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Museums as Landscape Activists

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Museums as Landscape Activists

The article discusses the issue of the “extended museum”, raising questions about how museums become active actors in current topical discussions on the shape of cities, what their role is in the processes of city management and how this engagement in external spaces affects the overall mission of museums. The point of reference is the ICOM Resolution on the responsibility of museums towards landscape adopted in 2016, which offered museums legitimacy in taking actions with regard to their environment, beyond museum walls. On the grounds of four case studies of Polish museums I present strategies whereby relations between the museum, authorities and communities are negotiated (regarding the protection of post-industrial and Second World War heritage, the contextualisation of socialist heritage and the struggle for greenery).

Keywords: extended museum, museum activism, landscape, ICOM Resolution

Many authors argue that museums have the potential to change the world¹ and that they should take advantage of their position and start acting. Robert R. Janes and Richard Sandell sadly conclude that “Raising museum voices in opposition to anything is traditionally out of character”.² Regardless the type, an increasing number of museums follow the example of city activists – sometimes having them on board as staff members – speak up and go into action. Museum activism refers to various issues of social justice; however, it may also be directed at the physical presence of museums in the landscape. It regards a museum that is not only confined to its walls, but also a museum in the environment where the museum building is part of the visual landscape of the city or nature. In such case the museum becomes an actor – just as any other resident of a city – with the right to voice one’s concern about the value of the area, both for the common good and its own benefit. The article discusses the issue of the “extended museum” which finds itself in a position to safeguard its landscape. The point of reference is the ICOM Resolution on the responsibility of museums towards landscape adopted in 2016. It gave museums legitimacy in voicing their concerns and taking actions. On the grounds of four case studies of Polish museums I present various strategies

¹ In the most recent volume edited by Adele Chynoweth, Bernadette Lynch, Klaus Petersen and Sarah Smed the authors argue for the “useful museum”. See CHYNOWETH, Adele, LYNCH, Bernadette, PETERSEN, Klaus and SMED, Sarah (eds). *Museums and Social Change: challenging the unhelpful museum*. New York: Routledge, 2020.

² JANES, Robert S. and SANDELL, Richard. Posterity has arrived: The necessary emergence of museum activism. In: Robert S. Janes and Richard Sandell (eds). *Museum Activism*. London & New York: Routledge, 2019, p. 18.

whereby relations between the museum, authorities and communities are negotiated. My aim is to discuss how museums become active actors in current topical discussions on the cityscape, what their role is in the processes of city management and how this engagement in external spaces affects the overall mission of museums. My position is that the changing paradigm of museums, which is reflected in new roles and responsibilities that museums have taken on in recent decades, is interconnected with a proactive philosophy towards diverse societal issues. Thus museums shaping new paths are attracted by this activist model.

Museum activism as a way to stay relevant

In 2019 Janes and Sandell edited a major volume titled *Museum Activism*, which is a direct call to action for museums. The authors articulate that museums need a new narrative that will “embrace many issues and many stories, including reducing wealth inequality, protecting Indigenous people’s rights, curbing population growth, eliminating the use of fossil fuels, reversing the loss of biodiversity and eliminating wasteful consumption”.³ These points belong to the domain of social justice, well-being and ecology, and are all as timely and topical as ever. However, museum activism also embraces areas of urban planning, architecture and heritage, which should by no means be less important in the management of cities. Janes and Sandell voice “a need for a new breed of museum workers and museums, grounded in the consciousness of the world around them, along with the need to work in a less museum-centred way”.⁴ I will address this call, referring to the physical space around museums and their care for cultural heritage, the natural environment and social/community life.

Museums as active agents of change are not a new phenomenon. The impact of museums on well-being, health and the development of social capital have already been studied in the late 1990s. In 2013 the Museum Association in the UK launched a campaign entitled Museums Change Lives which endeavoured to increase the social impact of museums. Museums address various social and political issues – for example climate change, ecology, crime issues, migration and health problems – by discussing them in exhibitions and public programmes, and working specifically with certain groups and communities.

Often, when delicate or controversial social and political agendas are in question and when an activist stance is considered, the role of a museum as a “safe place” returns. Should a museum get involved? Is there more to gain or more to lose? Maria Vlachou explicitly says that to be relevant for the twenty-first century, museums should not be

safe, anodyne or comfortable but rather clear about their mission, the reason why they exist, and capable of creating the appropriate space for an honest dialogue; one that might help societies become more willing to listen, without fear and perhaps also with greater empathy.⁵

Concerns and limitations that often result from the funding and organisational structure may lead to an illusionary form of activism. In the majority of cases (at least in Poland, where museum directors are dependent on state, regional or municipal governments) it is rhetorical to ask whether a museum can criticise the policy of the local government which provides its funding and organisational structure. Bernadette Lynch differentiates between performative

³ JANES and SANDELL, *Posterity has arrived...*, p. 7.

⁴ JANES and SANDELL, *Posterity has arrived...*, p. 17.

⁵ VLACHOU, Maria. Dividing issues and mission-driven activism: Museum responses to migration policies and the refugee crisis. In: Robert S. Janes and Richard Sandell (eds). *Museum Activism*. London & New York: Routledge, 2019, p. 54.

and operational activism, where the former is just for “show”, while the latter means “working in collaboration with people to *do* something”.⁶ Not every museum director, in any case, under any circumstances and at any cost decides to act to demonstrate a museum’s relevance to today’s issues, problems, challenges or expectations, many choosing illusional neutrality over a clear statement.

Museums in their landscape

Museum activism is rooted in the “new museology”, preoccupied with the relation between a museum and its environment – nature and communities. The connection between the two worlds became the subject of discussions in the museum world particularly in the 1960s and 1970s;⁷ however, various new types of museums started to emerge as early as the late nineteenth century – heimat museums, open-air museums, then folk museums and industrial museums, and finally community museums and ecomuseums.

The “new museology” emerged as the second museum revolution (1960–1980) characterised by Peter Van Mensch, where – as he put it – “the leading force is the wish to develop museums as social institutions with political agendas”.⁸ The benchmark in codifying the new museology was the Declaration of Quebec: Basic Principles for a New Museology, adopted in 1984, with the instrumental role of Pierre Mayrand. In his view the declaration

merely reaffirms the social mission of the museum as a new point of departure and the primacy of this function over the traditional museum functions: conservation, buildings, objects and the public.⁹

The new museology reversed previous museum hierarchies: the public and community are placed at the centre of museum activity (contrary to collections before) and knowledge is assimilated from the outside (instead of the previous dissemination from the inside). According to Hugues de Varine, who characterised the movement in the 1980s,

The new type of museum could be described as essentially a cultural process, identified with local community (population), on a specific territory, using the common heritage as a resource for development, as opposed to the more classical museum, an institution characterized by a collection, in a building, for a public of visitors.¹⁰

Among responses to the ideas of new museology was the ecomuseum – a term coined by de Varine for the French Minister for the Environment who first used it in 1971. According to the 2016 Milan cooperation charter: Ecomuseums and cultural landscape,

Ecomuseums consider themselves as participatory processes that recognize, manage and protect the local heritage in order to facilitate a sustainable social, environmental and economic development. They are specific projects through which to reconnect techniques, cultures, productions and resources of a

⁶ LYNCH, Bernadette. “I’m gonna do something”: Moving beyond talk in the museum. In: Robert S. Janes and Richard Sandell (eds). *Museum Activism*. Robert S. Janes and Richard Sandell (eds). London & New York: Routledge, 2019, p. 118.

⁷ See DE VARINE, Hugues. Ecomuseum or community museum? 25 years of applied research in museology and development. In: *Nordisk Museologi* 2, 1996, pp. 21–26.

⁸ VAN MENSCH, Peter. Magpies on Mount Helicon. In: M. Schärer (ed.). *Museum and Community*. ICOFOM Study Series 25, 1995, p. 133.

⁹ MAYRAND, Pierre. The New Museology Proclaimed. In: *Museum International*, 261-264, 2015, p. 116.

¹⁰ DE VARINE, Ecomuseum..., pp. 24–25.

homogeneous territory so as to relate to the cultural heritage of the area. They develop creative and inclusive practices aimed at the cultural growth of the local communities, based on the active participation of people and the cooperation of organizations and associations.¹¹

Although I will not discuss ecomuseums in this article, I believe their holistic character and interconnectedness should be a source of reference for various types of museums, and certainly it is for a handful of museums having the activist approach towards their landscape, which are discussed below.

The term “landscape” has a broad scope in definitions adopted by international institutions; however, it is often intuitively understood in museum practice. The European Landscape Convention adopted by the Council of Europe in 2000 understands landscape as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”, and most importantly it states that “the landscape is a key element of individual and social well-being and that its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone”.¹² Another important context for my discussion in the article regards the historic urban landscape. The Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape adopted by UNESCO in 2011 defines it as “the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of ‘historic centre’ or ‘ensemble’ to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting”. Apart from tangible elements this context includes “land use patterns and spatial organization, perceptions and visual relationships ... social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and the intangible dimensions of heritage as related to diversity and identity”.¹³ Although the HUL approach has been promoted largely among properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, it is not limited to them.

Museums safeguarding their landscape – ICOM Resolution as a means for legitimacy

Connections and relations between museums, areas and people, which have been addressed within the broad umbrella of “new museology” and a changing approach towards landscape – including the isolation of the historic urban landscape as a separate category – led ICOM to adopt in 2016 at its General Assembly a resolution regarding “The Responsibility of Museums Towards Landscape”. The document stresses that “Museums are part of the landscape. They collect tangible and intangible testimonials linked to the environment. The collections forming part of their heritage cannot be explained without the landscape.” Based on that, ICOM recommends that:

Museums extend their mission from a legal and operational point of view and manage buildings and sites of cultural landscape as “extended museums”, offering enhanced protection and accessibility to such heritage in closed relationship with communities.

Museums contribute not only to the knowledge of the values of cultural

¹¹ RIVA, Raffaella (ed.). *Ecomuseums and cultural landscapes: State of the art and future prospects*. Maggioli Editore, 2017, p. 403.

¹² COUNCIL OF EUROPE. *European Landscape Convention*. Florence. European Treaty Series – No. 176, 2000.

¹³ UNESCO. *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, including a glossary of definitions*, 2011, accessed July 26th, 2020, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=48857&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

landscapes, but also to the development of symbolic frameworks that determine them, so that the notion of cultural landscape becomes an instrument for the assessment of what needs to be protected, enhanced and handed on to future generations, and what will go instead questioned, criticized and modified.¹⁴

This resolution goes in line with the changing social roles and responsibilities of museums. Alberto Garlandini argues that

Museum collections cannot be explained and interpreted without considering the landscapes in which they are located and, conversely, landscapes cannot be recognised and valued without the help of museum collections. Like landscapes, museums are made up of relations between places and spaces, artefacts and people, physical evidence and symbols.¹⁵

Referring to this bond, museum-landscape, and the call for action and the legitimisation of actions taken by museums to protect cultural landscapes, I investigate strategies in which museums, feeling responsible for their context, took protection measures which derive from the ICOM Resolution.

Strategies to negotiate relations between museums and their landscape

I selected four museums representing various types, located in urban areas, having different histories and raising different issues, that have adopted an active approach towards their landscape. Muzeum Śląskie in Katowice raised the alarm to protect its post-industrial context from a new housing development approved for construction right behind the museum plot. The Museum of Podgórze in Kraków struggles for greenery and leisure space under the railway junction that neighbours the museum. The Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw contextualises the socialist heritage of the Plac Defilad (Parade Square) and negotiates the historically sensitive centre of the city.¹⁶ And finally POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw adds prestige to the civic action of saving and bringing back to the city the historic Waliców Street townhouses located in the former Jewish ghetto. The negotiations are still ongoing in three case studies, while in the fourth one the museum lost its battle to safeguard the landscape. All the case studies are informative of issues and challenges that museums meet, and of positions and actions that they take.

The choice of Polish museums is not coincidental. The subject of the extended museum and the implications of the ICOM Resolution were widely debated in museological circles in Poland at the conferences on “Planning an extended museum” organised by the Museum of King Jan III’s Palace at Wilanów jointly with ICOM committees in 2017 and 2018. Those discussions, followed by conference proceedings, gave the subject substantial recognition.

This investigation of museums working in an activist way to safeguard their landscape is part of my wider research project entitled “Participation and the Post-Museum”. The analysis

¹⁴ ICOM. Resolutions Adopted by ICOM’s 31st General Assembly 2016 Milan, accessed July 26th, 2020, https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOMs-Resolutions_2016_Eng.pdf

¹⁵ GARLANDINI, Alberto. New Museums for New Social Challenges: “Extended museums” facing UNESCO’s 2015 Recommendation on Museums and ICOM’s 2016 Resolution on the Responsibility of Museums Towards Landscapes. In: Dorota Folga-Januszewska (ed.). *Extended Museum in Its Milieu*. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas; Warszawa: Muzeum Palacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2018, p. 25.

¹⁶ Activities taken on by the Museum Śląskie and the Museum of Podgórze towards their landscape were discussed in a concise way in the article JAGODZIŃSKA, Katarzyna and TUTAK, Melania. Responsibility of Museums Towards Landscape: Discussion based on case studies from Katowice, Kraków and Warsaw. In: *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Etnograficzne* 48, 2020, pp. 141–158.

of case studies is based on numerous study visits to those museums (2018–2020) and a series of interviews with museum directors, curators, project managers, and – depending on the case study – museum consultants, architects and representatives of the community.

Raising an alarm to protect the post-industrial context of a museum: Muzeum Śląskie in Katowice and a new housing estate

In 2015 the newly built Muzeum Śląskie was opened in Katowice.¹⁷ It is a regional museum of Upper Silesia in southern Poland and represents the type of an encyclopaedic museum, encompassing collections of art, history, archaeology, ethnology, photography, non-professional art, industrial history and the Centre for Polish Stage and Set Design. Since its inception in 1929 the museum was housed in temporary buildings. In 1939 it was just about to move into the newly built edifice when the Nazis liquidated the museum and demolished the building. After reactivation in 1984 an attempt to build the museum according to a new architectural project failed due to a lack of funds. A new prospect for a new location appeared in 2003. The regional government, which operates the museum, acquired a deactivated “Katowice” Coal Mine as a result of a land swap with the intention of adapting it to become the museum. The site is centrally located in the city, within walking distance from the university and the main commercial streets.

The international architectural competition that was announced in 2006 brought an undisputable winner (no second prize was awarded) – Riegler Riewe Architekten from Graz. The architects approached the site with great respect proposing minimalist interventions above ground and thus yielding to the existing post-industrial architecture. The new construction was mostly hidden underground, including all exhibition halls and conference rooms, while above ground the architects placed white glass cubes which function as skylights and ventilation, as well as the administration building. This way the historic red brick mine buildings are confronted only with seven minimalist “glass boxes”. The jury commended the project especially for its symbolic value that addresses the mining identity of the region. The justification stressed that “The descent to the surface of the Museum under the ground emphasises the connection of its collections with the mining history of Silesia, and the place of the black treasure hidden deep in the earth is occupied by treasures of culture and memory”.¹⁸ The mine shaft hoisting tower “Warszawa II”, a symbol of the new museum, has served as a viewing platform since the museum’s opening; the former machine room of the shaft, clothing storehouse, carpentry and bathhouse buildings were converted into exhibition spaces, a restaurant and performance space, while the remaining nine buildings are still in the process of revitalisation.

Together with the museum and two adjoining developments, the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the International Congress Centre, these form the Cultural Zone – a new brand of the city and the region signifying a transition from heavy industry to new technologies, education and culture. It is the biggest and most costly project regarding culture in Silesia.

The industrial history of the region is one of the main subjects addressed by the museum in its programme (e.g., through large scale site-specific artworks commissioned from the most renowned contemporary artists, the cyclical conference “Industria. Non-obvious contexts”

¹⁷ The history and context of the museum presented according to JAGODZIŃSKA, Katarzyna. *Museums and Centers of Contemporary Art in Central Europe After 1989*. Transl. Carolyn C. Guile. London & New York: Routledge, 2020.

¹⁸ MUZEUM ŚLĄSKIE. Press release: Mamy projekt nowego Muzeum Śląskiego. June 15th, 2007.

initiated in 2018 and the major Biennale of Industria launched in 2019). It should not be surprising, then, that in the face of danger the museum as guardian of the site adopted an active attitude.

In 2016 the private developer TDJ Estate announced plans to build a real-estate complex of residential blocks located on a vast wasteland right behind the museum. Not the fact that the area would be developed, but the height of the new development alarmed the museum – the first four buildings are to be of twelve stories (built on a two-storey carpark), and the remaining four, in a second line, eighteen stories. As soon as the director of the Muzeum Śląskie, Alicja Knast, saw the designs, at the beginning of 2018, she initiated a public discussion about urban planning for this district and the city of Katowice at large, and the role of cultural heritage in the process of change. She argued in a video promoted via the museum's Twitter feed that the former coal mine, today's museum complex, constitutes "a certain symbolic frame, the cultural landscape of this city and *pars pro toto* of the cultural landscape of this region" and the new investment will simply cover it¹⁹ or rather offer an unwanted background.

Knast called for a debate. Open meetings were held in the museum and a major discussion was organised by the mayor's office as a result of a series of articles in the regional daily newspaper. All efforts, however, only proved the lack of understanding of cultural heritage arguments and in effect the museum remained alone in this struggle. The head architect of the estate, Przemysław Łukasik, maintained that the buildings would constitute a distant background²⁰ and to prove it he presented visualisations of the museum with the blocks behind. Knast in turn argued that the blocks would obstruct the view of the historic architecture of the mine from several key points in the city centre, ones not selected by the architect, and she based her opinion on the "Study of the landscape protection of the Muzeum Śląskie in Katowice complex" which had been commissioned by the museum from the West Pomeranian University of Technology in Szczecin. The study offered hard data and visual material presenting the relation of heights between the residential blocks and the museum. It clearly demonstrates that the blocks will, indeed, be invasive as far as the vistas towards the mine from the city centre are concerned.

City officials supported the vision of the developer to build the dense high-rise residential district and turned down the arguments that the post-industrial architecture of the complex (which symbolically stands for the wealth of the region) requires additional protection. Similarly, the circle of architects does not share this concern for the post-industrial heritage. In their view the city should expand, also at the cost of old architecture. Łukasik said, "The museum is a democratic space, which in my understanding should not be separated by a protection zone... Because what to protect against, against people, the city or urban architecture?"²¹

In the discussion Knast proposed to consider lowering the height of the buildings in favour of density. The area would still develop, which is also in the interest of the museum, but not at the cost of the context of cultural heritage. Only then, as she points out, would the buildings not dominate the cityscape, but "the investor, it seems, aims to shape the city centre according to his vision, with the quiet permission of the city authorities".²² It is not only the floor space

¹⁹ TWITTER FEED OF THE MUZEUM ŚLĄSKIE. Appeal to prevent the launch of large developments in the immediate vicinity of the Culture Zone and the Silesian Museum, February 21st, 2018.

²⁰ JAGODZIŃSKA, Katarzyna. Muzeum broni postindustrialnego krajobrazu. In: *Architektura & Biznes* 6, 2019: 149.

²¹ JAGODZIŃSKA, Muzeum broni..., p. 150.

²² JAGODZIŃSKA, Muzeum broni..., p. 151.

of the apartments that will be monetised, but also the view of the Culture Zone.

Since the exchange of arguments between the museum, developer and architect did not bring any consensus, only the city was in a position to impose limitations on the new development. Simultaneously with the design process, city officials were finalising the regulations of the local spatial development plan for this district, and the museum lobbied to introduce height restrictions to the area neighbouring the museum complex – unsuccessfully, as the draft document presented for compulsory civic consultations in early 2019, and finally adopted in June 2020, sanctions high-rise building in the area.

Knast pointed out that citizens of Katowice have a low level of agency and that the dialogue between city officials and citizens is, indeed, illusory. No activist association expressed any interest in this struggle, similarly to local residents. The regional authorities, that own the land and operate the museum, did not participate in this discussion with the city and developer, and so neither did the other two institutions in the Culture Zone. The only support, apart from some media coverage (including my major article in an architecture magazine published in June 2019), were the letters sent by museum directors and leaders of heritage and architecture organisations.



Fig. 1: *Muzeum Śląskie in Katowice seen from a distance – new glass cubes are visible on the right, viewing platform in the centre and historic coal mine buildings on the left. The photo was taken before the construction of the blocks began – nothing obstructs the background.*

Photo: K. Jagodzińska.

Struggle for greenery: Museum of Podgórze in Kraków and park under the railway junction

In 2018 a new local museum was opened in Kraków – the Museum of Podgórze, a branch of the Museum of Kraków, which is a major museum in the city. Until 1915 Podgórze was an independent city neighbouring Kraków on the right bank of Vistula river, and then the two cities merged together. Podgórze has grown considerably over the decades, today its core part located close to the river is known as Old Podgórze, and the former industrial part undergoing dynamic revitalisation is called Zabłocie. In 2003 the Podgórze History House (part of the Podgórze Cultural Centre) was opened in Old Podgórze, headed by enthusiastic activist Melania Tutak. She ran this tiny institution as an open house for the local community. Over time the formative energy grew around this place – people brought artefacts, shared stories and participated in building and running the programme. Together with the local association PODGORZE.PL, especially its president Pawel Kubisztal, she lobbied in favour of creating a new museum in the district. It soon proved to be impossible to establish a new institution, but after almost ten years they managed to convince the city authorities to establish a new branch of the city museum. The grassroots history of this museum is unique in Kraków and not very common on Polish

soil. It is often labelled the participatory branch of the Museum of Kraków.

The museum is located in the historical St Benedict Inn, at the intersection of busy roads, by a tram stop and overground railway station on the one side, and adjacent to some wasteland below the railway flyover which brutally disfigured the area in 2015–2017. The building had been dilapidated for decades and as a new museum it was brought back to the city and the local residents. This context predetermined thinking about the role the museum can play in the neighbourhood. The idea of creating a park in Podgórze was born in the winter of 2016 during a visit to the construction site. Tutak recalls,

I was curious what was happening in the neighbourhood. I looked behind the fence and saw that there was a gigantic space torn out of the earth, which, as it turned out later, stretches out to the Schindler's Factory. I thought then that this is a brilliant place for the green surroundings of the museum and that no one will fight for it, because there is only us.²³

The following months were filled with preparations for the opening of the new museum, but the idea was always in the back of the mind.

From the very beginning, the Museum of Podgórze engaged its neighbours in joint actions, so it is not surprising that it endeavoured to meet local associations present in the district to get to know each other before the museum was opened to the public. It turned out that the topic of land development under the railway flyover is in everyone's interest. Four entities, the museum and three non-governmental organisations (the PODGORZE.PL Association, the SOS Zabłocie group and the Fundacja Czasu Wolnego), formed an informal Grupa Pod Łącznicą (Group at the Railway Flyover) and the matter gained momentum. Subsequent local consultations gathered all interested parties – the residents, representatives of the railway PKP PLK, the City Green Board, the then Municipal Infrastructure and Transport Board, the vice mayor of the city responsible for urban infrastructure, and city and district councillors. Everyone agreed that this space must be reclaimed for the city.

The development is possible due to the ongoing modernisation of the E30 railway line on the Kraków Główny Towarowy – Rudzice section, under which flyovers, new bridges and railway stations are being built. The three-kilometre Park under the Flyovers (working name) will consist of two parts: one in the district of Grzegórzki on the left bank of the river and the other in Podgórze on the right bank, and the two will be connected by a pedestrian and bike bridge on the Vistula. The Grzegórzki part was already in the planning process when Grupa Pod Łącznicą submitted its idea to continue the park on the right bank of the river.

Before these actions were taken, the museum considered pros and cons of its engagement in the creation of the park. Tutak noted that the museum director was full of concerns. She explained,

the museum would make its debut as such a stakeholder and leader of a project, and we were very afraid of the expectations that the museum would raise, and might not be able to meet. The role of the museum had to be balanced so that it was not perceived as the one who is supposed to change this space, but the one who persuades to do so and connects various entities.... I have always explained that it is not us who will be implementing the park under the railway flyover, but

²³ JAGODZIŃSKA, Katarzyna. Powstaje Oś Kultury w Krakowie. In: *Architektura & Biznes*, portal: *Miasto na celowniku* cycle, June 23rd 2020, accessed July 26th, 2020, <https://www.architekturaibiznes.pl/os-kultury-w-krakowie,4124.html>

we can be the driving force, because we have time, we have a mandate, we are a neighbour of this space and we are somewhat responsible for it. This is also the heritage of Podgórze and I felt that we had the right to talk about it and take actions.²⁴

The idea of the park is multidimensional. The first argument is to restore degraded space to the residents and offer a park including a promenade and a bicycle route, greenery with city furniture for relaxation, a playground and a social garden. The second argument is to create the Culture Axis in Podgórze, starting from the Museum of Podgórze, then leading through Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory (the most visited branch of the Museum of Kraków) and the MOCAK Museum of Contemporary Art in Kraków to the planned Planet Lem Literature and Language Centre, as well as the nearby Cricoteka Centre for the Documentation of the Art



Fig. 2: *Museum of Podgórze seen from the perspective of the land under the railway flyover – future park.*
Photo: K. Jagodzińska.

of Tadeusz Kantor. The third argument is the ordering of communication in Zablocie, which is symbolically cut off from the rest of Podgórze by a railway embankment. The wasteland is adjacent to the museum's courtyard which already serves as a space for outdoor activities and as a leisure zone with seating of the museum café. New space will open new possibilities for the museum as well, for example to practice yoga with the residents and organise small concerts or outdoor exhibitions.

The museum took on the role of the driving force of the project, arranging meetings of the project team, offering space for public consultations, organising actions open to the public

²⁴ INTERVIEW WITH MELANIA TUTAK, curator of the Museum of Podgórze (branch of the Museum of Kraków). June 4th, 2020.

(e.g. cleaning of the green space, planting sunflowers), administering a Facebook fanpage of the project, and initiating and conducting talks with the authorities. The Museum of Kraków is a municipal institution, which makes formal contacts easier, and there is also the prestige and prominence of a major cultural institution that stands behind its actions. However, even though the museum has autonomy as an independent institution, it is dependant financially and organisationally on the city hall, so its actions in the cityscape need to be balanced.

The civic initiative led by the public institution found fertile ground among city officials who took over the project at the administrative level and started negotiations with the railway, owner of the land. The Grupa Pod Łącznicą has continued its role as the watchdog of the process. Since spring 2020 the project has awaited formal consent from the railway, which would then enable the project implementation to begin. In May 2021, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the process was still on hold.

Contextualisation of socialist heritage and negotiation of historically sensitive centre of the city: Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw on the Plac Defilad

The history of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (MSN) started in 2005 with the announcement of an architectural competition. It was planned as the first museum of contemporary art in Poland, initiating a museum boom in art museums, and following the great success of the first modern museum in post-transformation Poland – the Warsaw Rising Museum opened in 2004. There was an expectation that the new building of the MSN would become an icon for Warsaw, attracting worldwide attention and changing the image of the centre of the capital. The future museum was allotted a plot of land on the vast Plac Defilad, at the foot of the monumental, 230 m tall, Palace of Culture and Science (built in 1952–1955), considered a Stalinist symbol of Warsaw. The museum is scheduled to open in 2022, after many delays. The Palace evokes mixed feelings, and there have been attempts to pull it down. The choice of this location was in line with thinking about breaking the dominant position of the massive building. The terms of the architectural competition stipulated that, “Architecturally, the building of the Museum should be a formal and meaningful counterpoint for the Palace of Culture, and its shape, a globally recognisable symbol of Warsaw. The museum together with the adjacent square and park will become the most important public place in the revitalised centre of Warsaw.”²⁵

The shape of this museum instantly became one of the most pressing subjects in the capital, widely discussed in the nationwide media, by the architects, planners, art historians, museologists and the general public. The keyword of this discussion was the “Guggenheim Bilbao”. Due to legal and administrative shortcomings the first competition was annulled. The second was won by the Swiss architect Christian Kerez (with a ratio of votes of 7:6) who proposed a minimalist, box-like structure, the true opposite of the flamboyant Palace. Many protested against this building, and the victory in the competition resulted in a six-year struggle as problems amassed with the new development (the city of Warsaw as the investor twice demanded substantial changes to the building, the first time to meet the requirements of the European Union funding, and the second time to fit a theatre into the building; there were also administrative problems with the land ownership and the supposedly unrealistic expectations

²⁵ URZĄD MIASTA STOLECZNEGO WARSZAWY. Regulamin konkursu na opracowanie koncepcji architektonicznej budynku Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie. Warszawa: Urząd Miasta Stołecznego Warszawy, Biuro Naczelnego Architekta Miasta, 2005, p. 7.

of the architect). The protracted standoff came to an end with the termination of the contract with the architect and the referral of the case to court in 2012.

A third competition was announced in 2013. This time, the competition framework clearly stated that the goal of the project is not to search for an iconic building, but to build social bonds: “the aim is to create a place of contact between residents and modern art in Warsaw, as well as meeting places for Varsovians and visitors to the capital”.²⁶ At the same time, it was announced that:

This place can define a new centre of gravity for the whole city. The new building should oppose dichotomies such as lack of transparency–transparency, inhuman scale–human scale, glamour–simplicity, anti-social–pro-social; instead of history, it should be directed towards the future.²⁷

US-based Thomas Phifer and Partners studio won the competition and the construction works are underway. This project, like the criticised vision of Kerez, seems visually anti-iconic: two minimalist boxes, white for the museum and black for the theatre, juxtaposed with each other.

The uneasy history of the building is an important context for programme activities of the museum. They started in 2008 in a temporary location, first in the furniture pavilion “Emilia” (initially only in a warehouse, in the years 2012–2016 using the entire pavilion), located near the intended site; and from 2017, in a temporary exhibition pavilion on the Vistula River. Since the very beginning the museum was preoccupied with the city – its urban and visual space – which is yearly discussed at the *Warsaw Under Construction* festival. The festival is a tool with which to diagnose and investigate various problems and issues present in the cityscape, of which the museum has attempted to be an integral part. The 9th, edition in 2017, entitled *Plac Defilad: A Step Forward*, was devoted to the future location of the museum. It consisted of a major exhibition held in the Galeria Studio located in the Palace, various actions on the square and a public programme of meetings.

The museum and adjoining TR Warszawa theatre will be the instruments to humanise the gigantic square covering an area of 24 ha. It was designed for defilades and mass events, but is surrounded by busy road arteries, and so is isolated from the city life. Since the political transformation of 1989 the square has reflected changes affecting all areas of life. The most visible and prominent space of the capital became a huge market place, a car park, a temporary bus terminal, a funfair... a signifier both of the inertia of city planning and of aesthetic and functional backwardness. In 2017, simultaneously with the *Warsaw Under Construction* festival, the competition for the development of the central part of the Plac Defilad (called the Central Square) was underway. The festival offered a forum for debate on the future of the square and generated greater interest among the public about this space. The director of the museum, Joanna Mytkowska, explained that in order “to root [the museum] locally, make it an important part of community life”²⁸ she needed to look around, into the square. In a foreword to the book accompanying the festival she wrote: “We want as many voices as possible to be heard, so that they can be included in the design process of this space, and so that we all have the feeling that we have not lost a huge opportunity to design a centre which is functional, friendly and

²⁶ MUZEUM SZTUKI NOWOCZESNEJ W WARSZAWIE AND TR WARSZAWA. Wytuczne programowe dla wspólnej siedziby Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie i TR Warszawa. Warszawa, 2014, 1st April, p. 8.

²⁷ WYTYCZNE PROGRAMOWE..., p. 7.

²⁸ MYTKOWSKA, Joanna. Zobacz nowy plan. In: Tomasz Fudala (ed.). *Kto odzyska Plac Defilad? Warszawa w Budowie 9*. Warszawa: Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie, 2017, p. 7.

connected with the rest of the city”.²⁹

The museum did not limit its activities to research, observation and the offering of space for discussion, but it also played an active role in the process of liaising with various actors of the square. Artur Jerzy Filip, researcher and practitioner of innovative forms of cross-sectoral urban project management, became the museum’s consultant and plenipotentiary for the building of the partnership. On behalf of the museum he started to form a group “Local Stewards of Plac Defilad” (modelled upon New York City-based benchmarks) consisting of seven institutions with entrances on the square (including the commercial company that manages the Palace and its surroundings – Zarząd Palacu Kultury i Nauki, two theatres and two cultural cafes also located in the Palace but with separate entrances in the Palace, and two new developments – MSN and TR Warszawa). Filip commented that,

The management of the museum liked the idea to enter this area more broadly. Not that now the museum will fight for its part of the square in front of the building, but that we are talking about a perspective model of co-managing this process, first planning and then programming this space; that we will develop a model in which these institutions will serve this square, while maintaining its public character.³⁰

The museum became a leader of this process, and the *Warsaw Under Construction* festival was used as a vehicle to initiate the group. Its biggest success, as Filip notes, is the networking, as until that moment (even though some partner initiatives had been undertaken before) they had not cooperated in such a wide circle with such strategic aims to become an active member of the process of planning and finding various spatial solutions in the square. When a shortlist of designs for the future Central Square was announced, the group attended a special workshop organised by the city planning office and then conceived a document with remarks and suggestions to the winning designs that was officially submitted during public consultations. Subsequently, when the winner was announced, the group hosted “coordination meetings” as a platform for designers, city officials and local stewards to discuss detailed issues regarding needs and expectations of the future square.

The group has been dormant since autumn 2019, when the design for the future Central Square entered its technical phase; however, it has the potential to reactivate once the construction process starts. Despite its successes, the group failed to build any permanent cooperation mechanism with the city. The vision of an experimental model of space co-management was well received by the vice mayor of Warsaw; however, at the operative levels of administration in the city hall, there was no person willing to pursue this innovative idea. A significant obstacle was the fact that people working in the city office perceived the new idea as an attack on their work, as the group proposed solutions that should in fact be initiated by the city. Filip admitted that he agrees with Mytkowska, who says that “we were not stubborn enough to develop this project”.³¹

Despite attempts, it was impossible to formalise the group within any of the existing legal frameworks in Poland – they are aimed at engaging individuals and not-for-profit civic organisations, while none of them allows the forming of coalitions with public institutions, and thus – according to Filip – “cooperation needs to rely on personal relations, which results in

²⁹ MYTKOWSKA, *Zobacz nowy plan...*, p. 9.

³⁰ INTERVIEW WITH ARTUR JERZY FILIP, consultant of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and plenipotentiary for the building of the partnership of the local hosts at the Plac Defilad. April 2nd, 2020.

³¹ INTERVIEW WITH ARTUR JERZY FILIP...



Fig. 3: Construction site of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw in 2019. Text on the fence says: #museum has future. The Museum of Modern Art is constructed here. See you in 2022. Photo: K. Jagodzińska.

institutional unsustainability”.³² He stresses that the development of hybrid governance structures requires that all parties get involved – all stewards on the one side and the local government on the other. This is why Filip in his professional work and scholarship voices the need “for more inclusive urban planning and management processes in Poland”.³³

Adding prestige to civic action: POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw and historic Waleców Street townhouses located in the former Warsaw ghetto

In 2017 the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw engaged in the project of rescuing three dilapidated townhouses in Waleców Street. They are the remnants of pre-war architecture in Warsaw located in the territory of the Jewish ghetto. Museum director Zygmunt Stępiński has called these buildings “a symbol – a monument to Warsaw’s past, its wartime tragedy and post-war history”.³⁴ The destroyed front elevation of the tenement house at 14 Waleców Street is a testimony to the horror of the Second World War and the planned destruction of Warsaw by the Nazis. During the post-war reconstruction of the city and the progressive development that continues to this day, these tenement houses have retained their former shape. They fell into oblivion and ruin, but still served tenants. Time and again, since the 1970s, activists have demanded these buildings be protected, but their voice was too weak. The last tenants were evicted in 2018. The building no 14 was to be demolished due to poor condition and only in 2018, owing to local organisations and city activists who were collecting signatures of support in a petition to the Provincial Conservator of Monuments to block the demolition, did all houses enter the register of monuments.

Italian architects Guido Morpurgo and Annalisa de Curtis, who run the architectural office Morpurgo de Curtis in Milan and are both professors at the Politecnico di Milano, brought international attention to this unique heritage of Warsaw. Morpurgo was born into an Italian Jewish family that originates in Central Europe, which explains his specific interest in the history, culture and architecture of Warsaw. He considers the tenement houses at Waleców Street as bearing the DNA of a lost Warsaw and as witnesses to the history of the city’s total destruction, as well as “a ‘living’ fragment of a post-apocalyptic city”.³⁵ He conceived a project of bringing back the memory of this place in the form of a workshop for second year students at the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies in Milan called “Waleców Project” where they work on diploma projects to convert Waleców Street houses for contemporary functions.

Morpurgo and de Curtis indicate that,

³² FILIP, Artur Jerzy. Local institutions of culture as urban stewards: in pursuit of hybrid governance in Warsaw, Poland. In: *Ecology and Society* 25(2), 7, 2020, accessed August 11th, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-11512-250207>

³³ FILIP, Local institutions of culture...

³⁴ STĘPIŃSKI, Zygmunt. Słowo wstępne. In: Beata Chomątowska and Zuzanna Schnepf-Kolacz (eds). *Waleców: DNA Warszawy – Dziedzictwo Europy*. Warszawa: Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich POLIN, 2019, p. 6.

³⁵ MORPURGO, Guido. Wstępne wytyczne architektoniczne dla zachowania i rewitalizacji miejsca pamięci przy ulicy Waleców. In: Beata Chomątowska and Zuzanna Schnepf-Kolacz (eds). *Waleców: DNA Warszawy – Dziedzictwo Europy*. Warszawa: Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich POLIN, 2019, p. 25.

These testimonies of an entire culture and of the resistance to annihilation are now in danger, as they permanently risk to be removed from the city and from the European collective consciousness as well, because of the rapid urban transformations triggered by aggressive and forgetful construction activity. These places are heritage for humanity; they represent a testimony, a warning and at the same time an extraordinary building material for a future of dialogue and civil consciousness, a value to be protected and regenerated by a careful museum project, both architectural and urban, before it is too late.³⁶

Morpurgo's first ally was the vice-consul of the Polish consulate in Milan, Zuzanna Schnepf-Kolacz. She mediated in arranging a meeting with the then management of the POLIN Museum. He received a warm reception; however, at that time no one in the museum was personally interested to become involved in the project. Morpurgo found a partner at the Warsaw University of Technology and in 2016 they embarked on the first workshop for students.

The situation changed in 2017 when Schnepf-Kolacz finished her diplomatic mission and returned to Warsaw to resume work at the POLIN Museum. She was already passionate about the idea of bringing this complex back to the city and its inhabitants and she convinced the director to let her engage in the project on behalf of the museum. In a conversation she referred to an ICOM policy which recommends that "a museum takes responsibility for what is happening around it, outside its walls. We belong to ICOM and this is important to us."³⁷

Three up-to-date editions of the workshops were organised and students in Milan designed forty-five projects. In each instance the function was given by the tutors and then the students worked on its architectural shape. The function has evolved over time: at first it was predominantly a place of memory presenting the microhistory, and later it addressed also the needs of the neighbourhood, resulting in a city centre of cultural, artistic and social activities, and encompassing a modern cultural centre, library, theatre and concert hall, cafe, university for seniors, premises for non-governmental organisations working for the local community, artists' studios, craftsmen's workshops and coworking spaces for academics.³⁸

The museum used its prominent position in the city to add prestige to the project and attract the attention of city officials. In 2017 the POLIN Museum hosted a debate on the future of the Waliców tenement houses and an exhibition of the students' projects; the following year the museum, together with the Shalom Foundation, Wolskie Centrum Kultury, Politecnico di Milano and Warsaw University of Technology, prepared an open-air exhibition within the Waliców complex as a part of the Festival of Jewish Culture in Warsaw; and in 2019 it organised a public discussion with international experts as a part of the Horizon 2020 project (programme of the European Commission) "Critical Heritages: performing and representing identities in Europe – CoHERE". The outcome of this last-named discussion is a specialist publication "Waliców: DNA Warszawy – Dziedzictwo Europy" [Waliców: DNA of Warsaw – Heritage of Europe] which was conceived as an input for the city.

³⁶ THE PROJECT ENVIRONMENT. Fundamentals, accessed July 26th, 2020, <http://www.walicowproject.polimi.it/about-2019.html>

³⁷ INTERVIEW WITH ZUZANNA SCHNEPF-KOŁACZ, Programme specialist for Warsaw residents in the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. October 18th, 2019.

³⁸ CHOMĄTOWSKA, Beata and SCHNEPF-KOŁACZ, Zuzanna. Wprowadzenie. In: Beata Chomątowska and Zuzanna Schnepf-Kolacz (eds). *Waliców: DNA Warszawy – Dziedzictwo Europy*. Warszawa: Muzeum Historii Żydów Polskich POLIN, 2019, p. 8.



Fig. 4: Contemporary condition of Waliców Street townhouses. Photo: K. Jagodzińska.

“These issues are part of the broadly understood mission of the museum, which is why we get involved, but also never declare that we will be a leader”, underlines Schnepf-Kolacz. “We have always emphasised that our museum cannot be a leader because we have different priorities.”³⁹ In her view the city should be a natural leader. The considerable media coverage and social interest that this project generates finally mobilised city authorities in 2019 to host the first meeting. Schnepf-Kolacz concludes, “If all goes well and they are given the green light to act, they will take over the role of a leader, and we want to continue to participate in building the programme as a social partner. We feel responsible to the people who got involved and whom we contacted.”

The project is in the gestion of the city authorities. “The right thing to do is to involve the young people, because the future of memory is in their hands, not in our hands” says Morpurgo.⁴⁰ In his view, once the city manages to secure the financial resources to restore the tenement houses,

it should organise an architectural competition that would be targeted to international students of architecture. Due to the cost of the investment, the idea may remain on paper for some time.

Conclusions

The activist approach of all the museums discussed is apparent, although the merit, context and level of engagement in each case is different. The museum is either the *spiritus movens* and leader of change or acts as one of several engaged parties. As in the case of the Muzeum Śląskie, the call of a museum targeted at its neighbourhood to act jointly may not be heard. After a fierce struggle the museum may lose the case; however, it can hardly be called a defeat – the courage and determination to speak on a difficult matter should embolden other museums to be active actors of the civil society.

Dorota Folga-Januszewska admits that the essence of change that led to the ICOM resolution on the responsibility of museums towards landscape is “promoting awareness of the role of museums as organisers of social life among significantly wider circles than those of the former recipients of the museums’ offers”.⁴¹ The resolution and the activist mode of operation that it proposes is in line with the proposal for a new museum definition that began to be forged soon after the 2016 ICOM General Conference in Milan. The new definition that was considered at the ICOM General Assembly in Kyoto in 2019, yet not adopted, says that

³⁹ INTERVIEW WITH ZUZANNA SCHNEPF-KOLACZ...

⁴⁰ INTERVIEW WITH GUIDO MORPURGO. April 2nd, 2020.

⁴¹ FOLGA-JANUSZEWSKA, Dorota. Museum and Its Milieu – Bilateral Relations. In: Dorota Folga-Januszewska (ed.). *Extended Museum in Its Milieu*. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas; Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie, 2018, p. 11.

museums are inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue, that they acknowledge and address the conflicts and challenges of the present, and that they work in active partnership with and for diverse communities.⁴² These issues were raised by the discussed museums with reference to the safeguarding of the monuments or their context (POLIN, Muzeum Śląskie) or the bringing of change to the public space neighbouring the museum building (Museum of Podgórze, MSN).

In the case of the Muzeum Śląskie, arguments for the recognition of post-industrial cultural heritage lost to those favouring economical profit and the changing of the image of the city towards modernity. The museum director was too isolated in this struggle to be able to win. Despite the outcome in Katowice, it should be a lesson for other museums that their role is not only to observe and document changes, but also to be part and even generate those processes. Would the situation be different if the museum had allies in neighbours, local communities and city activists? My judgement of the situation is that appreciation of the heritage of recent decades is still too low in post-communist countries and people are still hungry for modern, spectacular investments which visually herald new times. So, there is still a lot to be done in the field of cultural education. Local pride and identity in the heavy industrial region is strong, although it should be channelled towards the protection and smart spatial development of this cityscape, not only the walls and objects which can be housed within museums. Nevertheless, stronger networking and engagement with communities would undoubtedly result in raising the scope, temperature and coverage of those debates.

Due to political pressure on the museum, in February 2020 Knast lost her position as director. Officially she was accused of formal inaccuracies in management, while circles of museum professionals and museum associations that unanimously demonstrated support have raised the issue that she was being punished for her nonconformist attitude, especially when it came to the political entanglement of the museum. She filed a lawsuit and won the first hearing; however, the museum under the new leadership does not follow in her footsteps and concentrates on operating within its walls.

The MSN in Warsaw has been preoccupied with the context of the city since the launch of its programme activity, so willingness to generate discussion about its future context on the Plac Defilad and engagement in building the partnership was more natural than in Katowice. The very first exhibition opened in 2008 was devoted to experimental art in the former Yugoslavia. The mediocre interest that it generated pushed the then small team of the museum to reconfigure the main interest areas of the institution and one of the leitmotifs of the new museum became local issues and an activist programme related to the city.⁴³

The MSN cooperated with an expert equipped with knowledge and experience in urban planning and building partnerships, and it was he – the external officer – who brought people together and negotiated the processes with neighbours and the city planning office. The success was partial – the partnership that was formed by the institutions on the Plac Defilad did not manage to win the full recognition that could have led to the innovative idea of space co-management. The museum assumes that the lobbying was not strong enough; however, it

⁴² ICOM. Museum definition. 2019, accessed July 26th, 2020, <https://icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/>

⁴³ JAGODZIŃSKA, Katarzyna. Trwa proces radykalnego światopoglądowego zwrotu i musimy się wobec niego określić. Rozmowa z Joanną Mytkowską (dyrektorką Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej w Warszawie). In: Jagodzińska, Katarzyna. *Nowe miejsca nowej sztuki w Europie Środkowej*. Warszawa: Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie; Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2019, p. 98.

proves that the museum acknowledges the power of public entities in pursuing their aims in the area of social justice.

In the Museum of Podgórze the driving force of the process of green change outside the museum walls is a curator/city activist who believes that individuals, associations and institutions can change the shape of neighbourhoods, and – crucially – that it is the responsibility of a public institution such as a museum. She gathered neighbours around the common goal, animated the whole process (including moderation of the Facebook fanpage) and managed to convince the museum director that the museum should be a leader of this process. From the perspective of the whole Museum of Kraków it is not a prominent project. Nevertheless, the director, who is a respected specialist in Kraków-related subjects, was a face of the project in negotiations at the managerial level.

The least important from the position of the museum is the Waliców townhouses project. It was adopted by the POLIN Museum when it was already in progress. The idea came from an external individual – an Italian architect, who found an advocate for the project in the person of the Polish vice-consul in Milan. Later, when she came back to the POLIN Museum, she brought the project with her, having convinced the museum director to give it institutional assistance. The presence of the museum in the project adds prestige and thus increases its visibility and facilitates the handling of official matters; however, for the museum it is a minor project carried out on a plan far from its core interests. Schnepf-Kołacz admits,

I work here because I care about this place, it is in my heart, I am glad that the museum allows me to do so, supports me, gives me its resources, the director participates in talks with the city, it was ennobling and empowering... On the other hand I'm aware that the Waliców issue is not among the main goals of the activities undertaken by the museum. Therefore the range of the Museum's involvement in this case depends to a great extent on my personal interest in this matter.⁴⁴

Observation of the activities of museums in Poland brings me to the conclusion that museums rarely get involved in matters happening in their environment, and in particular they rarely take real action. The four cases presented here are not the only ones, but are among few in Poland. Nevertheless, there are more and more examples of those that do get involved. The reasons why some do and some do not take action vary. It is always a matter of the personality of museum management and museum staff, of whether they feel comfortable to act in this way or not; a matter of courage and pragmatism; a matter of possibilities. Some museums may be more, and some less predisposed to carry out activities outside their walls, to motivate their neighbours to act, and to lobby municipal or regional authorities (local museums by definition should be best equipped because they should closely work with the communities), but without the consent, support and personal involvement of the management, such processes cannot be carried out.

Museum activism is for those who dare. In discussing activism one should consider historical context, which is different in the post-communist countries and in western democracies. Central European societies adopted values of civil society late and thus city activism was born here with a delay. It is the lesson that the Central Europe is still learning. Sociological diagnoses conducted in Poland since the early 1990s demonstrates that the civil society in the country does not develop and remains worryingly low. One of the indicators is the organisation of and

⁴⁴ INTERVIEW WITH ZUZANNA SCHNEPF-KOŁACZ...

participation in activities for the benefit of the local community (communes, housing estates, towns, in the immediate vicinity). In the most recent diagnosis of 2015 only 15.4 percent of those surveyed had got involved in the last two years.⁴⁵ “Since Poles gather up so poorly, they rarely undertake activities for the benefit of other people, organisations and their own communities, they are reluctant to gather to decide something together and then do something, they do not have the opportunity to learn organised social activity and acquire skills necessary for life in civil society. Poles do not know how to organise and act effectively together...”⁴⁶ This accurate observation may partly explain the social inertia around the call raised by the Museum Śląskie and the reserve of city authorities towards the group of local stewards in Warsaw. It also explains the tendencies of museum leaders who still only rarely demonstrate a proactive attitude to which, indeed, the four examples discussed in the article are in contradiction.

Also, the fact that the majority of museums is publicly funded means that their freedom of speech is practically somewhat limited. It would be very challenging, for instance, for a municipal museum to stand up against municipal authorities in its struggles to make a change in the cityscape. In Katowice the museum rose against authorities; however, it is the regional museum and it communicated with municipal authorities, so the issue of dependency was not involved. In other case studies museums attempted to inspire authorities to take action. In the MSN it was only partly successful, the Museum of Podgórze achieved everything that it sought to and the situation around the Waliców Street houses looks promising.

The personal involvement of the director was fulfilled in the Muzeum Śląskie, was strong in the MSN, came rather in the form of support in the Museum of Podgórze and constituted the granting of permission for an employee to become involved in the POLIN Museum. Nevertheless, every case study proves the growing awareness of museum directors that operating beyond museum walls, taking part in public discussions on topics not necessarily related to collections and programme activities, may be as important as their obligations as listed in the museum definition, that is to acquire, conserve, research, communicate and exhibit.

None of the mission statements refers to physical space – the museum building; only references to geographical space are included – Silesia, Kraków, Warsaw, Poland, Europe, the world.⁴⁷ The involvement of museums in the outside world is included in statements like “We listen to the city”, “We want to be useful... closely tied with Warsaw, its history and inhabitants”. The discussed projects do not affect museum missions; on the contrary they constitute a new reading of those missions and understanding of what the museum is or can be. Museums have physical boundaries, but the scope of their interest and public resonance is not limited.

⁴⁵ CZAPIŃSKI, Janusz. Stan społeczeństwa obywatelskiego. In: *Diagnoza społeczna 2015. Warunki i jakość życia Polaków*, Janusz Czapinowski and Tomasz Panek (eds). Warszawa: Rada Monitoringu Społecznego, 2015. In: *Quarterly of University of Finance and Management in Warsaw* 9(4), 2015, pp. 341–344.

⁴⁶ CZAPIŃSKI, Janusz. Stan społeczeństwa obywatelskiego..., p. 348.

⁴⁷ These are the mission statements of the four museums: Muzeum Śląskie: “Bound by the heritage of the region, its historical dynamics, its numerous cultures and the leading role of industry, and yet recognising Silesia’s intellectual and artistic background, Muzeum Śląskie provides a space for dialogue with the past and the achievements of modernity to further explore Silesia, Poland and Europe.” Museum of Kraków: “We describe, document and tell Kraków. We listen to the city...” MSN: “... We want to be useful. We treat art as a means of communication, of discovering and understanding the world... We move beyond art, but are always inspired by it. The Museum is closely tied with Warsaw, its history and inhabitants, all the while actively taking part in artistic life in Poland and abroad.” POLIN Museum: “To recall and preserve the memory of the history of Polish Jews, contributing to the mutual understanding and respect amongst Poles and Jews as well as other societies of Europe and the world.”

Folga-Januszewska anticipates that “good intentions need to be supported by good legislation ... Museums will operate in their milieu, work for their surroundings and obtain support in response to their actions – if only a suitable legal context emerges, regulating the competences of museums.”⁴⁸ It seems to me that such legislation could result from education. The authorities would need to be convinced that it was important to back museums in their presence in the public space. If the education was successful and recognition was achieved, perhaps new legislation would not even be needed.

Museums as agents of change, museums caring for the common good, seem to be the most relevant response to insufficiencies in civil societies and in culture. One may, however, ask a justified question: Is a museum an institution that should lead its own “policy”? Is it what the museums are for in the first place? These questions lead to a discussion on the non-neutrality of museums. It has been convincingly argued that museums are by no means neutral,⁴⁹ although some museum directors act as if they were and create an illusion of objectivity. I shall reverse the question and ask: If not its own “policy”, then whose? Local authorities? Government? Donors? Political agendas are tricky, yet many museums indeed get involved in politics. An activist position, however, does not require radicality.

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⁴⁸ FOLGA-JANUSZEWSKA, Museum and Its Milieu..., p. 12.

⁴⁹ See the global advocacy initiative Museums Are Not Neutral at <https://www.museumsarenotneutral.com>.

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- INTERVIEW WITH GUIDO MORPURGO. April 2nd, 2020.
- INTERVIEW WITH MELANIA TUTAK, curator of the Museum of Podgórze (branch of the Museum of Kraków). June 4th, 2020.

Cultural Heritage Viability: An Example of Traditional Transport in Central Europe

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Cultural Heritage Viability: An Example of Traditional Transport in Central Europe

This paper focuses on traditional transport as a form of cultural heritage in Central Europe, looking at the modes of transport that are still viable today as a part of people's lives and livelihoods, as well as strategies to ensure their survival. The importance of preserving the original purpose of traditional transport modes, as well as their acquisition of new functions in the modern era, are examined in the context of the sustainability and viability of cultural heritage. The article also highlights crucial role of promoting the visibility of cultural phenomena to the public in encouraging their protection and ongoing sustainability. It also draws attention to some less positive examples of how forms of traditional transport are currently presented, examining approaches that may lead to the alteration of traditions and the construction of distorted images of cultural heritage. In the conclusion, I propose distinguishing between forms of traditional transport that continue to maintain people's livelihoods or generate entertainment, and forms which are merely reconstructions of traditional phenomena, intended only as imitations to recall the past.

Keywords: cultural heritage viability; traditional transport; intangible cultural heritage (ICH); UNESCO; Central Europe

Introduction

On an international level, there have been extensive and thematically diverse discussions on the viability and sustainability of cultural heritage.¹ The specific issue of the viability of traditional transport has, however, yet to appear in these discussions. Nevertheless, the topic of transport heritage viability is a topical one, as evidenced by the fact that elements of traditional transport are included in many Central European countries' Representative Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).²

¹ KIM, Soojung, WHITFORD Michelle M. and ARCODIA, Charles V. Development of intangible cultural heritage as a sustainable tourism resource: the intangible cultural heritage. In: *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 14(5–6), 2019, pp. 422–435; PHILLIPS, Dan. Archeology, Conservation and Enhancement. The Role of Viability in the UK Planning System. In: *Historic Environment: Policy and Practice*, 10(3–4), 2019, pp. 345–362.

² Czechia: Timber-Rafting Tradition on the Vltava River (2017); Slovakia: Mountain Carrying (2018), Husbandry of Lipizzaner Horses at Topoľčianky (2017); Poland: Rafting traditions in Ulanów (2014); Germany: Timber Rafting (2014); Austria: Knowledge of Lipizzaner breeding (2016), Knowledge of Timber Rafting on the Upper Drau (2014); Hungary: Lipizzaner Horse Breeding in Hungary (2018); Slovenia: The making of pletna boats and using them on Lake Bled (2019), Cable ferrying (2016), Making drevak boats (2015).

European ethnologists began to take an interest in traditional transport mainly in the second half of the twentieth century. Examples include Olaf Bockhorn in Austria;³ Józef Gajek and Zygmunt Kłodnicki in Poland;⁴ Ludvík Baran⁵ and Magdalena Paríková⁶ in Czechoslovakia; and Attila Paládi-Kovács in Hungary.⁷ In 1973, a multiauthor work on *Land Transport in Europe* was published.⁸ The interest in this topic persists today among contemporary ethnologists, including Katarína Slobodová Nováková⁹ and Peter Slavkovský¹⁰ in Slovakia; Aleš Smrčka and Daniel Drápala in Czechia;¹¹ and Anna Drożdż in Poland.¹² However, the research outputs of these authors mainly focus on historical discourse.



Fig. 1: A mountain porter carrying goods in the High Tatras in 2016.
Photo: Pavol Barabáš, with the author's permission.



Fig. 2: A mountain porter and cottager.
Photo: Pavol Barabáš, with the author's permission.

³ BOCKHORN, Olaf. *Bäuerliche Fabrzeuge aus dem Mühlviertel*. Linz: OÖ. Musealverein – Gesellschaft für Landeskunde, 1988.

⁴ GAJEK, Józef (ed.). *Kwestionariusz nr. 5: Transport i komunikacja lądowa*. Wrocław: PTL, 1960; KŁODNICKI, Zygmunt. *Reliktowe formy transportu nasobnego i ręcznego w kulturach ludowych środkowej Europy*. Praca doktorska. Wrocław, 1976.

⁵ BARAN, Ludvík. Transport in Czechoslovakia as an Ethnographical and Social Phenomenon. In: FENTON, Alexander, PODOLÁK, Ján and RASMUSSEN, Holger (eds). *Land Transport in Europe*. Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet, 1973, pp. 57–89.

⁶ PARÍKOVÁ, Magdalena. *Návod na etnografický výskum transportu a dopravy*. Bratislava: Slovenská národopisná spoločnosť pri SAV, 1979.

⁷ PALÁDI-KOVÁCS, Attila. Einige Bemerkungen über die Traggeräte der ungarischen Bauernschaft. In: SZABAD-FALVI, József and UJVÁRY, Zoltán (eds). *Studia Ethnographica et Folkloristica in honorem Béla Gunda. Műveltség Hagyomány XIII-XIV*. Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem, 1971, pp. 409–426.

⁸ FENTON, Alexander, PODOLÁK, Ján and RASMUSSEN, Holger (eds). *Land Transport in Europe*. Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet, 1973.

⁹ NOVÁKOVÁ, Katarína S. Nosenie na hlave ako archaický spôsob transportu nákladov v európskom priestore. In: *Národopisný vestník*, 79(1), 2020, pp. 43–66.

¹⁰ SLAVKOVSKÝ, Peter. *S nošou za industrializáciou krajiny. Tradičné podoby dopravy na slovenskom vidieku*. Bratislava: VEDA and Ústav etnológie Slovenskej akadémie vied, 2014.

¹¹ DRÁPALA, Daniel. Doprava. In: BROUČEK, Stanislav and JEŘÁBEK, Richard (eds). *Lidová kultura. Národopisná encyklopedie Čech, Moravy a Slezska. 2. svazek*. Praha: Mladá fronta, 2007, pp. 449–451; SMRČKA, Aleš. Etnografický výzkum tradiční dopravy v českých a slovenských zemích – historie, současný stav a perspektivy. In: *Slovenský národopis-Slovak Ethnology*, 65(1), 2017, 7–25.

¹² DROŽDŽ, Anna. Transport i komunikacja lądowa w materiałach źródłowych i publikacjach Polskiego Atlasu Etnograficznego – stan obecny i nowe perspektywy. In: *Národopisný vestník*, 77(1), 2018, pp. 5–24.

Therefore, I would like to extend the discussion of traditional transport to explore the issue of its current viability. The aim is to acquaint ethnologists and museologists with the various forms of traditional transport that can currently be encountered in the field and, at the same time, draw attention to the issue of their viability and protection. The conclusions regarding the viability of cultural heritage with regard to traditional transport and the issues around its protection are based, apart from literature, on data collected during my long-term field research conducted between 2009–2020. During the course of my research – which involved observations and interviews conducted mainly in Czechia, Slovakia and Poland – I encountered various forms of transport that still exist in their original form and serve their original function, as well as some that exist in a changed form and are used in new cultural-social contexts.

Forms of transport heritage viability

Unchanged form

Traditional transport has been preserved in Central Europe in various forms and is still used, with variations in intensity and frequency, to this day.¹³ In the observed area, one of the unchanged forms is the traditional manner of transporting goods using mountain porters (Fig. 1, Fig. 2), which was added in 2019 to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovakia.¹⁴ The continuity of mountain portering has been maintained until the present day thanks to the year-round need to supply high-altitude huts with goods.¹⁵ The profession is unique not only due to the preservation of its original traditional form – that is, the transportation of goods in a frame backpack – but also due to its rarity on the European continent. In Europe, the mountain porter profession is, at present, only associated with the cultural space of the Low and High Tatras and the Great Fatra mountain range in Slovakia. The reason for this is simple: cottages in these areas are located high in the mountains and are difficult to access. No infrastructure exists to allow access by car, therefore the only option is to go on foot. Alternative means of transportation, by helicopter, for instance, are simply too expensive.¹⁶

In addition to their traditional duties as goods suppliers, porters participate in an official race called the *Sherpa Rally*, which was established in 1985. Participants compete in ascent speed and carrying heavy cargo, while tourists spectate and cheer.¹⁷ Although this kind of event can be considered folklorism (a term explored in more detail below), it demonstrates that cultural heritage need not represent a completely unaltered cultural entity. On the contrary, some authors argue for the importance of innovation in the sustainability of cultural heritage and indicate the importance of cultural elements being open to change in order to retain their

¹³ Cultural heritage in an unchanged form is defined according to its originality and authenticity as heritage consisting entirely of genuine cultural elements. If an objective approach is applied to evaluating authenticity, it would be defined as the genuine, unstaged presentation of heritage; NING, Wang. Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. In: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 1999, pp. 349–370; LOVRENTJEV, Sonja. Intangible Cultural Heritage and Tourism. In: *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6 (5S1), 2015, p. 523.

¹⁴ ICH lists – Mountain Carrying, accessed February 5, 2020, available at www.ludovakultura.sk/en/list-ich/mountain-carrying

¹⁵ NOVÁKOVÁ, Katarína and TURINICOVA, Zuzana. Sherpas in High Tatras as a Touristic Phenomenon (Analysis of a specific Alpine Profession as a European attraction). In: *International Conference on Economics, Education and Humanities (ICEEH'14)*, Bali: International Center of Economics, Humanities & Management, 2014, p. 193.

¹⁶ NOVÁKOVÁ and TURINICOVA, Sherpas in..., p. 193.

¹⁷ NOVÁKOVÁ, Katarína. *Tatranskí nosiči*. Tatranská Lomnica: I&B, 2008, pp. 90–93.

significance.¹⁸ From this perspective, these portering competitions offer a means to maintain the generational knowledge transfer of this centuries-old tradition and ensure its viability.



Fig. 3: A horse hauling wood in the Krkonoše mountain range in 2012. Photo: author.

Another unchanged form of traditional transport in Central Europe is horse logging (Fig.3), a practice which is unique due to its constancy. The specifics of this mode of transportation have remained unchanged – except for minor innovations such as adjustments in the work regime¹⁹ – for centuries, as has the method of transferring knowledge to the next generation. Most forestry coachmen learn the basics of their profession by observing and gaining experience from older coach-

men and pursue the profession because it is already followed in the family. I observed the present form of cultural transmission – which illustrates the practice’s viability – while conducting field research in the Czech mountains. During a structured interview, a coachman mentioned that he was bringing his eight-year-old grandson to the forest and that the child would be helping by giving commands to the horse.²⁰

The transportation of timber by horses is not limited to specific areas, but can be found in most mountainous areas of Czechia, Slovakia and other Central European countries.²¹ The reasons for its preservation today are pragmatic: horses are often the only means of moving logs in challenging mountain terrains where access is difficult. It is also an environmentally friendly form of transport, which is perceived positively by visitors to the forests.²²

Regarding the future sustainability of this form of traditional transport, the greatest obstacle, in my view, may be insufficient visibility. At a local level, a number of projects are re-introducing or maintaining horse-based transport in forestry. However, coachmen do not act in an organised manner, nor do they form larger associations to coordinate their activities. The extent to which coachmen identify with their profession is subjective and questionable, as is the definition of a coachman’s work as cultural heritage, as defined by Article 2 of the 2003 UNESCO Convention. Some coachmen do regard their profession as their ancestors’ legacy, and as something that needs to be sustained and passed on.²³ Many, however, do their job

¹⁸ CHAN, Clare S. C. Sustainability of indigenous folk tales, music and cultural heritage through innovation. In: *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 8(3), 2018, pp. 342–361.

¹⁹ Interview with K. H. (b. 1953), coachman, December 17, 2017.

²⁰ Interview with J. B. (b. 1948), coachman, August 23, 2013.

²¹ FICSOR, Csilla and MALATINSZKY, Ákos. A lovas közelítés, mint természetkímélő anyagmozgatási módszer helyzete a hazai erdőterületeken. In: *Journal of Landscape Ecology*, 12(1), 2014, pp. 127–135.

²² KADLEC, Jiří and MATYSOVÁ, Zlata. Heavy Horses in City Forests of Ostrava. In: FIALOVÁ, Jitka and PERNICOVÁ, Dana (eds). *Public recreation and landscape protection – with man hand in hand! 2015 Conference Proceeding*. Brno: Czech Society of Landscape Engineers and Department of Landscape Management of Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology of Mendel University in Brno, 2015, p. 88.

²³ Interview with J. G. (1957), coachman, November 5, 2019.

simply as a means to earn money and make no reference to cultural heritage or seek to train successors to carry on the tradition.²⁴

I've always been one to promote honour, but there's no honour in this craft. I said so even to the younger guys. But the young ones won't keep it up. Just a few of them. [...] They have horses, but they mostly work with tractors and they end up using the horses for just two months of the year. They prefer tractors.²⁵

The situation observed in the Czech Republic and Slovakia is similar across Central Europe, and possibly even further afield. For example, in Hungary, as Csilla Ficsor and Ákos Malatinszky claim, only few people have the knowledge and are willing to work with horses, since the job requires significant adjustments to one's personal life.²⁶ If technology continues to advance and the need to use horses to transport timber ceases to exist, this form of traditional transport will probably be lost. Moreover, the profession of coachman is not listed for protection in Central Europe.

Horse breeding presents a different case. In Slovakia, specifically in the Veľká lúka na Muráni area, horses have been bred specifically for forestry purposes since the 1950s. In 1997, they were declared a protected breed.²⁷ Breeding non-draught horses is conducted in a similar manner. For example, the Lipizzaner is a breed registered on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovakia,²⁸ on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Austria: Customs, knowledge, craft techniques,²⁹ and on the List of Elements on the National Inventory of ICH in Hungary.³⁰

Other forms of heritage transport, such as transporting materials on a wheelbarrow or in a textile sheet, face similar challenges with regard to their future sustainability. Textile sheets are occasionally used by individuals to transport hay from one place to another in activities associated with 'mountain chalet farming',³¹ which is typical in the Krkonoše Mountains³² and the Austrian Alps.³³ Recently, however, there has been a boom in Europe in the use of textile

²⁴ Interview with P. J. (1960), coachman, July 12, 2018.

²⁵ Interview with J. G. (1957), coachman, November 5, 2019.

²⁶ FICSOR and MALATINSZKY, A lovas közelítés..., p. 135.

²⁷ ŠMELKO, Vladimír. História a súčasnosť chovu norika muránskeho typu v š. p. LESY SR. In: STEINOVÁ, Šárka (ed.). *Z histórie lesníbo dopravníctví*. Praha: Národní zemědělské muzeum, Banská Bystrica: LESY Slovenskej republiky š. p., Zvolen: Lesnícke a drevárske muzeum Zvolen, 2012, pp. 198–199.

²⁸ VOJANSKÁ, Lubica (ed.). *Reprezentatívny zoznam nehmotného kultúrneho dedičstva Slovenska, Zoznam najlepších spôsobov ochrany nehmotného kultúrneho dedičstva na Slovensku*. Bratislava: Ministerstvo kultúry Slovenskej republiky – SEUK – Centrum pre tradičnú ľudovú kultúru, 2018, pp. 40–41; DOVČ, Peter, KAVAR, Tatjana, SÖLKNER, Hans and ACHMANN, Roland. Development of the Lipizzan horse breed. In: *Reproduction in Domestic Animals*, 41(4), 2006, pp. 280–285.

²⁹ Immaterielles Kulturerbe: Bräuche, Wissen, Handwerkstechniken – Wissen um die Lipizzanerzucht, accessed February 6, 2020, <https://www.unesco.at/kultur/immaterielles-kulturerbe/oesterreichisches-verzeichnis/detail/article/wissen-um-die-lipizzanerzucht/>

³⁰ Intangible Cultural Heritage in Hungary – Lipizzaner horse breeding in Hungary, accessed February 6st, 2020, http://szellemikulturalisorokseg.hu/index0_en.php?name=en_0_lipica

³¹ The phenomenon of mountain chalet farming refers to permanently (year-round) inhabited mountain dwellings with small farms. The owners would typically keep a goat and a cow, primarily for milk. Livestock were grazed in meadows or above the upper forest line, while the land around the dwelling, known as a grass garden, was fertilized regularly and used only to produce hay, to build up enough supplies for the winter to feed the livestock. The highlanders made butter, cottage cheese and cheese, and transported these dairy products down to the valley to sell.

³² SMRČKA, Aleš. Die Bedeutung des Heus und sein traditioneller Transport im Riesengebirge. In: *Cesky lid*, 101(1), 2014, pp. 92–93.

³³ LECHNER, Eva and HÖLZL, Reinhard. *Tiroler Almen*. Innsbruck: Loewenzahn, 2008.

sheets for carrying babies,³⁴ an example demonstrating the transfer of a traditional means of transport from its original context to modern households. Again, the functionality of the phenomenon plays an essential role in preserving selected elements of cultural heritage.

Folklorism

Traditional transport in the region of Central Europe can also be found in the form of folklorism³⁵ – where traditional culture is presented and/or revived in the form of folk performances or scientific reconstructions.³⁶ Water transport in the Czech Republic represents one such phenomenon, specifically, log floating in the Šumava canals and timber rafting on the Vltava River, both of which are now carried out purely for the benefit of spectators, and not as a genuine means of transport relied upon by the local populace.

In Slovakia, folklorism is also encountered in water transport in the form of commercial water rides for tourists on special rafts, called *plťe*, on the rivers Dunajec, Váh, Orava and Hron. Tourists who ride on *plťe* rafts for a fee learn about the toponyms of navigation routes, the history and traditions of rafting, the lives of former rafters, and the cultural-historical context of the surroundings. The transformation of the former Czechoslovakia's traditional methods of water transport into their current folklorism form dates to around the 1960s, when the experimental reconstruction of rafting practices was conducted in order to document the tradition. This was followed by demonstration raft rides for tourists in the twenty-first century.³⁷ Similar demonstrations of raft navigation are also offered in Austria (Drau River),



Fig. 4: A false presentation of raft navigation on the Vchynice-Te-tov Canal in the Šumava mountain range. Captured in 2014. Photo: author.

Germany (Lake Oberpfuhlsee, Finow Canal, Muldenberg Reservoir, and the Kronach, Rodach, Saale, Werra, Loisach, Isar, Nagold and Kinzig rivers), Poland (San, Wisła and Dunajec rivers) and Slovenia (Drau and Sava rivers).

The commercial exploitation of intangible cultural heritage or tradition cannot be completely condemned, since heritage also fulfils an economic function and supports tourism.³⁸ Many debates within the scientific community are attempting to determine to what extent commodification affects the

³⁴ NOVÁKOVÁ, Katarína. Tradičné spôsoby prepravy detí v Európe a podoby ich súčasnej revitalizácie. In: *Ethnologia Europaea Centralis*, 10, 2011, pp. 55–64.

³⁵ The use of the term “folklorism” is preferred to “revival of tradition” and “revitalizing traditions”. The reason is that many changed phenomena of traditional transport continuously follow on the forms of the original likeness or function. Thus, the existence of the phenomenon has not been interrupted.

³⁶ ISTENIČ, Saša P. Texts and contexts of foklore. In: *Traditiones*, 40(3), 2011, p. 51.

³⁷ SLABA, Martin. Splavení posledního vltavského voru – příběh jedinečného muzejního experimentu z roku 1971. In: STEINOVÁ, Šárka (ed.). *Z historie lesního dopravnictví*. Praha: Národní zemědělské muzeum, Banská Bystrica: LESY Slovenskej republiky š. p., Zvolen: Lesnícke a drevárské muzeum Zvolen, 2012, pp. 171–179.

³⁸ PETRONELA, Tudorache. The importance of the intangible cultural heritage in the economy. In: *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 39, 2016, pp. 731–736; Heritagisation can also be found in the food industry; PETROVA, Ivanka. Traditional culture and contemporary economy: Constructing cultural heritage through bread-making. In: *Folklore (Estonia)*, 71, 2018, pp. 73–88.

sustainability of cultural heritage. Some argue that the viability of cultural heritage can only be maintained if it is economically viable for the community.³⁹ This can be applied not only to cultural phenomena maintained in the form of folklorism, but also to unchanged forms of traditional transport which do not benefit from tourism. The economic function still has a fundamental impact on their existence. However, the additional processes of commodification and touristification, as some authors mention, pose the risk of adversely altering the authenticity of cultural heritage.⁴⁰ This is also an issue in the case of traditional transport. The problem arises when a cultural element is presented as an unchanged tradition or is linked to the wrong location by practitioners of the tradition in an effort to present cultural heritage to the public and increase its visibility. Thus, folklore becomes ‘fakelore’, defined as a fake tradition or false folklore that is presented as authentic.⁴¹



Fig. 5: Preparing *plě* rafts for tourist rides on the Orava River in Slovakia. 2015. Photo: author.

This phenomenon can be encountered in the Czech Republic in the mountains of Šumava, where tourists are shown the binding of raft boards and the subsequent navigation of the Vchynice-Tetov Canal (Fig.4). In the past, the Vchynice-Tetov and Schwarzenberg Canals were only used to float unbound logs.⁴² In Český Krumlov, southern Bohemia, one can observe sightseers riding on rafts, presented to them as traditional timber rafting, even though the vessels have nothing to do with the original rafts.⁴³ A somewhat distorted image of cultural heritage is also

created by the Slovakian *plě* raft rides for tourists. If one compares the appearance of the modern *plě* rafts to the originals, considerable differences in their construction can be observed, largely due to the change in their purpose, which is now to facilitate sightseeing rides for tourists. In the case of the vessels on the Orava River, the differences in construction are minor (Fig. 5); the main difference is that modern *plě* rafts are constructed of tightly bound logs. The rafts used for tourist rides on the Dunajec River, on the other hand, are significantly different. Although it is logical that their different purpose should be reflected in an altered appearance, this fact must be considered when the cultural phenomenon is presented to the lay public, in order to avoid creating confusion and or generating a false image of cultural heritage.

The importance of preserving traditional water transport today is highlighted by the fact that the timber-rafting tradition on the Vltava River is the only form of traditional transport

³⁹ OLALERE, Folasayo E. Intangible cultural heritage as tourism product: The Malaysia experience. In: *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 8(3), 2019, pp. 7–8.

⁴⁰ KIM, WHITFORD and ARCODIA, Development of..., pp. 422–435; DOGANER, Sedef and DUPONT, William. Accelerating cultural heritage tourism in San Antonio: A community-based tourism development proposal for the missions historic district. In: *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, 10(1), 2015, pp. 1–19.

⁴¹ DORSON, Richard M. *Folklore and fakelore: essays toward a discipline of folk studies*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 5.

⁴² BERNAU, Friedrich. *Der Böhmerwald*. Prag: Druck und Verlag von J. Otto in Prag, 1888, p. 103; BLAU, Josef. *Böhmerwälder Hausindustrie und Volkskunst*. Prag: J. G. Calvesche k. u. k. Hof und Universitäts Buchhandlung, 1917, pp. 66–79.

⁴³ Voroplavba, accessed May 7st, 2021, <http://voroplavba.cz>



Fig. 6: *Timber rafting on the Vltava River. 2020.*
Photo: author.

mentioned in the Czech List of Intangible Elements of Traditional Folk Culture, having been added in 2017 (Fig. 6). One of the reasons this phenomenon is under national protection is that the timber rafting tradition, while no longer essential for people's livelihoods, still carries important knowledge about the technologies used to make the original rafts and helps preserve navigation folk knowledge.⁴⁴ Responsibility for increasing the visibility of timber rafting currently falls to the International Association of Timber Raftsmen, which consists of 38 national asso-

ciations.⁴⁵ Timber rafting appears on various other Central European countries' national lists. Germany lists timber rafting generally,⁴⁶ while Austria specifies "knowledge of timber rafting on the Upper Drau",⁴⁷ and Poland highlights "rafting traditions in Ulanów".⁴⁸ The National Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovenia does not feature timber rafting, but does mention other traditional methods of transport, specifically, making *pletna* boats and using them on Lake Bled, cable ferrying, and making *drevake* boats.⁴⁹ These examples can all still be considered an unchanged form of cultural heritage.

In addition, in 2021, six European states – Austria, Czechia, Germany, Latvia, Poland and Spain – jointly submitted a transnational nomination for timber rafting to be added to the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.⁵⁰

These examples clearly show the importance of identifying cultural heritage phenomena and raising their visibility by forming associations, organising cultural and social events for association members and the public, and raising public awareness by including these practices on lists of protected cultural heritage.

Although the examples mentioned above may lead to timber rafting being assessed as an essentially folkloristic phenomenon, repackaged for tourists, the possibility that some of its original functions will be restored in the future cannot be definitively dismissed. For example, wood is currently experiencing something of a renaissance in contemporary construction prac-

⁴⁴ Národní ústav lidové kultury – Tradiční vorařství na řece Vltavě, accessed March 4, 2020, <http://www.nulk.cz/2018/10/04/tradice-vorarstvi-na-rece-vltave>

⁴⁵ International Association of Timber-Raftsmen, accessed March 4st, 2020, <https://raftsmen.org>

⁴⁶ Nationwide Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage – Timber Rafting, accessed March 4, 2020, <https://www.unesco.de/en/timber-rafting>

⁴⁷ Intangible Cultural Heritage – Practices, Knowledge, Craftsmanship, accessed March 4, 2020, <https://www.unesco.at/en/culture/intangible-cultural-heritage/austrian-inventory/detail-1/article/knowledge-of-timber-rafting-on-the-upper-drau>

⁴⁸ SADOWSKA-MAZUR, Katarzyna and WŁODARCZYK, Julia (eds). *Polish Intangible Cultural Heritage List*. Warszawa: Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa, 2016, pp. 10–11.

⁴⁹ Koordinator varstva nesovne kulturne dediščine, accessed March 4, 2020, <http://www.nesovnedediscina.si/en/register-of-intangible-cultural-heritage>

⁵⁰ Radio Prague International, accessed March 18, 2021, <http://english.radio.cz/czechs-submit-joint-unesco-bid-timber-rafting-tradition-8712338>



Fig. 7: Races on *robačky* sledges in the Krkonoše mountain range. 2017. Photo: author.

tices for ecological reasons,⁵¹ and floating and soaking wood is beneficial for its natural preservation.

Races are a good example of the use of folklorism to support the viability of traditional terrestrial transport heritage. This approach can be seen in races on *kerně* sledges in Slovakia, races on *robačky* sledges in the Krkonoše Mountains on the Czech-Polish border (Fig. 7), and coachmen's races in various locations around the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Other examples include riding logs through long wooden

troughs, such as the Rakytovo water channel near Dolný Harmanec in Slovakia.⁵² Porters' races are also held occasionally in Krkonoše, in the Czech Republic where, unlike Slovakia, the profession of porter has already entered the realm of folklorism.⁵³

These examples loosely connect to the above-mentioned notion that cultural heritage can be preserved when it is economically viable for the community.⁵⁴ While this view can be accepted, other factors relevant to the viability of cultural heritage, such as entertainment or interest in history, should not be forgotten. Folklorism can therefore also be seen as “a new awareness that seeks to find novel ways to communicate with the past”.⁵⁵ Based on the examples above, I believe it is useful to distinguish two approaches to maintaining the viability of cultural heritage through folklorism. The first type involves merely the reconstruction of traditional phenomena and remembrance of the past. The second type of folklorism imbues traditional phenomena with a completely new function, such as entertainment (e.g., sledge races), or else provides a new form of livelihood, such as charging tourists for raft rides.

Extinct forms

The case of transport heritage demonstrates that many traditional technologies which were passed down through generations disappeared as a result of increasing mechanisation, leaving only rare instances preserved by a limited number of individuals (for example, see Fig. 8).

⁵¹ MAY, Sarah. Holz. Ökonomien, Politiken, kulturwissenschaftliche Potenziale. *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, 114(2), 2018, p. 247.

⁵² JUNEK, Jiří, FIALOVÁ, Jitka and KUBÍČKOVÁ, Hana. Reconstruction of the unique water trough at Harmanec as the example of the attractiveness. In: FIALOVÁ, Jitka and PERNICOVÁ, Dana (eds). *Public recreation and landscape protection – with man hand in hand! 2015 Conference Proceeding*. Brno: Czech Society of Landscape Engineers and Department of Landscape Management of Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology of Mendel University in Brno, 2015, pp. 201–204.

⁵³ Interview with H. H. (1933), porter, January 24, 2011.

⁵⁴ OLALERE, Intangible cultural heritage..., pp. 7–8.

⁵⁵ NURYANTI, Wiendu. Heritage and postmodern tourism. In: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 23(2), 1996, p. 250; ISTENIČ, Texts and..., p. 51.



Fig. 8: *Transporting manure on a horse-drawn sledge in the Nový Hrozenkov area. 2019. Photo: author.*

After 1945, as a consequence of water reservoir construction, timber rafting for economic purposes disappeared from Czech and Slovak rivers.⁵⁶ Other forms of transport, such as simple skids, sledges or classic wooden wagons, began to disappear in their original form in the former Czechoslovakia in the mid-twentieth century due to the development of more advanced technologies. Nevertheless, in the second half of the 20th century, traditional transport in its original form and purpose could still be found in certain areas.⁵⁷ For example, in the Krkonoše Mountains, the highest mountain range in the Czech Republic, logs and timber were routinely transported on sledges in the 1960s.⁵⁸ Similarly, in Slovakia in the 1960s, ethnographers documented timber sledging⁵⁹ and wooden wagons; these were used still in the 1990s, for example, by Carpathian herdsmen on the Slovak-Polish border.⁶⁰ In these cases, we cannot speak of the efforts to preserve the viability of cultural heritage, but rather efforts to preserve its memory through information collected during salvage ethnographic research and presented in academic publications. Researchers were fortunate that, at the time when Europe's

⁵⁶ SCHEUFLER, Vladimír and ŠOLC, Václav. *Voroplavba na jihočeských tocích*. Praha: Ústav pro etnografii a folkloristiku ČAV, 1970, p. 43; The transportation of timber in a bound or unbound state by water was stricken by the first wave of decline in traditional transport in some places in the Czech and Slovak lands at the end of the nineteenth century; JERÁBEK, Richard. *Karpatské voraštvi v 19. století*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1961, pp. 19, 96.

⁵⁷ BARAN, Transport in..., pp. 57–89.

⁵⁸ LYSÝ, František. *Lesní těžba*. Praha: Státní zemědělské nakladatelství, 1963, pp. 327–328.

⁵⁹ PODOLÁK, Ján. Zimná doprava sena z horských lúk na západnej strane Veľkej Fatry. In: *Slovenský národopis*, 10(4), 1962, pp. 565–574; UHRÍKOVÁ, Tatiana. Tradičné spôsoby dopravy dreva na dolnej Orave. In: *Slovenský národopis*, 18(4), 1970, pp. 627–639.

⁶⁰ KOCÓJ, Ewa. Powroty do tematów pasterskich. Zwyczaj i wierzenia związane z rozpoczęciem sezonu pasterskiego na pograniczu polsko-słowackim w xxi wieku. In: *Etnografia Polska*, 62(1–2), 2018, pp. 85–106.

traditional transport was disappearing or changing significantly, in some places it could still be captured in its original forms. Thus, in addition to documenting cultural-historical background, the technological processes involved were also documented, including the production of various means of transport. Moreover, in many European countries, including the former Czechoslovakia, ethnography and folkloristics developed institutionally after World War II.⁶¹ Salvage ethnography was not a local matter, specific to the former Czechoslovakia or other Central-European countries, such as Poland,⁶² Austria⁶³ or Hungary.⁶⁴ Traditional presentation of transport flourished all over Europe. The appeal of this sector of traditional culture in the European environment also increased with the establishment of the *Ethnological Commission for the History and Development of European Agriculture* during a session of the European ethnological society *Société Internationale d' Ethnologie et de Folklore* (SIEF) in Prague in 1966.⁶⁵

Change of transport terminology

One of the ways to maintain the viability of traditional transport and thereby preserve them is through museum protection and registration on local or international heritage lists. The problem is how to define what is valuable and should be protected. A concrete step towards protecting intangible cultural artefacts was taken by UNESCO in 1989, with its *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*.⁶⁶ This document, as the title implies, still works with the concepts of 'tradition' and 'folklore', which we also encounter in the transport sector. European researchers have commonly worked with the term 'traditional transport' in the past⁶⁷ and it is still used,⁶⁸ although the concept of 'tradition' is subject to critical discourse in the academic environment. Discussions continue regarding its artificial construction, and further questions persist, such as when tradition ceased being a part of lifestyle and became a part of national, political and economic strategies.⁶⁹ However, some European researchers oppose this view, suggesting that it is not always precisely correct to talk about inventing tradition, but rather about revitalising it.⁷⁰ Furthermore, in regard to different forms of transport or even clothing and footwear, only the materials used were changed, while their function remained

⁶¹ SMRČKA, Aleš. Etnografický výzkum tradiční dopravy v českých a slovenských zemích – historie, současný stav a perspektivy. In: *Slovenský národopis-Slovak Ethnology*, 65(1), 2017, p. 10.

⁶² GAJEK, Kwestionariusz nr. 5...

⁶³ BOCKHORN, Bäuerliche Fahrzeuge...

⁶⁴ PALÁDI-KOVÁCS, Einige Bemerkungen..., pp. 409–426.

⁶⁵ JACOBETT, Wolfgang. Ziele und Aufgaben der ethnologischen Kommission für Geschichte und Entwicklung der europäischen Landwirtschaft. In: *Volkskunde*, 68, 1967, pp. 3–11.

⁶⁶ VECCO, Marilena. A definition of cultural heritage: From the tangible to the intangible. In: *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, 11(3), 2010, p. 323.

⁶⁷ MARINOV, Vasil. Traditionelle Transportmittel in Bulgarien. In: FENTON, Alexander, Podolák, Ján and Rasmussen, Holger (eds). *Land Transport in Europe*. Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet, 1973, pp. 347–394; PARÍKOVÁ, Návod na...; UHRÍKOVÁ, Tatiana. Tradičné spôsoby dopravy dreva na dolnej Orave. In: *Slovenský národopis*, 18(4), 1970, pp. 627–639.

⁶⁸ KŁODNICKI, Zygmunt. Transport i komunikacja w Karpatach Północnych. In: KŁODNICKI, Zygmunt, PIENCZAK, Agnieszka and STOLIČNÁ, Rastislava (eds). *Polska – Słowacja. Pogranicze kulturowe i etniczne. Archiwum Etnograficzne 49*. Wrocław-Cieszyn: Polskie Towarzystwo Ludoznawcze 2009, pp. 117–134; NOVÁKOVÁ, Tradičné spôsoby..., pp. 55–64; SMRČKA, Etnografický výzkum..., p. 7–25.

⁶⁹ KULIGOWSKI, Waldemar. On new meanings of tradition. Globalization, politics and questions for anthropology. In: *Cesky lid*, 101(3), 2014, p. 323.

⁷⁰ KOCÓJ, Powroty do tematów..., p. 86.

the same.⁷¹ Even the concept of ‘folklore’ is not foreign to transport, as can be seen in the European academic environment, where the term “folk transport”⁷² is sometimes applied. The concept of “folk” itself is widely used in many European countries, as are its multiple equivalents, such as “popular culture”. The concept has thus gained different meanings in different countries.⁷³ As a result of this terminological ambiguity, divergent connotations and lack of consensus on the meaning of the above-mentioned terms, which are still applied in the humanities today, the question arises as to what exactly should be protected as traditional transport (and traditional elements in other sectors), what it should be called, and how it should be presented and publicised. All these questions fed into the creation of the relatively new concept of ‘intangible cultural heritage’.⁷⁴

Conclusion

It is clear that while cultural heritage can serve as a calculated political and economic tool, it still forms a natural part of current lifestyles. Traditional transport is a representative example of this. Nowadays it exists in various forms, especially in unchanged forms (e.g. horse logging, mountain porters), which may disappear as technologies develop, or may be reimaged along the lines of folklorism (e.g. raft rides for tourists, horse and sledge races).

The basic requirement for preserving often unique phenomena of traditional culture is to maintain their function, either for entertainment or as a means of living. Cultural elements should be open to change which can help them retain their significance.⁷⁵ However, in times when society is experiencing great pressure from relentless modernisation, commercialisation, and global market forces, this may not suffice. In my opinion, making traditional culture visible to the public may help raise awareness and can be crucially important in maintaining the viability of traditional transport in its various forms. Cultural marketing is therefore essential, and a significant part of this is achieved by adding traditional cultural phenomena to national lists or the UNESCO lists. But increasing the visibility of traditional culture may also usher in negative effects. A staged presentation of traditional transport may lead to changes in traditions and the construction of a distorted image of cultural heritage. As a result of such practices, the public often comes across fake or distorted images of traditional culture. The role of experts is to draw attention to these negative phenomena and to seek rectification.

Further, I propose distinguishing between forms of traditional transport that continue to maintain livelihoods and generate entertainment, and forms which are merely reconstructions, intended only as imitations to recall the past.⁷⁶ Phenomena in unchanged form should qualify for a different type of registration than those which exist only in the form of folklorism. Even among the latter, a clear distinction should be made between a living element used, for example, in tourism, and a reconstructed tradition. Taking the example of commercial tourist rides on Slovak plť rafts, these are not only a reconstruction but also a means of livelihood

⁷¹ KONOVSĚK, Tjaša, MIKŠA, Peter and ZORN, Matija. Od cokel do gojzarjev: Gorniška obutev na Slovenskem v 19. in 20. stoletju. In: *Glasnik SED*, 58(1–2), 2018, p. 53.

⁷² ANDEL, Karol and MARKUŠ, Michal. Ludový transport v strednom Zemplíne. In: *Slovenský národopis*, 19(3), 1971, pp. 377–412; GUNDA, Béla. Ludový transport v Žakarovciach. In: *Slovenský národopis*, 3(2), 1955, pp. 150–212.

⁷³ TESTA, Alessandro. From folklore to intangible cultural heritage. Observations about a problematic filiation. In: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, 70(3–4), 2016, p. 233–235.

⁷⁴ 2003 UNESCO Convention, accessed March 18, 2020, <http://ich.unesco.org/en/convention>

⁷⁵ CHAN, Sustainability of..., pp. 342–361.

⁷⁶ ISTENIČ, Texts and..., p. 51.

in the twenty-first century, yet they do not appear on local lists, despite the ethnographic literature mentioning the use of rafting in Slovakia for recreational trips in the past.⁷⁷ This should subsequently be reflected in the concept of intangible cultural heritage. For example, distinguishing the form of a given cultural phenomenon by adjusting its registration type would be appropriate.

Furthermore, I consider the requirement of the practitioners' identification with the cultural phenomenon – that is, the expectation they should think of it as a part of their cultural heritage – to be problematic. I learnt that far from all practitioners recognise significant and endangered cultural phenomena as cultural heritage, this being one of the important features of the definition of intangible cultural heritage in the 2003 UNESCO Convention. As a result, this may prevent valuable traditional phenomena from appearing on representative lists in the future and may even lead to their extinction.

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⁷⁷ HUSKA, Miroslav A. *Slovenská pltníci*. Martin: Osveta, 1972, p. 56.

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Acquisition Fund: An unrecognised treasure within the cultural policy of the Czech Republic

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Acquisition Fund: An unrecognised treasure within the cultural policy of the Czech Republic

The paper elaborates on the Acquisition Fund for Contemporary Art established in 2017 in the Czech Republic by the Ministry of Culture. Paradoxically, this fund is perceived both positively and negatively by various institutions. On the positive side, from the year 2017 to 2019, the fund has allocated 41,257,888 CZK (1,517,753 EUR) for the purchase of 287 artworks by 29 institutions. On the negative side, only 29 out of 218 eligible institutions have applied for support from the fund during the three years of the fund's existence. This low application rate is attributed partly to the time consuming and complicated administration of the application for support, and partly to apprehension from some institutions regarding the likelihood of the actual realisation of the receipt of financial support. In turn, due to this low application rate, the institutions that have applied have had a high probability of receiving funding. The paper sheds new light on the lack of financing for acquisition in art institutions and opens the question of the effectiveness of the Acquisition Fund in the Czech Republic.

Keywords: acquisitions, contemporary art, acquisition fund, art museum, art collecting

Introduction

Acquisition, as one of the critical features of museums, should never be neglected. Unfortunately, due to increasing operational costs and decreasing public subsidies, public Czech art museums have struggled, with the lack of financial sources, to extend their collections. Consequently, many public art museums in the Czech Republic have not achieved their collection missions. Therefore, there is a risk that contemporary artistic creations will be absent in the collections of Czech public art museums.

Moreover, although the Czech Republic is primarily considered a culturally developed country, its contemporary art scene's weakness is significant. This weakness is most prominently manifested in the lack of a national contemporary art institution. This void in contemporary art is currently compensated in three ways. First, the National Gallery Prague collects and presents artworks and masterpieces from Medieval Art to contemporary art. Second, the regional art museums network aims to collect and exhibit contemporary art, even though it

is not their primary focus, and even with minimal resources. Third, compensation also occurs by the eclectic collections of private art museums, art centres and commercial art galleries financed majorly by their founders. Private art museums have become important players in the landscape of contemporary art in the Czech Republic in the last few years. The sector has recently witnessed a rise of such institutions, usually created by businessmen who possess modern and contemporary art collections.

While the Czech Republic lacks the finance and policymakers' effort to create a national contemporary art institution, the Ministry of Culture is aware of this cultural gap. It has, therefore, included partial solutions in the State Cultural Policy for 2015–2020. Beyond this central cultural policy conception, the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic has developed a document focused solely on museums called *The Concept Of Museum Development In The Czech Republic for The Years 2015 to 2020*, and it is the first of its kind in the Czech Republic. As a part of such policies, the Ministry of Culture planned to establish the Acquisition Fund for contemporary art in 2017. This paper reacts to the creation of this fund and aims to explore and evaluate the fund's role in contemporary art acquisitions.

Methodology

The research employs grounded theory,¹ and more precisely, a constructivist grounded theory,² which assumes that the researchers construct theories due to their interactions with the field and its participants.

By coding, thematising, and generalising semi-structured interviews, authors define the main issues related to the application process for the relatively newly launched Acquisition Fund in the Czech Republic. These semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten directors of the regional art museums in the Czech Republic listed in Table 1 in alphabetical order. The interviews were conducted in the period from July to September 2019. Each interview lasted from 40 to 60 minutes and was recorded and transcribed. The final interview, with a representative of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, the ministry responsible for the Acquisition Fund agenda, was held in written form via email in May 2020.

Moreover, authors used data from interviews with representatives of three commercial art galleries focusing on contemporary art that were conducted in August and September 2018, specifically with the representatives of the Polansky Gallery, the Nevan Contempo, and the DSC Gallery.

Additionally, the Acquisition Fund's effectiveness over the three years is assessed through the examination of statistical data obtained from the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.

Tab. 1.

Original name of the art museum	English translation of the art museum name	Website
Alšova jihočeská galerie	Aleš South Bohemian Gallery	www.ajg.cz
Galerie Klatovy / Klenová	Klenova District Gallery	www.gkk.cz
Galerie moderního umění v Hradci Králové	Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Kralove	www.galeriehk.cz

¹ GLASER, Barney G. and STRAUSS, Anselm L. *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. London: AldineTransaction, 1967.

² CHARMAZ, Kathy. *Constructing grounded theory*. London: SAGE Publications, 2014.

Galerie moderního umění v Roudnici nad Labem	Gallery of Modern Art Roudnice nad Labem	www.galerieroudnice.cz
Galerie výtvarného umění v Chebu	The Art Gallery in Cheb	www.gavu.cz
Galerie výtvarného umění v Havlíčkově Brodě	The Art Gallery in Havlickuv Brod	www.galeriehb.cz
Galerie výtvarného umění v Náchodě	The Art Gallery in Nachod	www.gvun.cz
GASK – Galerie Středočeského kraje	GASK – the Gallery of the Central Bohemian Region	www.gask.cz
Oblastní galerie Liberec	Regional Gallery of Liberec	www.ogl.cz
Východočeská galerie v Pardubicích	East Bohemian Gallery in Pardubice	www.vcg.cz

The Art Museum Sector in the Czech Republic

The development of the museum sector in Czech lands started at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the last thirty years, the sector has undergone significant changes.³ Since 1990 the public sector has been undergoing a reform related to the change in the state's territorial organisation and the launch of new entities providing public services. There were seven administrative regions until 1999. Today, there are fourteen administrative regions. As a part of the public administrative reform, a hypothesis that each region would have at least one historical and one art museum was adopted.⁴

In 2002 the second wave of the reform was completed and included the extinction of seventy-six district offices, and some of their competencies were transferred to regional administrations. During the first wave of the reform, eight general museum and nineteen art museums were transferred from the Ministry of Culture's governance to that of administrative regions. During the second wave, sixty-three general museums and one art museum went through the same governmental transformation.⁵

Regions operate on the basis of Act No. 129/2000 Coll. on Regions (Establishment of Regions), as amended. Regional administrations make independent decisions, take care of their territory, development, citizen satisfaction and support of culture and its development, and help fulfil the government's concepts following its recommendations. Saying this, it is the regional administration which is the founder of regional art museums. It sets up an institution by issuing a founding document which lists its name, registered office, identification number, legal form, main purpose of the institution, subject of activity, statutory body, definition of property and property rights, additional activities, and economic standards. The regional art museum, as a non-profit organisation, performs the given tasks to satisfy the public interest and is a legal entity under public law. Budget-wise, it follows Act No. 250/2000 Coll. on Municipal Budgetary Rules, which regulates expenses and support from regional and municipal budgets. The regional art museums are financed majorly from the public budget, that is, following Decree No. 397/2017 Coll., structured into 4 sub-funds:

³ PROKÚPEK, Marek. *Ekonomika a měření výkonnosti muzeí*. Praha: Wolters Kluwer ČR, 2020, p. 20.

⁴ FIALOVÁ, Dagmar. *Profesní a etické standardy a výkonnostní ukazatele muzejní práce*. Praha: Asociace muzeí a galerií, 2003, p. 32

⁵ FIALOVÁ, Dagmar. *Profesní a etické standardy...*, p. 32

- Investment Fund,
- Remuneration Fund,
- Reserve Fund,
- Cultural and Social Needs Fund.

The budget is set up by the organisation itself and the founder approves it. The regional administrations “compete” for the funds with national level administrations and municipalities. Regional budgets are provided with approximately 27.2 % of the overall state expenditures on culture, out of which the cultural heritage sector on the regional level, including historical and art museums, gets approx. 35.7 % (1.21 billion CZK or 559.2 million EUR).⁶

According to The National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture, in 2018, there were 477 museums in the Czech Republic, while in 1999, the number of museums was 436. In 2018, there were 45 art museums, 39 of them being organisations funded by the Ministry of Culture or other ministries, regions or municipalities. Entrepreneurial units fund two art museums, and four are listed as run by associations, churches or other non-governmental, non-profit organisations.⁷

Of course, museums must comply with legislation. The most important one for museums is Act No. 122/2000 Coll. on protecting collections of a museum character and applying specific laws. This act replaced the previous one from 1959 and defined a museum, its collection and its purpose. It says that a museum is an institution that acquires and collects natural and human creations.

Therefore, building a collection is at the core of museums’ activities. Museums have historically faced issues regarding acquisition budgets. In the past, the budgets of Czech art museums did not include a specific part dedicated to acquisitions. Acquisitions were made only if a museum had succeeded in saving money. The critical change was brought about by the force of Decree No. 397/2017 Coll. Since January 1st, 2018, art museums are obliged to buy artworks from sources allocated in the Investment Fund of the art museums’ budget structures. As Act No. 122/2000 Coll. declares, museum activities are partly or wholly financed from public budgets. Thus, each regional administration directly assigns sources incorporated into art acquisition investment funds following the new decree. The change has partly affected even the existing ministerial programme named ISO C, which offers financial support of up to 100% of costs for acquisitions of objects with a cultural value of particular significance. Now, the programme allocates support as both investment and non-investment funds.

Acquisitions of Contemporary Art

The collecting and preserving of objects have traditionally been a central function of museums. The collection gives the museum its character and determines its purpose.⁸ Collecting is, therefore, the *raison d’être* of museums. The museum’s approach to collecting focuses on a certain phenomenon of reality, which has a transparent cognitive and value meaning. Museums select from reality such objects that have been an authentic part, and thus also witnesses of its

⁶ PETROVÁ, Pavla. *Compendium - Country profile - Czech republic. 2020*. Accessed May 16th, <https://www.culturalpolicies.net/database/search-by-country/country-profile/category/?id=9&g1=1>

⁷ NÁRODNÍ INFORMAČNÍ A PORADENSKÉ STŘEDISKO PRO KULTURU. *Základní statistické údaje o kultuře v České republice 2018*. Praha: NIPOS, 2019, pp. 9–15

⁸ GENOWAYS, Hugh H. and IRELAND, Lynne M. *Museum administration: An introduction*. Altamira Press, 2003.

existence.⁹ As Ryan points out,¹⁰ the acquisition is a unique moment in time for contemporary artworks as the various stakeholders are interested in defining the artwork and its conditions for purchase, resulting in discussion and evaluation from a wide variety of perspectives.

In last four decades, the focus has shifted from pure collection stewardship toward a more visitor-oriented approach.¹¹ Museum exhibitions play a crucial role in establishing the value of contemporary art. While speaking about the value of an artwork, we distinguish two types of value, formulated by Karl Marx: value and exchange value.¹² Museum exhibitions impact the art market¹³ since they are considered to be arbiters of the quality of works.¹⁴

The collecting of contemporary art by museums is an essential aspect in documenting our society and its development and raises several issues ranging from challenges to the traditional conception of the art museum to changing the character of contemporary art.¹⁵ One of the issues may be the fact that after some time, art which was once considered as contemporary becomes historical, and is included in the history of art and thus loses the status of the present. The second issue with the creation of a collection of contemporary art can be caused by the instability of forms of contemporary art and also of the materials that contemporary artists use to create their works. Often the works are only temporary in nature or are made of materials that are very difficult to store for a long time. Much of contemporary art is essentially intangible in nature, or is recorded in the form of electronic data. The musealisation of these objects can be an interesting challenge for art museums.

The Acquisition Fund for Contemporary Art

A key point in the Czech Republic's current cultural policy is the Acquisition Fund of the Ministry of Culture. This fund was set up in 2017 to compensate for the underfunded museums' budgets and art museums established not only by the regional administrations but also by private institutes.

The Acquisition Fund's objective is to ensure that contemporary art phenomena, which represent fine arts development in the Czech Republic, are perceived in an international context and are collected, preserved and accessible to the public. Additionally, a conceptual and coordinated approach to contemporary art representation can enliven a commercial art market. Art museums must acquire artworks of emerging artists in their initial career before the prices of their art increase. On the other hand, acquisitions from a young art scene help position living artists on the market. The Acquisition Fund serves the visual art field, and specifically, art museums solely. The acquisitions that can be submitted to the selection process need to be: works of fine art, or an original author's documentation of fine art, including

⁹ STRÁNSKÁ, E. and STRÁNSKÝ, Z. Ozvláštnění skutečnosti: sběratelství a sbírkotvorná činnost. In: Pachmanová, M. (ed). *Mít a být, sběratelství jako kumulace, recyklace a obsese*. Praha: Vysoká škola uměleckopřemyslová, 2008. ISBN 978-80-86863-25-2, s. 43–44

¹⁰ RYAN, Gwynne. Considerations in the acquisition of contemporary art: Refabrication as a preservation strategy. In: *Studies in Conservation*, 2016, pp. 198-202.

¹¹ ALTSHULER, Bruce (ed.). *Collecting the new: museums and contemporary art*. Princeton University Press, 2007.

¹² NAIRNE, Sandy. Exhibitions of contemporary art. In: Barker, E. (ed). *Contemporary Cultures of Display*, 1999, pp. 105–126.

¹³ VELTHUIS, Olav. *Talking prices: Symbolic meanings of prices on the market for contemporary art*. Princeton University Press, 2007.

¹⁴ FALK, John H. and SHEPPARD, Beverly K. *Thriving in the knowledge age: New business models for museums and other cultural institutions*. Altamira Press, 2006.

¹⁵ ALTSHULER, Bruce (ed.). *Collecting the new...*

original documentation of installations and an author's performance records; applied art; architectural design documentation; industrial design or its original documentation; the original of an author's photograph (or gelatin silver prints) with the original negative; video art; or an author's book. Financial support from the Acquisition Fund can be provided only to purchase artworks that have been created up to a maximum of 50 years ago.

The Acquisition Fund redistributes financial support based on the subsidy once a year through an open call. Applying institutions cannot be founded by the Ministry of Culture, since in their case, the contribution for acquisition is included in their annual subsidy. There are no limitations for privately run institutions, but the collection to be extended and funded by the fund must be registered in the Central Registry of Collections (CES). The CES was launched in 2000 as the implementation tool for Act No. 122/2000 Coll., on the protection of collections of a museum character and amendment to specific laws. It is a publicly accessible list of officially approved collections by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic which are protected by law and can be financed by public funds.

Ambitions vs Reality

The Czech Cultural Policy for 2015–2020 outlines specific details regarding the foundation of the Acquisition Fund. It allocates annual financial support of 80,000,000 CZK (2,941,261 EUR) for new acquisitions of contemporary art. However, this amount has not been allocated in reality. In the first year, the Acquisition Fund distributed 10,088,810 CZK (370,941 EUR). In the second and the third years respectively, 15,453,818 CZK and 15,715,260 CZK (568,190 EUR and 577,802 EUR) were allocated. The sum of three years' funding was 41,257,888 CZK (1,516,900 EUR), which represents merely half of the fund's envisaged annual allocation. The representative of the Acquisition Fund has confirmed that the yearly budget can cover more applications or the purchase of more expensive artworks.¹⁶ This being said, it only proves that the Acquisition Fund is not used sufficiently.

Evaluation

Given the situation in the Czech Republic, where art institutions lack adequate finances, the fact that a new funding initiative such as the Acquisition Fund has found a less than enthusiastic response is astonishing. According to reports for the Acquisition Fund of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic for the years 2017–2019, over the course of three years, just 29 different institutions (20 art museums and nine other types of museums) out of the total of 218 eligible institutions have received the awards making up the total funding of 41,257,888 CZK (1,517,756 EUR).¹⁷ In the first year, 14 museums were awarded funding, and that number has been growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 11% over the three years. Only seven¹⁸ (6 art museums and 1 other type of museum) applied every year consecutively; the sum of their funding over three years makes 58.5%, which is 24,142,474 CZK (888,146 EUR) of the entire budget, and equally 58.5% (169 artworks) of the nominal quantity of artworks funded.

¹⁶ Interview with Eva Teuerová, representative of the Acquisition Fund of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic. Prague, April 2020.

¹⁷ Centrální evidence sbírek muzejní povahy. Accessed June 19th, 2020, from <http://www.cesonline.cz/arl-ces/cs/index/>

¹⁸ Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Králové, The Art Gallery in Cheb, Jan and Meda Mládek Foundation – Museum Kampa, The North Bohemian Gallery of Fine Arts in Litoměřice, The North Bohemian Museum in Liberec, East Bohemian Museum in Pardubice, Gallery of West Bohemia in Pilsen

Tab. 2¹⁹

Institutions (original name)	English translation of the art museums name	Subsidy in 2017	Subsidy in 2018	Subsidy in 2019
České muzeum Stříbra v Kutné Hoře	Czech Museum of Silver in Kutna Hora	0 CZK	0 CZK	63 000 CZK
Galerie hlavního města Prahy	Prague City Gallery	592 900 CZK	420 000 CZK	0 CZK
Galerie Klatovy / Klenová	Klenova District Gallery	0 CZK	0 CZK	881 000 CZK
Galerie moderního umění v Hradci Králové	Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Kralove	0 CZK	0 CZK	2 523 968 CZK
Galerie moderního umění v Roudnici nad Labem	Gallery of Modern Art Roudnice nad Labem	462 000 CZK	297 500 CZK	315 000 CZK
Galerie Středočeského kraje v Kutné Hoře	GASK – the Gallery of the Central Bohemian Region	0 CZK	820 800 CZK	1 363 500 CZK
Galerie umění Karlovy Vary	Karlovy Vary Art Gallery	0 CZK	98 000 CZK	0 CZK
Galerie výtvarného umění v Chebu	The Art Gallery in Cheb	297 500 CZK	717 500 CZK	706 300 CZK
Galerie výtvarného umění v Havlíčkově Brodě	The Art Gallery in Havlickuv Brod	72 450 CZK	0 CZK	0 CZK
Galerie výtvarného umění v Náchodě	The Art Gallery in Nachod	0 CZK	56 000 CZK	0 CZK
Galerie výtvarného umění v Ostravě	Gallery of Fine Art Ostrava	0 CZK	2 320 000 CZK	1 942 000 CZK
Horácká galerie v Novém Městě na Moravě	The Horácká Gallery in Nové Město na Moravě	0 CZK	50 000 CZK	0 CZK
Krajská galerie výtvarného umění ve Zlíně	Regional Gallery of Fine Arts in Zlín	0 CZK	226 800 CZK	657 740 CZK
Královská kanonie premonstrátů na Strahově	Royal Canonry of Premonstratensians at Strahov	1 015 000 CZK	0 CZK	0 CZK
Městské muzeum a galerie Hlinsko	Hlinsko Municipal Museum and Gallery	0 CZK	0 CZK	98 000 CZK

¹⁹ Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic. Acquisition Fund. Accessed June 19th, 2020, from <https://www.mkcr.cz/akvizicni-fond-1697.html>

Městské muzeum a galerie Polička	Poličkam Municipal Museum and Gallery	0 CZK	128 000 CZK	0 CZK
Museum Kampa - Nadace Jana a Medy Mládekových	Jan and Meda Mládek Foundation – Museum Kampa	4 762 960 CZK	5 273 000 CZK	1 075 000 CZK
Muzeum Českého ráje v Turnově	Museum of The Bohemian Paradise	0 CZK	90 780 CZK	100 000 CZK
Muzeum města Brna	Brno City Museum	357 000 CZK	0 CZK	704 000 CZK
Muzeum regionu Valašsko ve Vsetíně	Museum of the Wallachian Region	0 CZK	0 CZK	168 000 CZK
Oblastní galerie Liberec	Regional Gallery of Liberec	250 000 CZK	866 976 CZK	0 CZK
Regionální muzeum v Kolíně	Regional Museum in Kolin	0 CZK	259 000 CZK	68 000 CZK
Severočeská galerie výtvarného umění v Litoměřicích	The North Bohemian Gallery of Fine Arts in Litoměřice	252 000 CZK	376 000 CZK	309 000 CZK
Severočeské muzeum v Liberci	The North Bohemian Museum in Liberec	288 000 CZK	90 000 CZK	600 000 CZK
Slovácké muzeum v Uherském Hradišti	The Museum of Moravian Slovakia	0 CZK	0 CZK	770 000 CZK
Východočeská galerie v Pardubicích	East Bohemian Gallery in Pardubice	1 460 500 CZK	1 774 000 CZK	2 075 752 CZK
Východočeské muzeum v Pardubicích	East Bohemian Museum in Pardubice	135 000 CZK	0 CZK	0 CZK
Západočeská galerie v Plzni	Gallery of West Bohemia in Pilsen	126 000 CZK	1 589 462 CZK	1 295 000 CZK
Západočeské muzeum v Plzni	Museum of West Bohemia in Pilsen	17 500 CZK	0 CZK	0 CZK
Total subsidies		10 088 810 CZK	15 453 818 CZK	15 715 260 CZK

The most successful institution is the private not-for-profit Jan and Meda Mládek Foundation – Museum Kampa, receiving 26.93% of all the funding to acquire 22% (64 artworks) of all artworks supported by the fund over three years.

The Acquisition Fund offers institutions the opportunity to increase their investment budgets for acquisitions by 70%. The fund can finance a maximum of 70% of the total price of an artwork; this amount cannot exceed 1,000,000 EUR after recalculation at the exchange rate applicable on the date of submission of the application, and the total support from all public sources for the purchase of a particular artwork must not exceed 80% of the selling price of

the artwork. Studying the yearly financial reports of ten interviewed art museums, it appears that different art museums are employing various strategies to receive funding. Four out of all interviewed art museum professionals approach this maximum range with the Acquisition Fund covering their acquisition investment budgets by 60% to 70%. Two other art museums interviewed fund approximately 35% of their acquisition through the Acquisition Fund. The remaining three art museums that were interviewed had a rate in between 17.5% and 25.5%. No straightforward approach is visible while looking at the nominal number of funded acquisitions and the total number of acquisitions for the particular institutions by year. The highest rate is 93.1%, while the lowest is 1% of the number of acquired artworks being supported by the Acquisition Fund.

Notably, the Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Králové took quite a risky path when its acquisition plan for 2019 merely counted on the Acquisition Fund's support. However, this precarious strategy paid off and has allowed them to expand their collection appreciably. The Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Králové almost tripled their budget acquisition compared to the previous year. The support of the Acquisition Fund represents 67.2% of the overall acquisition budget; the remaining part was financed by exceptional funding from the municipality investment fund. Thanks to this generous financial support, the art museum has acquired 29 new artworks. As stated in the current acquisition policy of the art museum, artworks purchased are of the nature of art installations and videos, completed by paintings of artists of the Czechoslovak post-revolutionary generation.

When looking at the price level of funding, the subsidies for single artworks cover a whole range of values going from 1,015,000 CZK (37,340 EUR) down to 9,000 CZK (331 EUR). A broad spectrum of price levels is also visible when evaluating the particular institutions; each of them asks for funding for high valued and less valued artists or more valuable and less valuable media within any given year. The differentiated portfolio reflects the need to co-finance acquisitions by at least 30% of the artwork's price. However, the issue of this 30% co-financing rate directive is brought up by one respondent who worries that the participatory budget structure limits acquisitions of the highest quality artwork due to the inadequate acquisition budgets of art museums.

Limitations and Pitfalls of the Application Process

The Acquisition Fund provides direct subsidies to art museums to stimulate the acquisition of contemporary art. As a subsidy of the Ministry of Culture, specific eligibility requirements are imposed. These entail a formal presentation by applying institutions, a description and an explanation of entitlement for planned art acquisitions by applying institutions, as well as "proofs of the excellency" of planned acquisitions. While formal conditions are clearly understood, and a necessary paperwork activity for museums, the demonstration of an artwork's uniqueness for a particular art collection might be a restraint.

The application process for support from the Acquisition Fund requires the filling out of a basic form which includes three obligatory annexes (affidavits declaring the correct settlement of obligations to the state, eligibility to apply for state subsidies according to the minimum criteria, and the appropriate pursuance of EU Commission Regulation no. 651/2014 of June 17th, 2014). Moreover, applicants need to attach three documents certifying the legal existence of the applying institution. Beside all formalities, applicants then need to provide six descriptive documents for each individual artwork-to-be-acquired as evidence of its

exceptionality (evidence of artwork being exhibited, coverage in catalogues or a professional press publication and expert testimony), and its suitability (acquisition strategy, acquisition commission protocol and curatorial report) for a particular art museum collection. As cultural authorities, art museums need to comprehensively explain the significance of the collection as a whole and each artwork. Collecting policies developed by curators and directors and curatorial reports to justify acquisition expenditures may fulfil the explicit statement's function, but may not validate the market value.²⁰ To evaluate the acquisition as appropriate from both cultural and economic points of view, the ensemble of statements must be elaborated upon.

The conducted interviews revealed that museum directors consider the Acquisition Fund's application process to be administratively demanding and time-consuming. They, however, do not oppose the validation process. "Even though the administration is difficult, it is acceptable given the opportunity the fund brings to us."²¹ Nevertheless, among 29 applying institutions in three years, eight did not apply again after the first successful, but deterrent, application. Their main restraint is the extensive paperwork and the obligation to confirm an expert testimony, representing additional costs for art museums. "For the smaller-scale art institution focused on graphics, illustrations and works on paper, thus artworks of lower financial value, the unsure rentability of the pre-existing flat cost is the demotivating factor."²² The other four directors interviewed mentioned the expert testimony as an issue they need to tolerate unwillingly. There are only a small number of respected experts in the field, which is problematic, compounding the above-described issue of additional costs. On the other hand, two directors claimed that they must have written expert testimonies within standard documentation for their acquisition commissions or their founders, being it municipality or regional government. The attitude towards the requirement of the expert testimony differs according to the subjective experience of interviewees.

In contrast, a consensual reproach among all interviewed institutions is the schedule of the call for support from the Acquisition Fund. The gap between the submission deadline, which is at the end of August, and the publishing of applications to be supported, which happens at the end of December, puts institutions and concerned artists/providers and even regional administrations on hold in a period of uncertainty. In the case of a successful application, this period is afterward followed by a critically short time left for the realisation of the purchase and billing of the subsidy strictly by the end of the fiscal (equals calendar) year.

[The gallery] offers/demands an artist to acquire his/her artwork. But firstly, [it] needs the purchase to be approved by [its] acquisition commission, which meets once a year, usually in September. As the acquisition commission protocol is a mandatory document within the call, the application cannot be submitted before the call in the following year. And still without certainty whether it will be financially supported. This unpredictability also complicates the co-financing of the supported acquisitions that again results in a long administration process within regional administrations agendas and a risk not to be approved in such a short time. The artist holds the artwork for more than a year with no security that [the gallery] will have money for his acquisition.²³

²⁰ YOUNG, Linda. Significance, connoisseurship and facilitation: New techniques for assessing museum acquisitions. In: *Museum management and curatorship*, 1994, pp. 191–199.

²¹ Interview with Miroslav Divina, the director of the Gallery of Modern Art Roudnice nad Labem. Roudnice nad Labem, August 2019.

²² Interview with Hana Nováková, the director of The Art Gallery in Havlíčkův Brod. Havlíčkův Brod, August 2019.

²³ Interview with Jan Randáček, the director of Regional Gallery of Liberec, Liberec September 2019.

The criterion of the significance of the artwork within the art environment is required to be proclaimed by its exhibition history and its coverage within a professional publication. Eight out of ten interviewed art museum professionals consider acquisitions of particular artworks based on their exhibitions programme. “Once we take time and put a lot of energy to examine particular artworks in detail, to visit artist studios and make selections of the high-quality pieces, we want those investments to be valued. The acquisition is the way to complete that effort.”²⁴ Artwork intended to be purchased with the Acquisition Fund’s support needs to have been previously exhibited and included in an exhibition catalogue or a professional art-oriented publication.

Moreover, in regional art museums, 90% of purchases of artworks are made directly from artists or their inheritors. A purchase through commercial art galleries occurs in some cases; however, the low number of commercially represented artists does not create any pressure in that sense, although the professional approach of commercial art galleries encourages the involvement of represented artists into curatorial programming. Being aware of the potential for a publicly exhibited artist’s work to increase in value, commercial art galleries offer discounts equal to the VAT rate (20%) or even more exciting discount rates to make artworks more affordable for non-profit institutions.^{25,26,27} The commercial art galleries also play an essential role in popularising represented artists through exhibiting their artworks at international art fairs that can attract tremendous worldwide media coverage and the attention of collectors, curators and art lovers.

The requirement for an artwork intended for acquisition to have been published in an exhibition catalogue or a periodical art-oriented publication, online or offline, might be another pitfall of the application process. The Czech Republic still lacks a sufficient level of such an art-oriented press. Therefore, this might limit the evidence that the artwork has been published in the professional media, a collective publication or exhibition catalogue, or professionally evaluated on an online platform. However, this limitation is not considered as the main issue among the majority of interviewed art museums. Only two participants in the research pointed out this issue, spontaneously, as problematic. Art museums, having their acquisition strategy focused intrinsically, rely mainly on their publishing activities, referring to past exhibitions.

The most important document required is the descriptive explanation of the acquisition. The artwork to be acquired needs to meet the strictest requirements of artistic quality and represent a significant developmental trend in contemporary art. Notwithstanding, no other guidelines specify criteria for measurement of the uniqueness of the art, nor the part played in developing a contemporary trend. It is up to curators to elaborate on why the artwork represents a significant enrichment and appreciation of the cultural heritage. As for regional art museums, their acquisition strategy is focused on the artworks of both established and emerging contemporary artists. Their vision is to fill a gap in the acquisitions caused by a communistic political establishment. The artworks of renowned artists rarely appear on the market, and if so, art museums’ budgets cannot compete with private sector collectors.

Consequently, the acquisitions of all interviewed art museums (except for the regional gallery with a stable, historically given orientation towards Russian art) focus mainly on the generation of artists which has taken the scene from the 80s onwards. 50% of all purchases

²⁴ Interview with Marcel Fišer, the director of The Art Gallery in Cheb, Cheb September 2019.

²⁵ Interview with Filip Polanský, the director of the Polansky Gallery, September 2018.

²⁶ Interview with Mikuláš Nevan, the director of the Nevan Contempo, September 2018.

²⁷ Interview with Edmund Čučka, the sales executive at DSC Gallery, August 2018.

supported by the Acquisition Fund were artworks from the 1970s to 2000s, and the second half was of post-millennium artworks. The funding of “80s generation artworks” represents 55% of the overall sum. That confirms the strategy to acquire “missing high-quality artworks” which are, yet, affordable.

The regional art museums have a good reputation among the Czech art scene.²⁸ “Private collectors are open to lending artworks from their collections for [regional art museum’s] exhibitions, and commercial gallerists and dealers offer discounts to them. Artists recognise the advantages of being included in [regional art museum’s] collections.”²⁹ Except for one interviewed art museum, all agreed that being included in regional art museum collections positively impacts artists’ careers. Local art museums’ collections have significant visibility due to permanent or temporary exhibitions in these museums and loans among art museums. Referring to yearly reports of the interviewed institutions, on average, 1,300 artworks are yearly lent from regional art museums’ collections. Also, seven out of ten interviewed museum professionals make efforts to build collaborations with international institutions to present Czech art abroad. The art museums see the opportunity to support artists through an acquisition policy. According to Czech legislation, art museums cannot pay any artistic fee for time and energy spent preparing, installing and promoting exhibitions. Acquisitions, therefore, serve as a compensating instrument – not to forget that art museums’ deposits are ideal places to preserve the work of artists. These benefits augment the negotiating power of art museums when it comes to prices.

Regarding the territorial structure, art museums, in general, feature the nationwide context. However, the emphasis on local artists is marginalised, highlighted by just four regional art museums incorporating local names in their programming. They also understand their role as institutions of memory, responsible for honouring local artists. Three of ten interviewed art museums have developed a specific approach towards contemporary art to alternate their programming. Further, various strategies are being adopted by museums to make their programming more distinctive: collaboration with art awards for young emerging artists; cycles of exhibitions dedicated to artists more youthful than forty years old; the use of new media; or the embracing of a Central European focus. The art museums need to submit persuasive curatorial reports to convince the Council of the Acquisition Fund that their acquisition selection is significant either in the territorial context or the collection-wise context. Together with protocols of the individual acquisition commissions of the art museums, these documents act as objectifying factors regarding the administration process.

However, the required documentation’s qualitative character defines the Acquisition Fund subsidy more as a grant with unpredictable selection outcomes. On the other hand, repeating successful submissions certifies an institution’s quality in the eyes of the particular regional administration by which it was founded. A positive image endorsed by the Council of Acquisition Fund, formed by professional experts, confirms or encourages a regional administration to invest in the institution.

²⁸ Artyčok TV: Kam kráčí Národní galerie?, accessed October 11th, 2020, <https://artycok.tv/43350/kam-kraci-narodni-galerie>.

²⁹ Interview with Petra Příkazká, the chief curator of the Gallery of Modern Art in Hradec Kralove, Hradec Králové September 2019.

Conclusion

The Acquisition Fund, as the support and the stimulus for contemporary art acquisitions launched by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic as stated in the Cultural Policy for 2015–2020, is the critical aspect helping Czech art museums to enrich their collections with valuable artworks of the older, middle and younger generations of contemporary artists. The fund provides subsidies for a potentially significant number of institutions as indirect finance for artists or their gallerists.

Due to the fund's existence, the overall budget for acquisitions of ten interviewed art museums increased by 23.5%. With a detailedly defined acquisition conception and resourcefully supported by their regional administrations, the most successful art museums have increased their budgets by up to 60%. Satisfaction as well as the positive attitude of interviewed institutions affirms the efficiency of the fund. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture has declared that the fund offers more significant financial potential.

Applying institutions need to consider their acquisition budgets when preparing applications; they need to think of the minimal 30% co-financing directive, which forms barriers to unlimited requests. The exhaustive documentation that has to be submitted for each artwork to be acquired individually also sets impediments for rather small art museums' teams – this being one reason why the number of applying institutions is surprisingly low. Elaborating closely on the application process requirements, they are set to enrich art museums' collections with previously endorsed high-quality artworks. None of the requirements imposes overly high demands. This is confirmed by twenty-nine successful applicants who represent the wide scale of eligible, yet not applying, institutions. The double revision of planned acquisitions by the internal commissions and by the Acquisition Fund's Council objectifies the selection and, thus, the art collections. The two-step control more accurately validates public money spending on cultural patrimony.

That said, the low number of applicants could be caused by inadequately set rules for acquisitions within art institutions themselves. These rules do not meet the more objective standards of the Acquisition Fund. The acquisition policies of art museums are not clearly defined, implicating the non-continual building of art collections. Once a generational gap of the artists represented within a collection occurs, it is difficult to fill it later. This is because of high costs and low supply. Institutions should rethink their acquisition strategy protocols for contemporary art following the Acquisition Fund's standards. The fund significantly helps institutions to avoid the risk of such a collectibles gap, and provides the essential financial support to complete a collection with the works of missing artists.

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Specific Forms of the Safeguarding and Showcasing of Cultural Heritage as Part of Tourism in the High Tatras*

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Specific Forms of the Safeguarding and Showcasing of Cultural Heritage as Part of Tourism in the High Tatras

This study describes a variety of approaches to communication by museums involved in cultural heritage exchange. It focuses on the High Tatras region, which is the most important centre of tourism in Slovakia. It also looks at the specifics of how tourism developed in the region.

The data was collected over a multi-year series of ethnological field research trips, and primarily conducted by means of structured interviews, oral histories and participatory observation. The paper concentrates on shifts in the area of museum communication, from the classical interpretative approach towards exhibitions that present their subject matter in a more flexible way, with a focus on emotional experience. The article aims to use some chosen case studies of small, independent museums and galleries from the town of Vysoké Tatry, in the High Tatras, to highlight the importance of sustainability, especially in terms of the growth of tourism.

Keywords: museum, tourism, cultural tourism, cultural heritage

Introduction

One of the main determining factors of human development in all crucial political or economic processes in the world is the need to respect the ethnic and cultural diversity of communities, the key factor being the knowledge and understanding of different cultures. In terms of the travel industry, it is the cultural core of ethnic groups that is the starting point in the process of learning about them with respect to a particular geographical space. Memory institutions play an indispensable role in this process.

The preservation of the cultural and natural environment is one of the key priorities of the travel industry and tourism, and relates to sustainable tourism and sustainable development issues as well. Sustainable tourism – also known as soft tourism, green tourism or responsible tourism – is characterised by the exploitation of and respect for local natural and cultural resources. It thus has a positive effect on the preservation of cultural identity and cultural diversity.¹

*This study has been produced under grant project VEGA 1/0232/19 Cultural heritage as part of the socio-cultural potential of tourism development within local communities.

¹ CHRENŠČOVÁ, Viera. Udržateľný rozvoj cestovného ruchu v chránenej krajinskej oblasti Horná Orava z pohľadu aktérov rozhodovacej sféry. In: *Acta Universitatis Matthiae Belli*. 2011, pp. 61–62. www.fpv.umb.sk/

The issue of cultural tourism resonates in these contexts. In this form of tourism, which takes place on both the domestic and international level, the subjects of interest tend to include the discovery of tangible heritage, such as historical monuments, as well as intangible heritage, expressed through the cultural landscape of the destination and experienced through activities which authentically reflect the cultural history of a community.²

Based on this framework, this study aims to explore the transformation, safeguarding, presentation and, in particular, the use of cultural heritage values within the environment of the town of Vysoké Tatry, while considering the background of the travel industry and tourism. It is in this context that we focus on the subject of this study: a special type of museum whose mission is to obtain, preserve, manage and present to the public original tangible evidence of cultural and natural development and which, from the perspective of accepting fundamental scientific museological principles, represent a specific form of presentation. Through some examples of such museums in Vysoké Tatry, we explore the degree to which they fulfil their core mission of safeguarding and showcasing cultural heritage in the context of the development of sustainable tourism.

Our approach focuses on specialised memory institutions, and examines the cultural links of the travel industry and tourism to a particular place, and on the relationship and use of that place's cultural values in the process of sustainable development. Cultural value ties often become inconsistent with the economic priorities, including the equally threatened environmental essence of a place.

The data presented and analysed in this report is primarily sourced from a series of ethnological fieldwork projects conducted in 2019 and 2020, with a primary focus on direct structured interviews with key figures in cultural institutions, local government and tourism organisations oriented on the town of Vysoké Tatry. In order to ensure the protection of personal data, we only provide basic information about gender and age and, where necessary, the respondent's role in the process under discussion. The methodology also involved direct participation or observant participation, in the case of visited activities and events.

Nowadays, most human societies regard the travel industry as an integral part of their complex development. The travel industry can be defined as a "set of activities aimed to satisfy people's needs related to travel and staying outside their permanent residence, usually during their spare time, for the purpose of rest, learning, amusement and entertainment".³ It is a system determined by the external environment and by dominant prevailing systems, one of them being the cultural system.⁴ The cultural aspects of the travel industry can be described as positive, and often determine its realisation.

If we approach the travel industry as a socio-cultural phenomenon and explore it, for example, in the context of cultural heritage and local culture, then it is appropriate to replace the term travel industry (as a set of services) with the term tourism (oriented on people and society).⁵

This is the basis from which we will observe the specific features of museums' activities with regard to the presentation of cultural heritage.

² TOADER, Cosmina-Simona, SAMBOTIN, Dana, GHERMAN, Dana. Aspects regarding cultural tourism development in Timiș county through projects. In: *Agricultural Management / Lucrari Stiintifice Seria I*. 2013, pp. 56–63.

³ GÚČIK, Marián et col. *Manažment cestovného ruchu*. 2006, p. 4.

⁴ GÚČIK, Marián et col. *Manažment regionálneho cestovného ruchu*. 2007, p. 5.

⁵ CHORVÁT, Ivan. Sociológia turizmu a jej počiatkové východiská. In: *Tradičná kultúra, turizmus a rozvoj regiónov*. 2006, p. 196.

Description of the research site from a geographical, economic, and ethnic perspective

The vast geographical territory of the High Tatras Mountains is a natural part of Slovakia's northern border with Poland. Their complex boundaries are linked, not only in an administrative and geographical sense, but also in cultural terms, with overlapping cadastral boundaries of several neighbouring municipalities and towns.⁶ With an area of 37,988 hectares, the administrative centre of the modern town of Vysoké Tatry (literally High Tatras) was formed by the gradual establishment of Tatra settlements within the cadastral areas of Starý Smokovec, Nový Smokovec, Horný Smokovec, Dolný Smokovec, Tatranská Lomnica and part of Štrbské Pleso.

Today, the mountain range attracts the attention of visitors mainly due to its opportunities for hiking and winter sports. Aside from the specific features of the natural environment, the primary reason the first Tatra settlements were established was to make use of the local healing springs. In contrast to the prevailing agrarian nature of traditional Slovakian culture, the spa resorts were the main economic driver in the High Tatras. The first settlements were gradually followed by the growth of the hotel industry, accompanied by the development of sports and hiking.⁷

Slovakia, lying on the boundary between Eastern and Western Europe, has never been a homogenous unit in terms of ethnicity, religion or culture. It constituted a crossroads of various ethnic groups and cultures, which have all left a mark on its culture.⁸ The initial interest in the Tatras came predominantly from members of the intelligentsia, researchers and scientists, travellers and artists. The wider, historically conditioned ethnic ties relate to the members of the German, Hungarian or Czech ethnic groups.

The administrative unit of Vysoké Tatry can be delineated by the gradual establishment of individual Tatra settlements since the end of the eighteenth century. The oldest Tatra settlement – and the only one until the opening, in 1872, of the Košice–Bohumín railway line along the foothills of the Tatra mountains – was Starý Smokovec, established in 1797. From the beginning of the twentieth century, it was a spa town; it also, in the same period, became the first official winter sports centre in the Kingdom of Hungary, of which it was a part until 1918.⁹ Štrbské Pleso settlement (1872) acquired the official status of a healing spa for climatic treatment in 1885, after a bath house was opened there.¹⁰ The establishment of Tatranská Lomnica in 1892 related to the opening of the first state climatic spa in the High Tatras.¹¹ These areas form the basis of the current urban centre, which was founded in 1957 and also includes several smaller Tatra settlements.

From a contemporary perspective, the fall of communism in 1989 marked a major turning point for the travel industry and tourism in the High Tatras. As a result of the economic changes mainly in the field of property ownership laws the High Tatras faced a period of chaotic development, lacking a comprehensive strategy. At first, the emerging market mechanisms were

⁶ ŠTURCEL, Marián. *Príroda Tatier*. In: *Vysoké Tatry*. 2017, p. 15.

⁷ The healing effects of the acidic and thermal waters of the Spiš region were described by a doctor, Ján Žigmund Kreysel, back in 1764 (BOHUŠ, Ivan, st., BOHUŠ, Ivan, ml. *Tatranské osady do r. 1918*. In: *Vysoké Tatry*. 2017, p. 49).

⁸ BITUŠÍKOVÁ, Alexandra. *Kultúrne dedičstvo a regionálny rozvoj: Etnologická perspektíva*. 2008, p. 38.

⁹ BOHUŠ, Ivan, st., BOHUŠ, Ivan, ml. *Tatranské osady ...*, p. 49.

¹⁰ BOHUŠ, Ivan, st., BOHUŠ, Ivan, ml. *Tatranské osady ...*, p. 52.

¹¹ BOHUŠ, Ivan, st., BOHUŠ, Ivan, ml. *Tatranské osady ...*, pp. 59–60.

used mainly by entrepreneurs as well as some original land owners, with the primary objective of achieving high profits. But many proved unable to cope with the new situation, starting projects which ended in failure and allowing a plethora of cultural objects to fall into ruin. As a result, the number of visitors declined at the beginning of the 1990s, which was something of a paradox given the opening of the borders significantly facilitated the entry of foreign visitors.¹²

The specific features of the cultural heritage of the High Tatras as interpreted by memory institutions

In the context of the socio-cultural importance of the travel industry, one of the primary aspects is the interpretation of the features of a visited site. In the case of the High Tatras, the objectives of present-day visitors include hiking and sports. However, the demands of modern visitors include a much broader knowledge of the place, mutual relationships, the links between past and present, the culture, and the life of the communities that characterise it.

The transformation and interpretation of cultural heritage in connection with tourism is an information-intensive activity, requiring a deep knowledge and understanding of the site's cultural values. Professionals in this field must also pay attention to current trends in travelling and the requirements of tourist.¹³ Several authors confirm the existence of the educational aspects of cultural tourism, where the interest of participants is focused on the life of the local communities voluntarily and in a targeted way. Learning aside, visitors also find entertainment and leisure elements in cultural tourism. Together with other forms of capital – physical, natural, human, economic, and social – cultural heritage constitutes a principal source which can be used for promoting the sustainable development of a region.¹⁴

The safeguarding and subsequent showcasing of the cultural elements typical of the High Tatras is a prerequisite for knowing and understanding life in this region. This aim is apparent in several institutions within the town of Vysoké Tatry, including some memory institutions, with TANAP Museum in Tatranská Lomnica being the oldest and most famous one. The museum continued the traditions of the Hungarian Carpathian Society with the establishment of the Carpathian Museum in Poprad in the 1880s. The current TANAP Museum is managed by the State Forests company; its collection contains mainly natural exhibits, but also includes some ethnographic collections from the High Tatras area. The museum houses almost 138,000 items and archival documents.¹⁵ As a traditional brick-and-mortar museum, it is an important communicator of life in the High Tatras in the context of tourism.

The objective of this study is to focus attention on a smaller, specific type of memory institution, that is, museums formed as a result of individual activities by enthusiasts interested in life in the Tatras, across various fields of enquiry. They are mainly private institutions which, due to their legislative and organisational structures and marginal adherence to museological principles, differ from traditional museums in a number of ways. Their exhibitions, which provide a documentary record of the region's development, are complemented with participatory

¹² KRIŠKOVÁ, Zdena. Kultúrne dedičstvo – ekonomický zdroj rozvoja turizmu, či odraz kultúrnej identity? In: XXIII. Medzinárodné kolokvium o regionálnych vedách. 2020, pp. 364–365.

¹³ KURPAŠ, Michal, ZIMA, Roman. Manažment a marketing kultúrneho dedičstva. In: *Kultúrne dedičstvo a identita*. 2016, p. 72.

¹⁴ DUGULAN, Diana, POPESCU Ioana Cecilia, VEGHES, Calin. An assessment of the relationship between the cultural heritage, travel and tourism, and sustainable development in the Central and Eastern European countries. *Annals of Faculty of Economics, University of Oradea, Faculty of Economics*, 1(1), pages 1141–1147.

¹⁵ CHOVANCOVÁ, Barbara. *Spríevodca expozíciou múzea TANAP-u*. 2015, p. 7.

activities which form a key part of their work. They concentrate on showcasing specific features that characterise the development and culture of the Tatras. For both domestic and foreign visitors, these museums contribute, with these small fragments, to our understanding of the complex mosaic of life in the Tatras, and undoubtedly form a significant part of the region's cultural memory.

These institutions include the Museum of Tatra Cinematography and Photography and the Museum of Mountain Porters in Starý Smokovec, and the Ski Museum in Tatranská Lomnica. Despite their inconspicuous position in the local life, the creators of the collections, as experts in the given field and, in particular, as enthusiasts and lovers of the nature and culture of the Tatra region, give them a touch of significance. Each of them is devoted to a different phenomenon identified with Tatra culture.

The Museum of Tatra Cinematography and Photography

The Slovak High Tatras became the subject of interest of photographers and painters as early as the nineteenth century. The first protagonists, in the 1870s, included Karol Divald Sr,¹⁶ Juraj Weinciller, Milan Legutky and Viliam Malík. The unique pictures taken by these legendary Tatra photographers later became the foundation of the museum. They form a valuable documentary and artistic component of the historical memory of the mountains and preserve a unique record of the region's cultural heritage.

In terms of acquisitions, some of the exhibits were purchased from private collections, some donated, and some are on long-term loan from the family collections of the photographers' descendants.

The museum itself was founded in 2015 by four enthusiasts with an interest in photography and the Tatras: Michal Machala, Ján Fečík, Milan Mat'ášovský and Leo Weinciller. It initially presented their private collections, but gradually expanded with new additions. The founders' intention was to introduce to the public people who were active in the field of Tatra photography, and later cinematography, going all the way back to 1870. The collections detail the atmosphere of the Tatras and the transformations the region has undergone, as captured by camera lens. They also document themes relating to life in the mountains, including specialist local professions such as mountain climbers, rescuers, guides, porters and so on.¹⁷

The exhibition also focuses on the art of cinematography and photography, demonstrating the evolution of cameras since the nineteenth century. The Eastern European region is predominantly represented here (in particular, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and East Germany). Since the purchase of equipment from abroad was rather complicated in Slovakia during the communist era, the collection only contains a few objects of Japanese or US provenance.

In 2015, the town offered the museum the opportunity to rent two small exhibition spaces in the centre of Starý Smokovec. These premises are located in the reconstructed building of a national heritage site, the former Vila Alica bath house,¹⁸ which has been under new ownership since 2018. The miniature spaces of this originally log building, created by architect Gedeon Majunke, currently serve as the seat of the Tourism Association, the Mountain Porters' Office, and the Municipal Library.

¹⁶ NOVÁKOVÁ, Katarína. *Tatranské nosiči*. 2015. p. 14.

¹⁷ JANIGOVÁ, Ingrid. Spoločenské dianie a kultúra. In: *Mesto Vysoké Tatry*. 2017, p. 302

¹⁸ The villa was initially known by the Tatra inhabitants as Szilagyi Vila; in 1918, it was renamed after the daughter of the then President of the Czechoslovak Republic, T. G. Masaryk – Alica.

From a legislative point of view, the museum is private and is not listed in the Register of Museums and Galleries of the Slovak Republic, kept by the Ministry of Culture.¹⁹ Today, this originally non-profit organisation is run as an entity with a trade licence.

Given the private nature of this institution, the professional administration of the collection items is not performed in accordance with the official legislative standards of first- and second-instance documentation. The collections are identified based on descriptions containing background information provided by their former owners. The owner of the museum appears to be caught in an extended process of setting up a simplified collection registration system based on a personalised and idiosyncratic approach, rather than the widely accepted professional standards for cataloguing.

The limited space, which simultaneously serves as reception office, exhibition and depository, complicates the protection of the collections. Unexhibited objects are stored in the lower lockable part of the display cases. On the other hand, the wooden building is an advantage in terms of maintaining the appropriate humidity and temperature to preserve the items.

As far as presentation activities are concerned, the permanent exposition is complemented with regularly changing thematic exhibitions of photographs and other works, with a focus on domestic artists from the Tatras.

The museum is known for organising numerous complementary activities focused on gaining a more intimate, deeper perspective on life in the Tatras. These include film screenings, lectures and debates involving famous individuals from the Tatras or dedicated to figures who have contributed to the region's cultural growth and the promotion of its visibility.

The specific interest in culture, especially thematic [aspects], of which this museum is a part, is being formed extremely laboriously and slowly. Thanks to the fact that the events are held in this central place, there are also people who would otherwise not come specifically to this museum. Even though a group of permanent fans is being formed step by step, it is a difficult, long-term process built mainly through personal contacts. It is mainly domestic visitors who prevail in this process. (Woman, 35 years)

In general, the distribution of promotion materials is one of the principal pillars supporting the growth of tourism in the region. In this regard, the Museum of Tatra Cinematography and Photography focuses its marketing activities almost exclusively on the domestic tourism market. In terms of selling souvenirs or mementos, the museum offers DVDs, films, photographs and books issued by local publishing houses.

Giving people food and accommodation is too little. There is a trend towards experience travelling, and this is what I'd like to offer people. My intention is not only to preserve the museum, but to make it lively, offer activities, invite people to different kinds of programmes of non-commercial culture which visitors would not see elsewhere, just here. This is what

¹⁹ The Ministry of Culture lists in the Register of Museums and Galleries of the Slovak Republic the museums and galleries which meet the following conditions for the performance of basic professional activities, in compliance with Act No. 206/2009 Coll. on Museums and Galleries and on Objects of Cultural Value: a) keep chronological, expert records of collection items of level I; b) create the conditions for the security of collection items, as per Article 12, and professional protection of collection items as per Article 13 of the Museum Act; c) arrange the presentation of collection items and collections by means of permanent exhibitions, long-term, short-term and travelling shows, publishing and editing activities or other expert, educational and presentation activities; d) deploy qualified staff for the performance of basic expert activities. The Ministry of Culture SR. *Register of Museums and Galleries*. <http://195.49.188.210/kulturne-dedictstvo/muzea-a-galerie/>

I'd like to initiate, but I've only been here for a short time. Two years in tourism, it's nothing. (Woman, 35 years).



Fig. 1, Fig. 2: *Museum of Tatra Cinematography and Photography.*
Photo: Z. Krišková, 2020

Museum of Mountain Guides and Porters (Sherpa Museum)

Another private “mini-museum”, commonly known as the Sherpa Museum, has served the public since 2014. It is located within the Swiss House, the oldest preserved building in the town of Vysoké Tatry, built in 1856, and focuses on one of the dominant elements of life in the Tatras – the profession of mountain guides and porters.

Mountain guides, as local experts on the Tatras, stood at the foundation tourism’s development in the region at the turn of the twentieth century, disseminating knowledge of the area and enabling visitors to access the peaks, mountain lakes and other previously inaccessible or unknown corners of the High Tatras. The profession of porter was gradually separated from that of mountain guide, with a specific focus on carrying the technical equipment of the first explorers and artists, the personal belongings of visitors and, later, food supplies and furnishings for remote tourist chalets. It is important to note that this mountain profession has been included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovakia, as a special element of cultural identification associated with life in the Tatras.

The private *Sherpa Museum* was founded, and is still run, by Štefan Bačkor, a mountaineer and former porter who has a close relationship to this theme, having carried loads to mountain chalets himself for 18 years.

The idea of the mountain porters’ museum is to record traces of the highest number possible of still active, as well as legendary porters in the Tatra valleys, describe their activities and perhaps their fates. Many of them are no longer with us and drag their loads along heavenly paths. This is why I immodestly expect support from active as well as passive porters and their fans. I’ll be happy if you leave a story here, an interesting artefact or just a bit of that contagious “lightness of being”. (Man, 42 years)²⁰

²⁰ Museum of Mountain Guides and Porters: www.sherpacaffe.sk/

In terms of the collection items, all elements are part of the owner's private collection. They can be found in the museum's single small exhibition room, which also serves as a depository and a venue for lectures and film screenings. Since these activities represent the primary intent of the owner, they cannot really be described as accompanying or complementary. The owner complements the museum's activities with an offer of corporate team-building events which include the chance to try load carrying in practice.

The collection offers an overview of the evolution of portering equipment and tools, showing specialist equipment, from footwear to climbing accessories. The exhibition contains several rare exhibits, including a frame backpack used by Wehrmacht soldiers in World War II).

The museum is also special when it comes to the administration of collections, this is not undertaken to a level that meets the legal requirements for museums listed in the Register of Museums under the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. The records are exclusively a matter of the owner's memory. The premises are rented to the museum by the municipal authorities of Vysoké Tatry. A small café, a children's corner, and available accommodation in the form of two rooms with a kitchen on the first floor underlines its family atmosphere.

The primary activities of the institution include the event *Nosičská stovka* (Porters' One Hundred), held at the beginning of the season to preserve the memory of the porter Juro Petranský, and *Sherpa Rally*, which closes the season. Both competitions involve carrying loads to Zamkovský's Chalet. These events have developed the tradition by encouraging active participation by members of the public. This lively, interactive approach promotes the creation of a permanent relationship with the portering tradition, and helps to establish and strengthen contacts between individuals who are interested in this mountain profession. This continuity of cultural elements undoubtedly contributes to the essential mission of safeguarding and using cultural values in the sustainability process.

The cultural institution also owes its success to its cooperation with the town's representatives; for example, the museum organises a *Porters' Day* as part of the *Days of the Town* festival.



Fig. 3, Fig. 4:
Sherpa Museum.
Photo: Z. Krišková,
2020

Ski Museum

The sports museum is a memory institution focusing on the documentation and interpretation of the past and present of sports in the Tatras (even though its name gives the impression of a seemingly narrower thematic focus). It is located in the centre of the town of Vysoké Tatry, in the *Tatranská Lomnica* cadastral area.²¹

The owner and founder of this private memory institution is an active sports person (as is

²¹ JANIGOVÁ, Ingrid. *Spoločenské dianie a kultúra*. In: *Mesto Vysoké Tatry*. 2017, p. 301

his wife), a native of this region, and a proud local patriot with close personal links to the Tatras and sports. The owner's cultural roots, love for sports and the Tatras, and his professionalism radiate from every object and display cabinet, through the sensible design of the exhibition space and obvious care given the exhibits. His knowledge of the theme, and his great enthusiasm, is apparent in the detailed commentary on each of almost 600 pairs of skis and other tangible objects, photographs and accompanying documentation materials. The motivation to establish the museum was very prosaic:

Some thirty years ago, I had a restaurant called Slnecný dom (Sun House). We put skis on the wall; there were enough old skis everywhere. When a visitor once asked for more details about them, I didn't know what to tell him: well, some wooden skis. This was that impulse. I started to search for information, collect skis, search for information in literature, on the internet; I spent hours sitting and studying... Today, I immodestly think that, in Slovakia, there is no greater expert in skis. When anyone sends me a picture, I can tell you straight away what kind of ski it is, from which year, what kind of tying, the approximate value... (Man, 52 years)

This family-oriented museum opened in 2013 on the ground floor of a recently restored building in the centre of Lomnica, which the owner purchased. The building includes a small café and a sports store in the basement.

Among the institutions mentioned in this study, the Ski Museum is the only official member of Slovakia's museum network, listed in the Register of Museums and Galleries of the Slovak Republic. However, in legislative and organisational matters, it maintains an individual form of ownership without any formal museum statutes, even though this means certain restrictions apply when it comes to obtaining state subsidies. The museum cooperates closely with the Slovak Olympics and Sports Museum in Bratislava, mainly through expert consultations.

Regarding acquisition and management of the collections, most items are private property obtained mainly through purchase or donation. At present, the collection contains approximately 5–6,000 tangible items, in addition to photographs and documentation. The museum's philosophy regarding acquisitions is to focus on items that link exclusively to the themes of the Tatras and sports. In the context of tourism, especially international tourism, this approach helps to attract the interest of visitors, due to the museum's evident authenticity, originality and special ties to the environment.

Regarding the documentation of collections, the museum uses its own recording system, just as in the previous case. The owner takes great care to protect documents from mechanical damage by storing them systematically in special wooden crates in a private depository.

Items awaiting conservation are also stored in a separate room; they are treated by the owner himself or, in more complicated cases, in collaboration with professional conservation companies in Slovakia (Levoča) and the Czech Republic (Prague).

The museum's presentation activities for the public take the form of a permanent exposition which partly varies from time to time. Throughout the year, the permanent portfolio is complemented with four or five temporary thematic exhibitions.

Footfall at most of these institutions is an important issue. In this context, the Ski Museum's strategy relies on it being situated in the centre of the settlement.

Those European museums (like the big museum in Murzzuschlag, Austria), when they told me that their annual attendance is 10,000 people, it would be zero for us economically; I realised that we needed to have over 15,000 people to survive. Right in the first year, our attendance was around 18,000, which we have more-or-less maintained until the present. (Man, 52 years)

Groups of children are among the most common type of visitor: in winter, the museum sees mainly ski course participants, and later in the year, those attending open-air schools. Such visitors come predominantly from Slovakia, although it can be difficult to measure this precisely, since the courses are usually organised for large groups which may include visitors from abroad. As for foreign visitors, a substantial proportion attend as individuals.

The key determinants affecting footfall include the weather, since the Tatras, in their essence, are tied to hiking and outdoor sports. Museum institutions in the area offer additional indoor programmes in case of bad weather or for after-ski relaxation. However, even in a large resort such as the High Tatras, small private museums often struggle to survive economically.

To increase attendance, the museum tried offering extended opening hours in winter, staying open until 22:00 (its usual year-round opening hours being 09:00–18:00), in the hope that this might better fit the schedule of skiers.

We assumed that they would have a dinner after skiing and that they wouldn't have much to do in the evening, and so they could come to visit us. Unfortunately, we are not located at a mountain resort with shops open during the evening and with a centre full of entertainment. Nobody would stick his head out of the hotel. (Man, 52 years)



Fig. 5, Fig. 6:
Ski Museum.
Photo: Z.
Krišková, 2020

Nevertheless, random visitors still represent the largest majority. The number of visitors with a specific interest in skiing has been rising. Tourists often study the museum's offer in advance and choose what they wish to see. Social networks, the internet and, in particular, partner associations (Tourism Associations, Regional Tourism Organisation, Tatras Region) make a substantial contribution in this regard. The Wander Card project also contributes to promoting the visiting of these specialist museums.²²

The memory institutions listed in this study all represent specific approaches to showcasing various aspects of the High Tatras' cultural heritage. They are not run on the standard legislative and organisational basis of traditional brick-and-mortar museums, and the management of the collections is subject to the owners' individual rules.

What is common to all of them is the professional approach of the owners, their close relationship with the subject matter, their enthusiasm, and their efforts to present their collections through complementary interactive activities for visitors. Another characteristic

²² This is related to the Wander Book project, and provides a comprehensive and permanently developing network presenting interesting information on tourism, culture, sports and gastronomy. Thanks to its translation into several languages, the project also supports visitors from abroad. Wander Book was founded in the Czech Republic in 2008 by the orienteering runner and dedicated photographer Ing. Rudolf Ropek. <https://sk.wander-book.com/co-su-wander-card.htm>

feature of museum work that has survived until the present is their volunteer nature – in particular, the fact they were started by amateur enthusiasts, rather than museum professionals.²³ Nevertheless, their common objective is to build a relationship to the Tatras by sharing their cultural values.

Lomnica Gallery

Lomnica Gallery, located in Hotel Lomnica in Tatranská Lomnica, presents a specific and, undoubtedly, special approach to safeguarding and showcasing the cultural values of the High Tatras. Even though this study's main focus is not on the architectonic contexts of tourism, we shall make a brief exception in this case, as it is a special example of continuity of preservation and simultaneous use of cultural heritage combined with architecture and fine arts.

Hotel Lomnica, built in 1893, was the first hotel facility in Tatranská Lomnica. For this reason, but also thanks to its character and the high quality of service it offers, it has been called the “First Lady” of the Tatras. The building, a unique design by the Spiš architect Gedeon Majunke with elements of the Alpine Art Nouveau architectural style, is listed in the Register of Immovable Monuments of the Slovak Republic.²⁴

By the end of the twentieth century, after changing hands several times due to the failed economic ambitions of a series of owners, the building has ended up in a state of disrepair. The current owner launched a general restoration of “its body as well as spirit” and, in 2016, it “rose from the ashes like a phoenix”, as the locals say.

The current owner carried out some thorough qualitative research, having consulted the chronicles and records of other Tatra hotels. He surveyed local inhabitants and former employees, providing valuable data. By means of local and regional media, a website and the assistance of regional organisations, he launched the campaign PamätnícihotelLomnica.sk to obtain and summarise relevant documents.

After its restoration, which took around 20 months, the hotel launched the new era of its existence in 2016 with a meeting for the former workers and the new young team which would be working there. This approach, which placed emphasis on maintaining continuity and the transmission of cultural values, also contributed to the opening of the Lomnica Gallery.

Lomnica presents the unusual combination of staying in the hotel and the chance to view its gallery collection, which is loosely exhibited in the public areas of the building, in the corridors and in the rooms. The collection was, from the outset, conceived as an integral part of the restoration and functioning of Hotel Lomnica, which was a jewel of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy's heritage. Drawing on the idea of the renaissance of the spirit which characterised that era, the plan was to exhibit Slovak and other Central European works of art, alongside a historic overview that could capture the transformations of the period as reflected by visual artists.²⁵

The collection presents to the hotel guests, as well as walk-in visitors and tourists, the precious and important examples of Slovakia's cultural heritage through the works of the most prominent artists of that period. Landscape painting, prioritising Tatra themes, is a feature of the works of important representatives of several artistic currents, including L. Medňanský,

²³ TIŠLIAR, Pavol. Muzeológia na Slovensku. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo*. 2016/1, p. 127.

²⁴ It was listed in 1963 (No. 3862/1) as one of nearly 80 immovable cultural heritage sites in the town of Vysoké Tatry. Ministry of Culture SR. *Register of Museums and Galleries*. <http://195.49.188.210/kulturne-dedicstvo/muzea-a-galerie/>

²⁵ KVASNIČKA, Marián. Úvodné slovo ku zbierke. In: *Galéria Lomnica 2017*, p. 12.

N. Katona, J. Alexy, D. Skutecký, G. Mallý, V. Hložník, J. Hála, M. Benka, M. A. Bazovský, J. Kompánek and many others.

The exhibition includes documentation focused on the history of the hotel and related life and events in the Tatras, including important milestones in the region's development, mainly in connection with sports. The documentary exhibits include contemporary photographs, collectors' items such as old postcards of the Tatras and objects related to the history of the hotel, as well as several architectonic fragments discovered during the reconstruction.

Lomnica Gallery is officially listed as a gallery institution in the Register of Museums and Galleries of the Slovak Republic. It has its own system for collections management with regard to records and documentation in place.

In this institution, the greatest attention is paid to the security of the gallery's collection, given the value of the original works of art, some of which are owned by the hotel, while others are on temporary loan.

With respect to protection, the gallery ensures that basic conservation of the collection items takes place each year and, if major interventions are necessary, it makes cooperates with external museums and professional restoration studios. In general, the hotel management appreciates the guests' approach to its collections. High respect and esteem for the works is also an aspect of the relationship with today's visitor, as a participant in tourism, to the visited environment, place, or the artefact itself.

The gallery cooperates with expert consultants, as well as other galleries and museums, archives, painters and collectors. Several activities are organised jointly with other memory institutions in the town of Vysoké Tatry itself.

There is a highly informative documentary film which provides important accompanying information and promotes the hotel. Based on the outcomes of research undertaken by key figures in hotel, the film shows the development of Hotel Lomnica and, by capturing the important economic milestones, provides a brief, yet comprehensive socio-cultural picture of the High Tatras from the twentieth century until today.

It is an important part of our identity, it carries a message, an emotion. (Woman, 36 years)



Fig. 7, Fig. 8:
Lomnica Gallery.
Photo: Z.
Krišková, 2020

Lomnica Gallery, as part of the hotel premises, is open not only to hotel guests, but to the general public as well. It offers an original way of presenting of the highest values of Slovakian artistic cultural heritage. It fulfils, in a unique way, the essence of sustainable development of the country's tourism and travel industry by exploiting the exceptional values of its cultural identity.

The municipality and its contribution to the prosperity of the travel and tourism industry in the High Tatras

In the travel industry, the safeguarding and presentation of cultural values is tied to a certain place, city or town, region or state, the offer of which relates, to a certain degree, to the quality and capacities of the public authorities.²⁶ The town of Vysoké Tatry is currently an important co-actor in the shaping of the quality, growth, and sustainability of this phenomenon. Visitors are primarily oriented on tourism and sports. In order to ensure a rich cultural experience, the town also focuses its efforts on meeting visitors' needs for cultural relaxation.

When it comes to developing cultural tourism, the local population plays an important role. In general, little emphasis is placed on this aspect. Nevertheless, it is necessary to build up the local population's positive relationship with original local values.²⁷

Activities that encourage this in our study area include the Meeting at Kyselka Spring (Stretnutie pri kyselke), which opens the town of Vysoké Tatry's summer tourist season each year.

The Kyselka Spring is a place shrouded in legends. Through this spring, we interpret the scenic presentation of some legends on the High Tatras, especially on their healing springs and spas. The audience response is also positive, as we dig deep into the cultural essence of the Tatras. (Man, 56 years, representative of the municipality)

The Vysoké Tatry Town Days is a weekend festival that offers space for mutual interactions among members of the community and shows their connection to heritage and local environment. The Tatra Gala Night represents a special feature of this activity, being accompanied by the annual awarding of prizes to outstanding figures in the town. This event takes on a public character by presenting the year's new addition to the Tatra Sports Hall of Fame. Situated within the gallery premises in Vila Flóra, the Hall of Fame has the character of a "mini-museum", presenting to tourists who are learning about the memory of the town one of the dominant aspects of life in the Tatras – sports and sports personalities of both national and international importance.

Nowadays, the municipal authorities of Vysoké Tatry also contribute to the development and sustainability of tourism in the Tatras by partnering with marketing professionals and the national tourism board, being aware of the need for general coordination in promoting tourism in the area.

From the point of view of the much-discussed dilemma of "nature versus tourism", the attitude of the local government is unequivocal:

We are absolutely and fundamentally against any mass events of private companies with up to 30,000 people per day. Visitors have nowhere to park, decibels spread over the mountains (like in Hrebienok). [...] The Tatras are full of nervousness on both sides – visitors as well as nature. (Man, 56 years, representative of the municipality)

Conclusion

The development of cultural tourism tends to be perceived positively within the given environment, although it is important that it is managed in a sustainable manner. This topic has

²⁶ JAKUBÍKOVÁ, Dagmar. *Marketing v cestovním ruchu: Jak uspět v domácí i světové konkurenci*. 2012, p. 23.

²⁷ KURPAŠ, Michal, ZIMA, Roman. *Manažment a marketing...* p. 72.

been discussed by Terzic, Jovičić and Simeunovic-Bajic, among others.²⁸ In this context, local identity remains an important factor.

The commercial potential of natural and cultural heritage is increasingly exploited in the field of tourism, representing an important source of income for local, regional and national economies, and one of which representatives of local, regional and state governments are becoming increasingly aware. In this process of commodification, cultural heritage is all too often treated as a type of commercial product, degraded to a mere commodity, bringing its authenticity into question. Even though cultural heritage is a significant source of economic income and growth, its economic value must not outweigh or endanger the real value of the heritage, as emphasised in the Council of Europe's FARO Convention 2005.²⁹

This risk is also stressed by MacDonald, whose study on European populations found that people can lose the sense of their own identity and become the victim of the "identity industry" which builds on standardised identity.³⁰ The importance of identity issues is very sensitively perceived by the inhabitants of the town of Vysoké Tatry:

It is about the relationship of these people to the Tatras and to their history, about respect for their values [...] Historically – Lomnica, for instance, is some 100 years old, it's all young, people have no relationship to the land; when it was built, people were coming here from elsewhere. For example, it was necessary to quickly build apartment buildings for the World Championships, arrange service staff for hotels, people were recruited from different places, without having any relationship to these hills, not to speak of their children. And it served for nothing. There has been no relationship to the land or to its history. (Man, 52 years)

Even though this study does not focus on the economic factors of the travel industry and tourism in the Tatras, this aspect cannot be fully avoided in the context of this topic.

In the beginning, the spa sector assumed visitors would come for long stays and, hence, enjoy wider opportunities for exploring nature and the local culture, as well as engaging in sports. At present, tourism to the area is characterised by shorter stays, even weekend or one-day trips.

The counterpart to the the activities of small regional entrepreneurs who focus on presenting the High Tatras' cultural capital is the production of mass events promoted widely by large developers which predominantly meet the preferences of one-day visitors. In such cases, priority is given to short-term, commercial mass activities run by large private companies who syphon off most of the economic benefits. These popular, interesting and, at the same time, lucrative events include the winter attraction, the Tatra Ice Dome,³¹ which does have an undoubtedly artistic value, and is accompanied by an international competition in the creation of ice statues. Another example is the Bear Days at Hrebienok, with all-day attractions aimed at children.³²

This character of these activities brings contradiction to tourism in the Tatras, with negative impacts on the above-mentioned small private museums that pursue the safeguarding of local

²⁸ TERZIC, Aleksandra, JOVIČIĆ, Ana, SIMEUNOVIC-BAJIC, Nataša. Community role in heritage management and sustainable tourism development: Case study of the Danube region in Serbia. In: *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*. Special Issue/2014, pp. 183–201.

²⁹ HOPPÁL, Mihály. Trvalo udržateľné dedičstvo v spoločnosti založenej na tradícii. In: *Ochrana kultúrneho dedičstva*. 2012, p. 51.

³⁰ MACDONALD, Sharon. *Memorylands. Heritage and Identity in Europe Today*. 2013, p. 109.

³¹ <https://slovakia.travel/en/tatra-ice-dome>

³² <https://slovakia.travel/en/medvedie-dni-bear-days>

and regional values in their cultural identification context.

The large private companies that organise the cultural life here now are based in other towns and centres; their relationship is different. It's not about a person coming and step-by-step, building a reputation here, spinning capital right on the spot. It's about tourists coming here and paying for this and that [...] and the money doesn't stay in the Tatras, it goes to the company which is based in a different place. And it often happens that they don't reinvest the money in the Tatras. (Man, 38 years)

Last year, we already had the feeling that they would tear the Tatras apart, with all that unbearable strain by the businessmen and large companies – where and how much money to grab, what to invent [...] How much money is enough money? Let's keep in mind what kind of place it is, whether we want to have a national park or an amusement park here. (Woman, 32 years)

Nowadays, the travel industry is primarily considered to be an economic sector and, hence, the bearer of economic functions and effects. However, even from the economic perspective, the position of culture, along with the environment, must be significant or even determining.³³

It is up to the travel industry organisers and actors, with an emphasis on those in local government, to ensure that mass tourism, combined with the prioritisation of economic growth, does not prevail over the preservation of cultural values which form an integral part of the ethnic and cultural identity of the area, but remains in line with the principles of sustainability. The management of culture, destination management and marketing should be synchronised and operate in tandem. An appropriate share of income from the travel industry and visitor activities related to the objects of cultural heritage should be used effectively and fairly to maintain, safeguard, present, and manage them. The sustainable development of cultural and natural heritage sites should thus contribute to the area's social and economic development, which has a crucial impact on the creation of resources for the preservation of the specific features of local culture.³⁴

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³³ LENOVSKEJ, Ladislav. Cestovný ruch ako kulturologický fenomén. In: *Kontexty kultúry a turizmu*. 2008, p. 17.

³⁴ KURPAŠ, Michal, ZIMA, Roman. Manažment a marketing... p. 78.

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The Museum System of Modern Kazakhstan: Classification and Typology of Museums

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The Museum System of Modern Kazakhstan: Classification and Typology of Museums

This article discusses the museum system of modern Kazakhstan and offers, for the first time ever, a classification and typology of the country's museums.

In recent years in independent Kazakhstan, on the basis of the Soviet system, a modern museum network has been formed which currently lists 250 museums. Among them are 17 national-level museums, 54 at the regional level, 73 at the provincial level, 103 branches of regional- and district-level museums and four private museums.

The purpose of this article is to analyse the museum system of modern Kazakhstan and develop a classification and typology of the country's museums. In the course of the study, conducted in 2017–2018, data was collected on the activities of museums at the national, regional and district levels over the past seven years. From the results of this investigation, the museums of Kazakhstan were systematized according to the subject or topic of the museum (e.g. history, art, scientific), its affiliation (national, regional district), and by size, measured by number of employees.

Keywords: museum sector, museums activities, museums of the Republic of Kazakhstan, excursions, visitors.

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to analyse the museum system of modern Kazakhstan and develop a classification and typology of the country's museums.

The museums of Kazakhstan are the main socio-cultural institutions for the acquisition, study, storage and popularization of the country's historical, cultural and natural heritage. In this regard, it is relevant to research the current state of development of Kazakhstan's museum system and, based on this, to systematise the existing museums by means of classification criteria.

Certain issues in the formation and development of the museum sector in the Republic of Kazakhstan have previously been discussed by individual Kazakhstani and international scientists. However, in general, the current state of the museum sector in Kazakhstan has been under-explored. Among the works devoted to the issue of museums in Kazakhstan, the following are noteworthy: V. N. Aliyasova, “The Museums of North and East Kazakhstan as centers for the preservation and popularization of paleontological collections”;¹ A. G. Ibraeva, “Formation of museum affairs in Kazakhstan (1920-1940)”;² A. E. Kainazarova, “Museum affairs in Kazakhstan (1831–1925)”;³ M. Z. Musakhanova, “Development of museums in Kazakhstan (1991–2001)”;⁴ B. K. Sanakulova, “Museum construction and its activity in the Republic of Kazakhstan (1991–2004)”;⁵ and T. Taiman, “Development of museum affairs in Kazakhstan: experience and problems (1946–1970)”.⁶

In addition, a number of works by Kazakhstani researchers are devoted to the history and activities of independent museums in Kazakhstan, or focus on narrower museological topics. These issues are discussed in separate articles, for example: A. V. Kushchenko, “Museum in the system of sociocultural communication”;⁷ E. T. Murzagaliyeva, “The principle of accessibility of the environment in the architecture of museums”;⁸ G. Temirton, A. Kanafina, “Museum in the context of socio-cultural modernization”;⁹ Sh. S. Tursynbayeva, “Restoration of paintings” (through the picture from the funds of the Central State Museum of the Republic

¹ ALIYASOVA, Valentina. *Muzei Severnogo i Vostochnogo Kazakhstana kak tsentry sokhraneniya i populyarizatsii paleontologicheskikh kollektiy*. Avtoreferat dissertatsii na soiskaniye uchenoy sterpeni kandidata kul'turologii [Museums of Northern and Eastern Kazakhstan as centers of conservation and promotion of paleontological collections. Abstract of dissertation for doctorate in cultural studies.] Kemerovo, 2009, 25 p. <http://cheloveknauka.com/muzei-severnogo-i-vostochnogo-kazakhstan-kak-tsentry-sohraneniya-i-populyarizatsii-paleontologicheskikh-kollektiy-1> (accessed 11 April 2020). [In Russian].

² IBRAYEVA, Akmaral. *Istoriya i opyt poyavleniya i razvitiya muzeynogo dela v Kazakhstane (1831–2006)*. avtoreferat dissertatsii. [History and experience of the emergence and development of Museum business in Kazakhstan (1831–2006) Abstract of the dissertation]. Ibraeva A.G, Astana, 2010, 43 p. [In Kazakh].

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⁵ SANAKULOVA B. K. *Struktura i funktsii muzeyev v Respublike Kazakhstan (1991–2004)*: avtoreferat k dissertatsii na soiskaniye uch. st. k.i.n. [Structure and functions of museums in the Republic of Kazakhstan (1991–2004). Abstract of dissertation for doctorate in history of science.] Oral, 2006, 30 p. [In Kazakh].

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⁸ MURZAGALIEVA E. T. Princip dostupnosti sredy v arkhitekture muzeev [The principle of accessibility of the environment in the architecture of museums]. In: *Bulletin of the Kazakh Head Academy of Architecture and Civil Engineering*, vol. 58, no. 4, 2015, p. 60–65.

⁹ TEMIRTON Galiya. KANAFINA A. Muzei v kontekste sociokulturnoi modernizatsii [Museum in the context of socio-cultural modernization]. In: *Bulletin of KazNPU named after Abay. Series “Historical and socio-political sciences”*, vol. 47, no. 4, 2015, p. 156–160.

of Kazakhstan)¹⁰ and others.

Based on the above, we can conclude that the state of the literature on the activities of Kazakhstani museums is fragmentary and further research is required.

The purpose of this article is to study current development status of the country's museum system and attempt a systematisation of the museums in Kazakhstan according to the classification criteria defined herein.

In the history of the Kazakhstani museum system, three chronological periods can be distinguished, each having its own characteristics associated with political, economic, social and cultural factors:

- 1) Pre-revolutionary period: 1828 (or 1831) to 1915;
- 2) Soviet period: 1920 to 1990;
- 3) Modern period: 1991 to present.

The important characteristic of the first stage (1920-1960) is that this was the time when the final institutionalization of the museum took place. The museum system became a system itself. In the 1920s and 1930s, museums already existed already in every regional centre of the Republic. The last regional museum to open was Pavlodar, in 1942.

The second stage of the Soviet period (1961–1990) was characterized by the further development of the Republic's museum system. At this stage, there was a sharp quantitative jump: in just one decade, from 1961 to 1970, more museums (16) were created in Kazakhstan than in the previous three decades (11). This upward trend continued. From 1971 to 1980, 30 museums appeared, and in the last decade of the Soviet Union's existence, from 1981 to 1990, 41 were created.

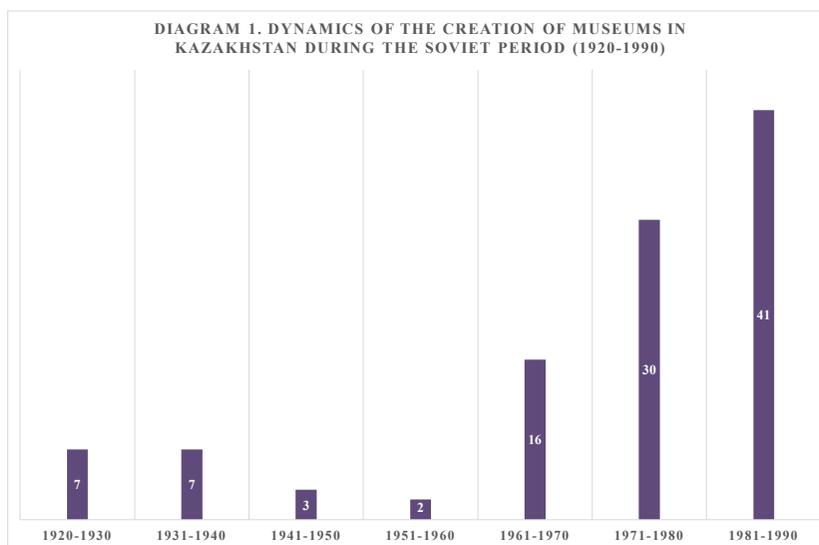


Fig. 1: Dynamics of the creation of museums in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period (1920–1990).

¹⁰ TURSUNBAEVA, Sholpan. Restavraciya proizvedenii zhivopisi: voprosy sokhraneniya (na primere kartiny iz fondov CGM RK) [Restoration of paintings: conservation issues (for example, paintings from the funds of the Central Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan)]. In: *Bulletin of the Kazakh National Pedagogical University*, no. 4, 2015, p. 143–146.

A new round of museum development began in Kazakhstan after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1991, only 15 museums were opened in Kazakhstan. Within 10 years, from 1991 to 2000, at least 50 museums were founded in the country, and from 2001 to 2017 a minimum of 64. Thus, for 26 years from 1991 to 2017, at least 114 museums were founded (see Fig 2).

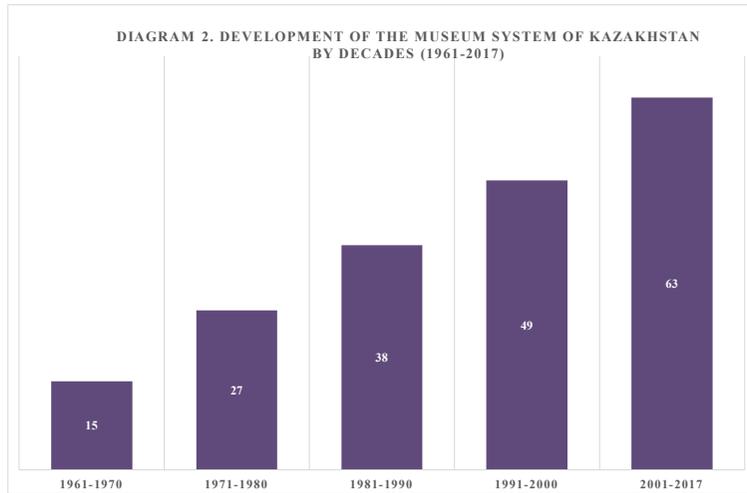


Fig. 2: *Development of the museum system of Kazakhstan by decades (1961 - 2017).*

Currently, there are 250 state museums operating in the Republic of Kazakhstan, including 17 museums at the national level, 54 museums at the regional level, 73 at the provincial level, 103 branches of the regional- and district-level museums, and four private museums¹¹ (Figure 3).

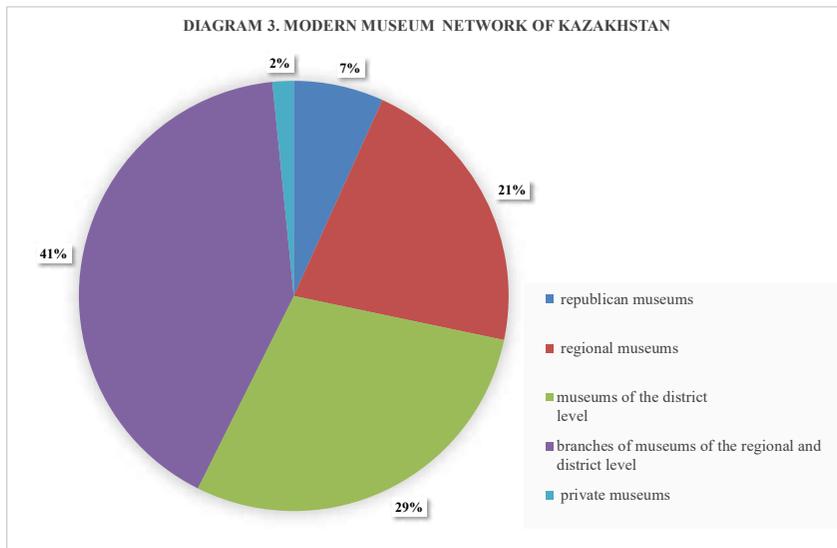


Fig. 3: *Modern museum network of Kazakhstan.*

¹¹ Ofitsial'nyy sayt Komiteta po statistike Ministerstva natsional'noy ekonomiki Respubliki Kazakhstan. [Official website of the Statistics committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan]. <https://stat.gov.kz/official/industry/21/statistic/7> (accessed 11 April 2020). [In Russian].

The largest museums are the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Central State Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the A. Kasteev State Museum of Arts of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the State Historical Cultural and Natural Reserve Museum “Tamgaly” and the State Historical-Cultural Reserve Museum “Azret-Sultan”.

As is well known, museums perform various functions, such as collecting, storing, studying, educating, displaying, publishing and popularizing cultural property.

As of 1 January 2020, there were 3,847,767 objects in the funds of the museums of Kazakhstan, of which 57,570 items require restoration. In 2019, the total number of visitors amounted to 6,829,000 people; in the same period, 13,990 lectures, 181,431 guided tours and 9,496 exhibitions were held.¹²

Tab. 1: *Number of events held in museums in Kazakhstan in 2019.*

Region name	number of excursions	number of exhibitions	number of lectures
Akmola region	6 961	558	549
Aktobe region	6 987	780	1 261
Almata region	8 049	804	948
Atyrau region	3 675	406	292
West-Kazakhstan region	8 087	322	250
Jambyl Region	6 404	614	608
Karaganda region	14 707	859	1 676
Kostanay region	10 713	1 010	723
Kyzylorda Region	12 304	696	876
Mangistau region	3 076	93	103
Turkestan region	4 666	783	1 519
Pavlodar region	3 581	257	927
North-Kazakhstan region	26 443	1 081	1 939
The East Kazakhstan region	21 022	772	1 843
Nur-Sultan	35 502	206	156
Almaty	9 014	224	299
Shymkent	x	x	x
Total by country	181 431	9 496	13 990

According to the classification of the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the museums of Kazakhstan are divided into the following seven groups: historical, regional, memorial, natural science, art history, reserve museums and others.

The largest share in this classification is covered by regional museums, of which there are 88 (36.7%), then memorial – 57 (23.8%), historical – 54 (22.5%), art history – 11 (4.6%), reserve museums – 9 (3.8%), natural science museums – 3 (1.2%). Museums included in the “others” section comprise in the amount of 18 or 7.5% (see Figure 4).

¹² Official website of the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

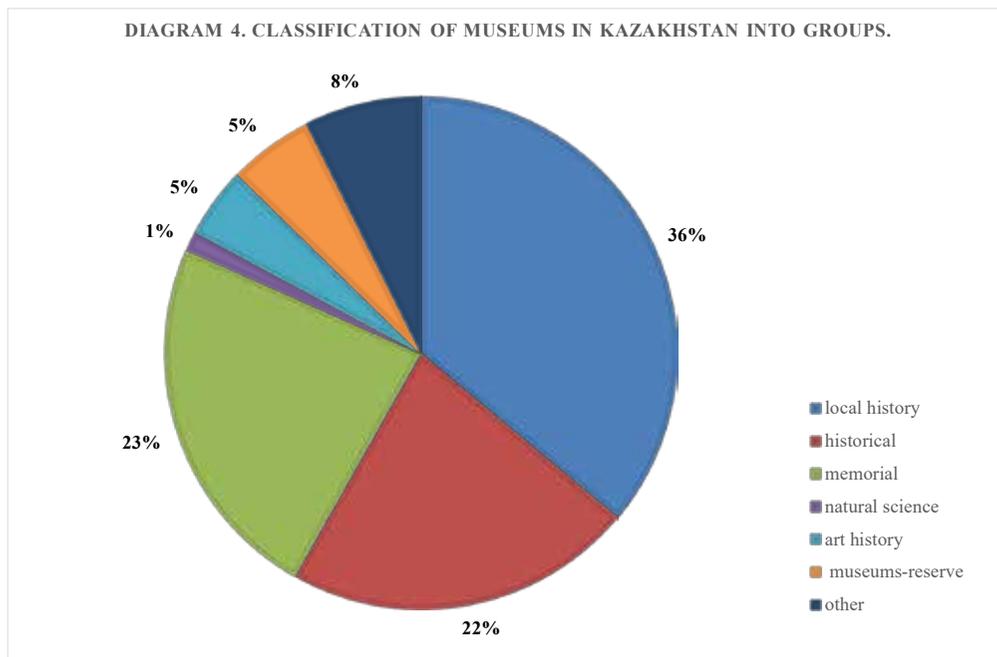


Fig. 4: *Classification of museums in Kazakhstan into groups.*

This classification raises a question, first of all, about the division of regional and historical museums. Certainly, there are museums whose expositions are not devoted to the history of a particular region, but to the history of the country as a whole, but there are far fewer than 54 of them indicated in the official statistics. In the light of specific features of most museums in Kazakhstan, such a division seems illogical.

In the course of preparing this study, we compiled a database on the museums currently operating in Kazakhstan. The database includes 221 operating museums, which is slightly less than the number of museums in the country (92.1% of the total); however, in our opinion, it allows us to draw quite representative conclusions about the classification and functions of museums.

According to our system, the museums of Kazakhstan can be roughly divided into nine groups:

1. Regional museums
2. Memorial
3. Art history
4. Industry-specific
5. Museums-reserves
6. Scientific
7. Historical
8. Universal
9. Others

Regional museums make up the largest group within our examined selection, with 100 institutions (45.2%). Regional museums can be divided according to their status into regional,

city, district and rural. There are 16 regional museums, 14 city museums, 60 district ones and 9 in rural locations.

The fact that some museums have more than one regional museum can be explained, as a rule, by the fact that the region has merged with another region. For example, the East Kazakhstan region was united with the Semipalatinsk region in 1997, and as a result, two regional museums now operate in the area, in the cities of Semipalatinsk and Ust-Kamenogorsk. The situation is similar in the Kostanay region, which includes the now-abolished Turgay region. Aside from the Kostanay Regional Museum, one can also find the Regional Museum of the History of the Steppe Territory (*krai*) in the city of Arkalyk, the former regional centre of the Turgay region.

Memorial museums make up the second largest group of museums, with 54 institutions (24.4%). The first memorial museum in Kazakhstan was the T. G. Shevchenko Museum, opened in 1932; the second is the House-Museum of Abay, opened in 1940. In terms of scale, almost all memorial museums are small organizations. Memorial museums partly overlap with both regional and art history museums. The profile of regional museums involves expositions dedicated to famous people from the region under examination. The intersection with art history museums is due to the fact that most of the memorial museums are dedicated to the memory of creative people, poets, writers, artists and musicians.

We divided the 54 memorial museums in our examined selection into three groups. Among them, 31 (57.4%) are museums dedicated to creative individuals, 8 (14.8%) are dedicated to scientists, and 15 (27.8%) are devoted to various other types of historical figure. This group includes politicians (D. A. Kunaev), war heroes (M. Mametova, A. Moldagulova) and others. Therefore, the problem of referencing a particular museum to a specific group arises in some cases.

There are 23 art history museums in our sample figure (10.4%). They can be divided into three groups in terms of scale: national, regional, and district/city. There is only one specialized art museum in the national-level group: the A. Kasteev State Museum of Arts of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Almaty. The nine regional-scale museums are: North Kazakhstan Regional Museum of Fine Arts (Petropavlovsk); Regional Museum of Literature and Art (Kokshetau); Aktobe Regional Museum of Arts (Aktobe); East Kazakhstan Regional Museum of Fine Arts named after the Nevzorov family (Semey); Karaganda Regional Museum of Fine Arts (Karaganda); Pavlodar Regional Art Museum (Pavlodar); Atyrau Regional Museum of Arts and Crafts (Atyrau); Museum of Fine Arts (Shymkent); the Bukhar Zhyrau Pavlodar Regional Museum of Literature and Art (Pavlodar).

Examples of regional/city art museums include the D. Nurpeisova Museum of Art History (West Kazakhstan region, Zhanakalinsky district, Zhanakala village) and the N. Bekezhanov Memorial Museum of Arts (Kyzylorda).

The analysed selection includes 10 industry-specific museums, which is 4.5% of the total. We classified as industry-specific those museums dedicated to a specific type of activity, profession, etc. Some of them are departmental, some are funded from the governmental budget. The oldest industry-specific museum in Kazakhstan, most likely, is the Museum of the History of Cotton Production of the South Kazakhstan region, founded in 1944. To name just a few, we can also mention the I. Zhakhaev Museum of the History of Rice planting, opened in the Kyzylorda region in 1982 and the Military History Museum of the Officers' House, opened in Almaty in 1965. The most recent, which is also a rather large-scale project, is the Military History Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, founded in Nur-Sultan in 2015.

The next group is represented by reserve museums, of which there are 13 (4.5%). Among the reserve museums are included the State Historical and Cultural Reserve Museum “Azret-Sultan” (Turkestan), Mangistau State Historical and Cultural Reserve (Aktau), the Otrar State Archaeological Reserve Museum (Turkestan region) and the State Historical Cultural and Natural Reserve Museum “Tamgaly” (Almaty region).

There are 8 museums (3.6%) classified into category of science museums in our examined selection. We have included here both natural science museums and museums related to the humanities. Among the natural science museums are the Museum of Nature and Ecology (Uralsk), the Geological Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Almaty), the Paleontological Museum (Atyrau) and the Nature Museum (Almaty). Covering the humanities, we have the Museum of Archaeology (Almaty), the Museum of Rare Books (Almaty) and the Museum of Ethnography (Mangistau region). In part, some museums can be attributed to several groups at once. For example, the Almaty Museum of the History of Kazakh Science can be classified as a science museum, an industry-specific museum, or a historical one.

The historical museums of Kazakhstan are represented by 8 institutions (3.6%). Almost all of them are highly specialized. For example, the Museum of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan is dedicated to the life and political activities of N. A. Nazarbayev. Other examples include the “Cherkasskaya Defense” Memorial Museum (Almaty region), three museums dedicated to the memory of victims of political repression (South Kazakhstan region, Karaganda region, Akmola region) and Abylaikhan Museum-Residence (Petropavlovsk).

We classified two museums (0.9%) as universal. These are the Central State Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Almaty) and the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Nur-Sultan). The versatility of these museums is due to the fact that from the outset they were not focused on a specific region. The Central State Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, founded in Almaty in 1929, was initially positioned as the main museum of the country. At the same time, it included the collections of the local Semirechensky Museum, as well as the former Kyzylorda Cossack Central Regional Museum, which in turn inherited most of the collection of the Orenburg Cossack Regional Museum.

The National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Nur-Sultan was also initially positioned as a supra-regional, national, capital museum. Accordingly, its collections do not belong to any particular region. The National Museum includes a Hall of Ancient and Medieval History, a Hall of History, a Hall of Ethnography, a Hall of Independent Kazakhstan, a Hall of Astana, a Hall of Gold and a Hall of Modern Art.¹³

We placed 6 museums (2.7%) in the “Others” category, which includes museums that cannot be classified under any of the previous categories. These include the Museum of the Mother “Anaga Kurmet” (Respect to Mother) in Almaty region, the museum “Rukhani zhangyru” (spiritual revival) in Uralsk, and the Aktobe regional museum “Rukhaniyat”, whose exposition is located in Aktobe central regional mosque (Aktobe).

Almost all museums in Kazakhstan are state owned. According to the Kazakhstan Statistics Committee, only four out of the 240 museums in the country are private. Two examples of private museums are Azat Akimbek’s Antique Art Salon and the “Umai” Art Museum.

¹³ Ofitsial’nyy sayt Natsional’nogo muzeya Respubliki Kazakhstan / razdel Istoriya muzeya. [Official website of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan / section: History of the Museum]. http://nationalmuseum.kz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23&Itemid=118&lang=ru (accessed 11 April 2020). [In Russian].

Divided by number of employees, the museums of Kazakhstan can be divided into four groups:

- 1) 1–20 employees;
- 2) 21–50 employees;
- 3) 51–100 employees;
- 4) More than 100 employees.

The first group includes more than 70% of all museums (71.5% in our selection). These are almost all rural and district museums. Most of the memorial museums have 1–20 employees.

In our sample of museums, 13.7% have 21–50 employees. Most museums of this size are regional-level institutions. The exception is the Karmakshinsky Regional Museum (21 people), the Bayanaul Memorial Museum of Academician K. I. Satpayev (31 people) and the Museum of Memory of Victims of Political Repression in the village of Dolinka (43 people).

The third group, those with 51–100 employees contains 10% of the museums sampled. All of them, without exception, are regional-level institutions. These are the museums of Kyzylorda, Kokshetau, Aktyubinsk, Semey, Karaganda, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Atyrau, Taraz, Petropavlovsk.

The fourth group, with the most employees (>100) is the smallest in membership, containing only 4.8%. From the regional museums it includes the G. N. Potanin Pavlodar Regional Museum (107 people) and the South Kazakhstan Regional Museum (110 people). However, the majority of museums in this group are national. This includes, for example, the A. Kasteev State Museum of Arts of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which has 183 employees, and the Central State Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which employs 240 people. The largest museum in Kazakhstan is currently the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where, as of August 2020, 384 people have been working.¹⁴

In view of this, the museums of Kazakhstan can be systematized according to the following classification criteria:

a) by the profile into nine groups: regional history, memorial, art history, industry-specific, reserve museums, scientific, historical, universal and others.

b) by the status (based on affiliation) into five groups: national, regional, district, city, rural.

c) by the number of employees and the scale of work accordingly into four groups: 1–20 employees (the most common), 21–50, 51–100 and over 100 employees. The more employees in a group, the fewer museums there are.

It is also possible to highlight such museums as the Central State Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which have 240 and 384 employees, respectively.

Classifying museums in Kazakhstan according to the form of ownership at this historical stage does not make sense, since 98.3% of the country's museums are state-owned. The country's four private museums are something of an exception to the rule. This can partly be explained by the peculiarities of the legislation in force in the country. The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Culture" allows the existence of museums of private collections (Article 25, paragraph 2), but there is no more or less detailed regulation of the activities of a private museum. Note that, in this case, one generates the other. An increase in the number of private museums could potentially provoke clarification and addition to existing laws in this regard.

¹⁴ Official website of the Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Summing up, it should be noted that over the 190 years of its development, the museum sector of Kazakhstan has come a long way and has formed a modern branched museum network that meets all the necessary world museum requirements.

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The practical use of police databases of stolen works of art in the protection of national heritage in selected European Union countries

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The practical use of police databases of stolen works of art in the protection of national heritage in selected European Union countries

The effectiveness in the protection of works of art constituting national heritage depends on many factors. These factors include, among other things, binding legal regulations within the scope of the protection of works of art and national heritage sites, good organisation of police forces specialising in this type of activities and cooperation in this field with other state and local government institutions and the wider society. Apart from police officers' commitment and experience, police databases that are dedicated to works of art also play an extremely important role. This article presents selected police databases devoted to works of art that are currently used by police organisations and the role of these databases in protecting national heritage in selected European Union countries. The content of the article was prepared on the basis of the analysis of literature, existing legislation and interviews with police officers and experts. The information obtained during the interviews was subjected to qualitative analysis and presented in a descriptive version.

Keywords: works of art, databases, protection of national heritage, European Union

Introduction

The global art market is growing dramatically and it continues to undergo significant transformations.¹ The value of sales on the auction market is increasing, and new price records are being set. The world of art effectively attracts investors who perceive it as a viable alternative to the financial market. For example, the global export of paintings and drawings amounted to \$25.3 billion in 2019, achieving an increase of 11 per cent compared to 2018. According to experts from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the stolen art market is the third-largest area of illicit trade in the world (after drugs and weapons).²

Organised criminal groups are also interested in the art market but their activity is not limited to investing money from illegal activity in purchasing paintings, sculptures or graphics.³

¹ DURNEY, Mark. PROULX, Blythe. Art crime: A brief introduction. In: *Crime Law and Social Change*, 56, 2011, pp. 115–132.

² ULPH, Janet, SMITH, Ian. *The illicit trade in art and antiquities: International recovery and criminal and civil liability*. Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2012, p. 32.

³ TORSÉN, Molly A. Fine art in dark corners: goals and realities of international cultural property protection. In: *Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 35, 2005, pp. 89–107.

A disturbing phenomenon called artnapping has been growing steadily for several years now. The phenomenon consists in stealing works of art in order to extort a ransom from their legal owners in exchange for their return or using works of art as a bargaining chip in related transactions of a criminal nature, such as drug trafficking.⁴ Works of art stolen in areas of armed conflict are also frequently sold by terrorist organisations and the funds thus obtained are used to finance terrorist activities.⁵

For many decades police from all over the world have been fighting crime on the art market, and their effectiveness has been determined by many factors.⁶ One of the leading tools of police work, which influences the effectiveness of detection activities, is police databases containing information on stolen works of art. The article presents the most advanced databases, which are independent IT instruments created by the police to collect data on works of art, cultural goods and national heritage objects, and the role of these databases in protecting national heritage in selected European Union countries.

The article was prepared based on the available literature on the subject, existing legal acts and the information obtained during interviews with officers involved in fighting crimes related to works of art and national heritage.

Protection of the national heritage in the light of the functioning of databases maintained by selected police units of the European union member states

The management of cultural heritage constantly faces international challenges that cannot be tackled by one country individually. The illicit trade in cultural heritage represents an example of this challenge. The plundering of archaeological sites and international trafficking in cultural goods are serious problems that affect every country.⁷ Counteracting and preventing them requires not only cross-border and sectoral cooperation but also the involvement of public and private institutions as well as society as a whole.

The persistently high prices of works of art on the world markets and the constant increase in their value create a continuing demand for such items, not always from legal sources. The art trafficking market appears to the criminal world as a relatively stable and long-term source of illegal income.⁸ Here are four main reasons why the phenomenon of the theft and smuggling of works of art is increasing:

- the price of paintings and other works of art is rising as a result of their limited supply in the world's antiquarian markets;
- works of art are increasingly considered a good investment and they also serve as a means of money laundering, financing terrorism and organised crime;
- works of art and movable items constituting cultural heritage are used as collateral

⁴ SCHACK, Haimo. *Kunst und Recht*. 3 Auflage [Art and law. 3rd Edition]. Heidelberg: Mohr Siebeck, 2017, pp. 171–173.

⁵ Interview with Miroslaw Lipka from the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability European External Action Service (National Policy Expert & Police Expert in the Operations Division CPCC EEAS; in the frame EEAS mission in Iraq, Mr Lipka supervises activities in the field of the protection of works of art and cultural goods located in Iraq). The interview was conducted on May 22, 2020 in Katowice by Jacek Dworzecki.

⁶ TIJHUIS, Edgar. *Transnational crime and the interface between legal and illegal actors: The case of the illicit art and antiquities trade*. Oosterwijk: Wolf Legal Publishers, 2006, pp. 24–25.

⁷ CZEGLEDI, Bonnie. *Crimes Against Art: International Art and Cultural Heritage Law*. Toronto: Carswell Legal Pubns, 2010, p. 26.

⁸ TOMPKINS, A. (ed.). *Art Crime and its Prevention: A Handbook for Collectors and Art Professionals*. London: Lund Humphries, 2016, pp. 11–12.

in the realities of the black economy (e.g. lending by criminal circles);

- as a consequence of the significant liberalisation of trade regulations and increased traffic between individual countries, customs barriers do not effectively protect against the illegal transfer of cultural goods.

Criminals are continually developing not only new methods to steal works of art, but also to obtain cash for them. In the last decade, the most common thefts have occurred in a situation where artworks have been ordered by the owners of private collections, or where the perpetrators of the theft or their agents are planning to ask the owner or the insurance company for a ransom for the return of the stolen work of art. Obviously, there are also attempts to sell stolen works of art on the legal market, but in the era of the global, instant flow of information, it is more and more challenging. However, the vast majority of attempts to sell stolen works of art (according to Interpol's estimates, over 95%) take place on the black market. Most activities of this type appear in the Internet space, mainly on the so-called Dark Web. For centuries, the illegal acquisition of works of art has also taken place in areas affected by armed conflict, and the perpetrators of such theft are not only professional criminals taking advantage of the opportunity, but also soldiers of the warring parties or occupiers.⁹

Nowadays, many organisational, legal and technical solutions have been implemented to protect works of art against theft and to identify and find them in the event of the crime. The solutions used are not only preventive, but also educational.

The digitisation of cultural heritage,¹⁰ the creation of IT databases containing information about sold or stolen works of art and other forms of their open presentation in cyberspace¹¹ are just some of the modern solutions that have been implemented at this time to protect cultural heritage. Police organisations, apart from regular cooperation in combating criminal offenses, also organise international, coordinated activities aimed at recovering stolen works of art. This type of action incorporates information from IT databases maintained by police units established to protect security, including combating crime related to works of art or carrying out other solutions that result in the protection of cultural heritage.

It should be emphasised that such IT databases dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage are not possessed by the armed forces of any of the European Union countries, which should be regarded as a serious drawback in their functioning. In the course of hostilities in an area of which there are predominantly military units, works of art are stolen and soldiers reveal such situations. Unfortunately, they do not have their own databases and they are not widely trained in order to protect works of art and objects constituting cultural heritage. Therefore, there are circumstances when after the disclosure of a transport containing objects of inestimable value for cultural heritage, said objects may not be retrieved by the military. Furthermore, the cooperation of the armed forces with police organisations in combating crime related to works of art and national heritage on the territory of armed conflicts takes

⁹ SCHVARC, Michal. „Kulturraub“ or Rescue? The Evacuation of Archives and Other Cultural Heritage by Third Reich Authorities from Slovakia at the End of World War II. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo-Museology and Cultural Heritage*, Bratislava, 2013, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 75–82.

¹⁰ ŽABKOVÁ, Soňa. Digitalizácia kultúrneho dedičstva. Projekt: Digitálne múzeum. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo-Museology and Cultural Heritage*, Bratislava, 2013, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 39–48.

¹¹ ŽUPČÁN, Ladislav. Platforma kultúrneho dedičstva v súčasnej kyberkultúre. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo-Museology and Cultural Heritage*, Bratislava, 2019, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 57–73.

place at a very low level, examples of which are events that occurred during the conflict in Syria.¹²

Database of works of art of the Federal Criminal Office of the Republic of Austria

After receiving an art theft report, the Austrian police registers the stolen work of art in a specially created IT database on stolen works of art created in 1991 and maintained by the Federal Criminal Police Office. The theft of a work of art or an object of art is registered in the database. The information must include a photograph and a description of the stolen object, including its individual characteristics (e.g. damage) and the security features used. The categories of registrable stolen works of art are consistent with the database maintained by INTERPOL.

The electronic application form includes fields such as:

- Type of object (can be selected: painting, sculpture, drawing, autograph/manuscript, musical instrument, weapon, jewellery, archaeological find, other);
- Material (what material the object is made of. You can select: paper, limewood, sandstone, bronze, white pearl, other);
- Technology (by which the object was made. You can select: woodcut on paper, wood, carved, polychrome and gilded, bronze cast on a wooden base, pencil drawing, watercolour);
- Measurements (height, width, depth – information in centimetres and item weight in grams);
- Title/description (if there is a title or description of the object, e.g. winter landscape, battle scene);
- Artist/writer/producer/designer/workshop (who created the object/work of art);
- Date/period/place of origin/country of origin (when and where the object was made, e.g. Tyrol circa 1480, early seventeenth century, Vienna 1914);
- Inscriptions/signature/markings/inventory number (whether the item has individual identification, e.g. signature, monogram, date, hallmark, number);
- Unique/miscellaneous features (whether the object has any special features that may help identify it, e.g. damage, signs of wear, distinctive restorations, markings on the binding or the underside, inscriptions, dedications);
- Origin (how long the artwork has been in the declarant/owner's possession; from whom it was acquired/inherited; whether the declarant/owner has evidence of the item's origin, e.g. invoices, find reports, export certificates, customs documents, shipping lists; whether the item is listed in publicly available inventories, catalogues, publications; whether there is publicly available photogenic documentation of the item).

The database contains information not only on stolen works of art but also registers objects found as a result of various police activities. When their owner cannot be established, these objects are presented on the publicly accessible website of the Federal Criminal Office of the Republic of Austria. On average, around 200 art thefts are recorded by the Austrian police per year, and the Stolen Art Database contained more than 42,000 registered objects in 2020.

¹² CUNLIFFE, Emma, MUHESEN, Nibal, LOSTAL, Marina. The Destruction of Cultural Property in the Syrian Conflict: Legal Implications and Obligations. In: *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 2016, no. 23, pp. 1–31.

ARTIST database maintained by the Art Crime Police Squad of the Organised Crime Department, Directorate for Property Crime of the Federal Police in Belgium

The ARTIST database (Art Information System) was launched in 1998. Among the data that could be collected in the database one could encounter information on: the owner of the work of art, its name, measurements, place of theft and features allowing for individual identification of the object. Currently, work is underway to further increase the ARTIST database's operational capabilities, including the extension of the possibility to enter photographic and image documentation connecting stolen works of art by means of 3D technology. Moreover, artificial intelligence methods and algorithms are being developed, which should allow more effective penetration of information contained on the Internet in the context of searching for stolen works of art. The functions planned for implementation in the ARTIST database that are also at the stage of testing are:

- geolocalisation of tagged works of art using the PoliceMaps application;
- automatic transmission from the ARTIST database of information on the theft of a work of art to the Protection System for Cultural Heritage (acronym PSYCHE) administered by INTERPOL;
- the integration of the ARTIST database into the database used by Belgian customs;
- automatic email notification to auction houses, antiquarians, licensed dealers in antiques and works of art and online auction shops of registered items that have been stolen, lost or found.¹³

At the beginning of 2020, the ARTIST database contained more than 27,000 works of art stolen in Belgium.

TREIMA information database for cultural and heritage assets used by police forces in France

The largest French IT database on which cultural and national heritage goods are registered is the National Police's TREIMA database.¹⁴ The database was created in 1995 by officers of the Central Office for Fighting Trafficking in Cultural Goods. The database registers only stolen works of art and objects described as national treasures which are circulating in trade without a reliable, legal source.

Registration in the TREIMA database has two stages: through the electronic stolen object sheet function, which allows for a detailed description of the item/object sought, and through the electronic investigation sheet function in which the investigating units (these are units throughout France) describe the circumstances of the loss of the works of art sought. No estimated value of the stolen work of art is given during the registration process. TREIMA can only be used by the French police forces, i.e. the National Police, the National Gendarmerie and the Paris Police Prefecture. Ministry of Culture employees can also use the database after obtaining permission from the database administrator. The TREIMA database contained more than 100,000 images of stolen items in 2019 as part of more than 32,000 ongoing investigations.

TREIMA is integrated with two databases of the Ministry of Culture, i.e. the MERIMEE

¹³ Source: Interview with Alain Ruelle from the Belgian Federal Police (Head of CEPOL Belgium). The interview was conducted on June 12, 2018 in Budapest by Jacek Dworzecki.

¹⁴ Source: Interview with Catherine Plano from the France National Police (Senior Adviser at the National Police Academy based in Saint-Cyr-au-Mont-d'Or). The interview was conducted on June 13, 2018 in Budapest by Jacek Dworzecki.

database, which contains data on objects important to the architectural heritage, and the PALISSY database, including data on movable objects important to the cultural heritage of the country. Data on items registered in the TREIMA database are immediately transferred to the abovementioned databases of the Ministry of Culture, which makes attempts at further legal trade in these works of art impossible.¹⁵

German art database NNSACH

The German Police maintains a database called NNSACH, which is intended for stolen, fake and dubious works of art.¹⁶ The NNSACH database can only be accessed (and entered) by trained police officers serving in the BKA and officers from the 16 German states (germ. Land) who investigate works of art. External parties (art dealers, museums, auction houses) that deal with the art market in Germany have indirect access (via the BKA) to the information included in the NNSACH database. This database contains:

- photos of original paintings or other two-dimensional pictorial works;
- information about dubious or fake works of art;
- original registered works of art such as sculptures, furniture, archaeological objects, books.

In 2020, about 21 thousand cases were registered in the NNSACH database with over 60 thousand objects and dating back to World War II.

Discussion

The interviewed police experts all expressed the view that soon the functioning of databases such as ARTIST, TREIMA and NNSACH will be based on artificial intelligence that will not only allow the identification of stolen or lost objects but that will also make it possible to compare images in virtual space with objects identified on the red lists of ICOM¹⁷ and works of art listed for sale on the Internet.

Work based on such assumptions is already in progress under the project acronym PREVISION funded by the European Commission under the programme Horizon 2020. As a result, an interactive IT tool based on AI algorithms is planned to be introduced, which will:

- upload and analyse data from massive heterogeneous data streams;
- constitute an advanced behaviour analytics tool;
- provide a near real-time analysis;
- contain advanced knowledge graphs for associating data;
- contain trend analysis and multivariate behaviour anomaly detection;
- continuously and autonomously learn by using machine learning and anomaly detection techniques;
- be equipped with advanced tailor-made dashboard and visualisation tools;

¹⁵ Source: Interview with Catherine Plano from the France National Police (Senior Adviser at the National Police Academy based in Saint-Cyr-au-Mont-d'Or). The interview was conducted on June 13, 2018 in Budapest by Jacek Dworzecki.

¹⁶ SCHWEIZER, Pierre. *Datenbanken und Fahndungssysteme der Polizei*. München: GRIN Verlag, 2019, p. 11.

¹⁷ International Council of Museums – international non-governmental organisation of museums, created in 1946 with the support of UNESCO in order to represent the interests of museums. ICOM consists of 118 national committees and 30 international specialised committees. The headquarters of the general secretariat is in Paris. ICOMS has approximately 26,000 members in 151 countries. Source: <https://icom.museum/en/> (accessed January 27, 2020).

- constitute a future-proof framework;
- comply with the legal, ethical and privacy rules of the EU;
- be able to independently search and analyse data contained in virtual space.¹⁸

Modern IT tools based on AI are increasingly taking on an offensive character.¹⁹ The operational abilities of such instruments are continuously increasing, which on the one hand allows the raising of the effectiveness of Police detection operations, and on the other hand can be used for the illegal invigilation of society and the violation of human rights. It is important in the case of police actions taken to protect cultural heritage (as with other policing actions) to exercise appropriate supervision over the use of such IT solutions for the prevention of any misuses.

According to the experts interviewed, a very important issue is also ensuring proper staffing levels in the central level police units, where the databases related to stolen works of art are administrated and where the detective operations in connection with national and international investigations are coordinated. The fact that an adequate number of officers can ensure success in the fight against crimes related to art and cultural heritage is demonstrated by the results obtained by Italian officers from the Carabinieri for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. Taking into consideration that the market for stolen works of art is the third largest area of illicit trafficking in the world (after drugs and weapons), police structures should be expanded adequately to the threat of this type of offence. The standards in this regard introduced by the Italian Republic and the consistent implementation of adopted objectives are set as an example to follow for police organisations of other EU countries by the experts. The abolition or inefficient reorganisation of specialised police units is the main reason for failures in fighting crimes related to art, experts say. According to the experts, over the next 5 years a specialised unit is expected to be set up within Frontex, whose aim is to be the coordination of international operations against organised crime groups which are involved in crimes (mainly theft and smuggling across the European Union and from the EU territory to Russia and China) related to works of art, especially from the territories of armed conflict, as is now happening in Syria, Afghanistan or Ukraine.

Another solution suggested by the experts to improve the security of works of art and cultural goods is the implementation of legal regulations at the EU level, which will oblige member states to introduce rules requiring entities operating in the art market (all entities should also have a licence to deal in the area of works of art) to check in databases that an object of sale is not the result of a criminal offence and that its origin is reliably documented. If the original of an item offered for sale is found to be incorrect, the verifier should be obliged to notify the law enforcement authorities of this situation. In cases of dispute, the sale should

¹⁸ Interview with Piotr Tycka, PhD from ITTI Poland. ITTI is an IT company (SME) providing software solutions for companies and institutions in Poland and in other countries. ITTI is a member of the research consortium implementing the PREVISION project. The interview was conducted (on-line) on May 10, 2020 by Jacek Dworzecki.

¹⁹ E.g. the Pegasus platform created by an Israeli company NGO Group. This tool based on artificial intelligence enables the interception of data transmissions without the operator's knowledge and it means that the platform owner is able to eavesdrop on phone calls and read messages sent via instant messaging. In addition, Pegasus has a considerable ability to infect even modern smartphones. Installing the application sometimes requires clicking on a crafted link, but other times it does not require any interaction on the part of the user. This platform is used by US government agencies such as the CIA, ATF and DEA and in Europe by, for example, the Polish Central Anti-Corruption Bureau. Source: Interview with a senior agent, Piotr (full name of the senior agent for the sole information of the author), from the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau (department in Cracow). The interview was conducted on February 23, 2020 by Jacek Dworzecki.

be preceded by an administrative decision of an authorised body charged with the protection of the national heritage and cultural assets of the country concerned.

In the case of technical aspects of the marking of works of art, the experts represent the view that these actions should be made statutory (e.g. as a regulation by the European Parliament) as an obligation for entities operating in the art market. Moreover, the participants of the interviews concluded that the usage of microphotography,²⁰ the DNA system²¹ or electronic chips in marking allows the security of works of art to be increased (as well as facilitating identification) with a relatively low cost incurred. Specialised police forensic units, the so-called police forensic laboratories, can assist in this.

In light of the information obtained through interviews with European experts representing police services involved in the fight against art crimes, it is hard to agree with the thesis statement adopted by Ch. Roodt and B. Benson, who in their article under the title “Databases for stolen art: Progress, prospects and limitations” stated that “...Police databases have limited potential for interoperability”.²² The high interoperability of police databases is due not only to the constant flow of information from the public sector (citizens, institutions, art dealers) about stolen or recovered works of art but also constitutes the effect of the operational and investigative work undertaken by officers in relation to the implementation of statutory tasks of a police character. Moreover, the police databases dedicated to works of art are constantly being modernised and expanded toward the broadening of the capacity of autonomous and detection operations.

Conclusion

Police organisations around the world undertake a number of actions aimed at preventing and fighting against crimes including in their most serious organised form.²³ The interest in works of art from international crime groups has already been a reality for several decades.²⁴

Furthermore, the art market is subject to criminal mechanisms whereby objects representing the cultural heritage of worldwide significance are sold and terrorist organisations, among others, are involved in these transactions. Art crimes are no longer just the means for enriching criminal groups but they have been increasingly becoming a means of financing terrorist attacks and activities designed to destabilise the security situation in many countries and regions of the world. It is therefore extremely important to implement operations and solutions allowing a more efficient fight by law enforcement against this form of crime.

Without a doubt, the modern IT databases such as ARTIST, TREIMA and NNSACH which police forces have at their disposal today are a leading tool in preventing and fighting against crimes related to works of art and the world’s cultural heritage. Within the next decade, this IT tool will be expanded to allow greater freedom for independent actions by the implemented

²⁰ Microphotography is the taking of digital photos of fragments of objects at up to 30–50 times magnification.

²¹ The DNA system is the laser marking of works of art with polyester micro-particles of millimetre diameter, with an individual multi-digit identification number (up to 17 digits).

²² ROODT, Christa, BENSON, Bernadine. Databases for stolen art: Progress, prospects and limitations. In: *SA Crime Quarterly*, 52, 2015, p. 9.

²³ DWORZECKI, Jacek, NOWICKA, Izabela, URBANEK, Andrzej, KWIATKOWSKI, Adam. Protection of national heritage in the light of the applicable law and the actions provided in this area by police in Poland. In: *Muzeológia a kultúrne dedičstvo-Museology and Cultural Heritage*, Bratislava, 2020, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 177–198.

²⁴ BRODIE, Neil, DOOLE, Jennifer, WATSON, Peter. *Stealing History: The Illicit Trade in Cultural Material*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2000, p. 11.

system without human contribution, which will be possible with improved AI algorithms, definitely leading to an increase in the level of modern detection and analytical capabilities.

Systems based on AI will allow the searching through photo resources, including analysis of the pattern of colours and shapes, to help search engines understand what we are dealing with in a painting. In this way, the photographs found on the Internet corresponding (shape, description) to the objects (works of art) searched for on the web will be identified, compared and catalogued. Moreover, police officers will be able to use a function that will allow them to “search by photo” instead of using a textual description. Already today, systems based on the above assumptions are being tested by major IT giants such as Google, which is working on RankBrain algorithms, designed to work with a version of the search engine called Hummingbird.

Undoubtedly, the improvement of IT tools used in the work of police officers dealing with works of art will significantly affect the effectiveness of fighting against this form of crime.

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