1945 is the *Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities Alienated in the Former Independent State of Croatia*. These are documents generally related to the Museum’s communication with the Commission. The name that was probably most often used was the *Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities*, with the acronym KOMZA. However, it is also possible to find names such as: *Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural and Historical Monuments and Antiquities*, *Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural and Historical Monuments and Antiquities in Zagreb and the Province*, *Commission for Gathering and Protection of Artistic and Cultural and Historical Monuments*, etc. For more on the first name, see: MUO Archives, Central record, no. 14-1945. Also, for differences in the Commission names, see: Pasini Tržec, “Osnutak,” 134.

²⁹ “By order of the Ministry of Education no. 3867/45. on June 28, 1945, the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities was established at the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of Croatia [...]. Since the said Commission has not been constituted independently to date, and on the proposal of the Department for Culture and Art of this Ministry, I order that the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural-Historical Monuments and Antiquities under the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of Croatia be constituted as follows: Working Committee of the Commission [...] and the Supervisory and Management Board [...]” HR-HDA-2117, no. 77-1946, “Naredba o konstituiranju KOMZE.”

³⁰ Juranović Tonejc, *Institucionalni razvoj*, 253.

³¹ MUO Archives, Central record, no. 14-1945.

³² A comparative analysis of the content of the *Decision on the Establishment of the Commission* of 1 June 1945 and document no. 76-1945 from the fonds of the Commission for Gathering and

Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities reveals a difference in the name and functions of the Commission: “The Commission began work on 5 June 1945, and its work was focused on four directions: a/ taking over those cultural, historical and artistic objects and monuments that were in danger of direct destruction or disappearance; b/ listing objects that fall within the competence of the Commission and that are legally in the possession of the ZUND, with the provision that they are handed over for safekeeping to the Commission upon approval by the ZUND; c/ listing objects that fall within the competence of the Commission and are the rightful property of private collectors and individuals; d/ taking over library materials by the librarian members of this Commission and storing them in the University Library.” HR-HDA-2117, no. 76-1945, “Izvještaj o dosadašnjem radu.”

³³ More in: HR-HDA-2117, no. 147-1947, “Popis članova Komisije.”

³⁴ From the city of Zagreb, in addition to the Museum of Arts and Crafts, employees of ten other institutions participated in the work of the Commission, such as: the Archaeological Museum, the Ethnographic Museum, the City Museum (it is assumed that until 1945 this was the name of the Zagreb City Museum, AN), the City Gypsotheca (in 1945 this was the name of today’s Glyptothèque of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts), the Conservation Institute (today’s Croatian Conservation Institute), the State Conservatory (today’s Academy of Music), etc.

³⁵ The province referred to the cities of: Osijek, Slavenska Požega, Slavonski Brod, Đakovo, Varaždin and Sušak. HR-HDA-2117, no. 147-1947, “Popis članova Komisije.”

³⁶ The content of this paper is limited only to the territory of the present-day Republic of Croatia.

³⁷ Among the nine employees of the Museum, there were seven professional employees – five curators and two librarians: Vladimir Tkalčić, director of the Museum of Arts and Crafts and president of the Commission; Ivan Bach, curator; Zdenko Vojnović, librarian; Olga Klobučar, curator; Vanda Pavelić, curator; Vesna Jiroušek, curator; Greta Šurina, librarian. In addition, Predrag Grdenić, secretary of the Museum of Arts and Crafts, and Ivana Vrbanić, secretary of the Commission were

also included. Verena Han was also present at the beginning, although she was not later listed in the complete list from 1947.

³⁸ According to the *Statement of the staff of the Croatian National Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb* from 7 June 1945, a total of 21 people were employed at the Museum. Interestingly, according to the *Statement*, only two of the Museum’s volunteers at the time are listed as members of the Commission, Verena Han and Predrag Grdenić.

³⁹ “By order of the Minister of Education no. 30080/45 of 27 November 1945, the above Commission took over the duties of the National Collection Centre in accordance with the ‘Instructions for the Establishment and Operation of Collection Centres’ of 31 July 1945.” HR-HDA-2117, no. 77-1946, “Naredba o konstituiranju KOMZE.”

⁴⁰ The following memo was taken as a case example: “This is to confirm that this museum has received from the Ministry of Education, Department of Culture and Arts 90 pieces of ‘Opening strictly prohibited’ stickers for use by individual teams of the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities, Alienated in the Former Independent State of Croatia. For the Commission, Director, Vladimir Tkalčić.” Also, the current name of the Commission is still visible on the document – the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities, Alienated in the Former Independent State of Croatia. More about this in: MUO Archives, Central record, no. 27-1945.

⁴¹ The document header related to the delivery of the furnace from the Poznanovec castle in Hrvatsko Zagorje contains the name of the Museum of Arts and Crafts instead of the name of the Commission, while Vladimir Tkalčić is signed as its director. That such a practice was evidently present for a certain period is shown by a memo from 1947: “For the proper functioning of the District Collection Centre, it is necessary to manage its administration separately if possible, and if that is not feasible, at least at the end of the memo, when signing, to indicate not the director of the museum, but the manager of the District Collection Centre.” HR-HDA-2117, no. 202-1947, “Rukovanje kulturno-historijskim predmetima,” MUO Archives, Central record, no. 370-1945.

⁴² “However, regarding the list of items made by this National Collection Centre, you are hereby informed that it is urgently necessary for you to submit here as soon as possible a list of the items you have taken over, regardless of whether they were listed by us or not [...]” HR-HDA-2117, no. 202-1947, “Rukovanje kulturno-historijskim predmetima.”

⁴³ More about what the Commission did during the first months of its operation in: Pasini Tržec, “Osnutak,” 126–128.

⁴⁴ “[...] Comrade Jiroušek will continue to report addresses from ZUND to the Commission every morning, and the secretary will assign individual members according to their capabilities [...]” MUO Archives, Central record, “Zapisnik sjednice KOMZE,” March 16, 1946.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ “1) that you regularly provide us, or the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Monuments and Antiquities, with addresses immediately upon receipt of the decision on the confiscation of property, so that we can simultaneously send our experts with your Commission to extract objects of cultural and historical significance for further proceedings; 2) that, given Gund’s previous operations, a successive revision of all cases resolved so far be carried out, based on which the earlier allocation of cultural and historical objects could be determined.” HR-HDA-2117, no. 182-1947, “Zakon i upute za zaštitu spomenika kulture i prirodnih rijetkosti – dostava.”

⁴⁷ It is important to note here that this is not the Commission’s material, but rather that which accompanied the work and activities of the Museum of Arts and Crafts. The Museum possesses an exceptionally small opus of documents related to the Commission.

⁴⁸ MUO Archives, Central record, no. 370-1945.

⁴⁹ According to an archival source from the Museum, it is evident that the content of the document refers to both castles in Hrvatsko Zagorje, Poznanovec and Bežanec.

⁵⁰ “For the sum of 15,000 dinars, all four furnaces (1 in Poznanovac and 3 in Bežanec) could be replaced with new furnaces.” MUO Archives, Central record, no. 370-1945.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² MUO Archives, Central record, no. 286-1945.

⁵³ “In connection with our memo no. 286/1945, dated October 2, 1945, You are informed that the objects have been taken over by the Commission for Gathering and Protection of Cultural Monuments and Antiquities, and for the management of this museum, the objects will now be safer if your representative personally takes them over, Therefore, we ask you to please choose one of your trusted people to take them over during their stay in Zagreb.” MUO Archives, Central record, no. 26-1949.

⁵⁴ It is assumed that the work undertaken was of a conservation or conservation-restoration nature.

⁵⁵ MUO Archives, Central record, document without a number, June 13, 1947.

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MUZEJ ZA UMJETNOST I OBRT I NJEGOVI DJELATNICI U PORATNOM VREMENU: IZMEĐU POLITIKE, PROFESIONALNE ETIKE I UMJETNOSTI

Osnovna je funkcija ovog teksta pokušaj prikaza načina na koji su u složenim društveno-političko-sociološkim i kulturnim uvjetima koji su nastupili u Hrvatskoj nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata kao dijelu bivše Jugoslavije radili i djelovali stručni djelatnici Muzeja za umjetnost i obrt.

Naglasak će biti stavljen na procese funkcioniranja u koje su bili uključeni stručni djelatnici Muzeja za umjetnost i obrt u kontekstu Komisije za sakupljanje i očuvanje kulturnih spomenika i starina (KOMZA-e), osnovane tijekom lipnja 1945. godine, dok će cjelokupan opseg teksta biti zaključen s 1947. godinom.