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LINKING LOCAL CULTURAL HERITAGE COLLECTIONS FROM THE SLOVENIAN–ITALIAN BORDER REGION WITH ICT

Abstract. This article discusses the creation of an inventory of thirty-four local cultural heritage collections in the border region between the Alps and the Karst, and the establishment of a network of owners and guardians of the collections, as well as professionals from the fields of museology, ethnology, digital humanities, and informatics. In the project “ZBORZBIRK – Cultural Heritage between the Alps and the Karst”, thirty-four collections of cultural heritage, diverse in type and content, that had been inaccessible to the general public and experts, were catalogued, contextualised and presented to the general and expert public in different media, e.g. also virtually on the project website. A unified repository was established, aggregating metadata of material objects (items) from the collections, as well as digital photographs and scans of images and textual objects (digital objects). In total, there are 4965 items and 8620 digital objects¹ in the repository, which is intended for researchers, experts and students from the fields of ethnology, cultural anthropology, history and linguistics as well as for the general public. The repository is generating greater visibility of the region and strengthening the cohesion of local communities. The scope of the research and results was restricted by the material objects from the collections as well as by different aspirations of collectors and specialised skills of all the people involved in archival processes. As the project addressed a wide scope of target groups, its implementation provoked opposing effects between the approaches of the virtual museum and the research archival repository. To clarify the priorities, more attention was given to archival and research norms rather than representational technologies. The ZBORZBIRK Project is one of the first projects in the Italian-Slovenian cross-border region to link non-institutional collections and their collectors with experts. A collaborative approach, the use of information and communications technologies (ICT) to enhance process phases, and a growing phenomenon of local collections and collecting make this project an example of good practice for comparable follow-up projects.

Keywords. cultural heritage, private collections, collecting, digital humanities, information and communications technology, digital repository, cross-border region, cross-border cooperation

1. Introduction

The project “ZBORZBIRK – Cultural Heritage between the Alps and the Karst” aims to evaluate, i.e. identify, register, arrange, present, and promote, local cultural heritage collections of material culture, which document past culture and lifestyles and are, as such, important for ethnology and other fields of humanities as well as for local communities. There were thirty-four cultural heritage collections registered in the area between the Canale Valley and the Upper Sava Valley in the north, the region of Goriška Brda in the south, the Soča Valley in the east, and the Torre Valley in the west: twenty-one private collections, four municipal collections, eight association collections and one regional museum branch. Metadata information about the collection items, entered into a common computer database, and digital photographs of material objects are kept in a digital repository of the project, which is available to the general public on the website: <http://zborzbirk.zrc-sazu.si>. Alongside the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ISN ZRC

¹ The data is from 14 February, 2015, when the inventory had not yet been completed.

SAZU) (Research Station Nova Gorica), the lead partner of this project, there were ten more partners working on the project, namely two educational-research institutions (University of Udine and the Institute for Slovenian Culture in San Pietro al Natisone), two museums (the Goriška Museum in Kromberk – Nova Gorica and the Upper Sava Valley Museum in Jesenice), and six local communities (the Italian municipalities of Lusevera, Pulfero and Taipana, and the Slovenian municipalities of Brda, Kanal ob Soči and Kobarid) [25, 36].

The identification and selection of the collections were based on the previous work of the Slovene Ethnological Society and the Slovenian National Library of Studies in Trieste, which addressed questions of private or amateur ethnological collections and cultural heritage collections in a discussion on museum collections of the Slovenian community in Italy [28, 29, 43]. The Slovene Ethnological Society had already partly registered private or amateur collections in the framework of two projects, *Identification and field topography of unidentified and unpublished ethnological collections kept outside the museums in charge in the Slovenian ethnic territory (2005–2005)* [32] and *Ethnological heritage in amateur hands* [33, 34]. Some of the collections that were included in the project had already been identified and partly registered in museums or archival institutions in charge, for example in the Goriška Museum, the Tolmin Museum, the Upper Sava Valley Museum, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, the Regional Centre for Cataloguing and Restoration of Cultural Monuments of Friuli-Venezia Giulia [42], and the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology (ISN ZRC SAZU).

2. Background Overview

In designing a registration form, a metadata scheme, and an archival application, we considered past experiences in museology [6, 7, 8, 9, 37, 40, 44], collections management standards set by institutions and expert associations, such as the SPECTRUM collection of standards [45], the ATHENA Project [2], and ICOM recommendations [18, 26], and the former and existing museum applications of SIRPAC [42], MINOK, and GALIS [39]. We also studied open source platforms and frameworks for building digital repositories [4]; the most attention was given to current particularly noteworthy software platforms [35], i.e. Fedora Repository [17] and DSpace [11], provided by the non-profit organisation DuraSpace, and Hydra [20] and Islandora [23], which are upgrades of the Fedora repository software framework.

Particular attention was directed to information projects and project phases in the field of ethnology that had dealt with similar circumstances and encountered similar problems, such as the compatibility of different archival applications or legal consequences brought about by copyright and related rights. The Slovene Ethnographic Museum has significant experience in this field, as it has been publishing some of its archives on its home page [41] in recent years; by 2012, approximately 23,000 items from fifty-five collections had been published [46]. The aim of this endeavour was opening the archive and establishing a free access to the depository of collections of digitised objects and photographs. As the size of the archive and the follow-up of the archival applications (Minok and Galis) posed a challenge, special procedural and technical solutions needed to be developed. While setting up the EtnoInfoLab database [15], the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana [19] approached the establishment of an archive afresh, without having to adjust to existing archival applications. The department developed an application based on a client-server model, in which a website user interface of the archive is an integral part of application functionality. However, a relatively effortless process of entering new units into a digital repository and a large number of authorised

users required a higher level of attentiveness to the legal and ethical impediments regarding the publication of material, such as interviews and personal photographs. The Institute of Ethnomusicology of ZRC SAZU faced similar dilemmas of the protection of copyright and related rights in the ETNOMUZA Project [13], a digital multimedia repository of folk music and dance culture [24]. Restrictiveness of categorisation and controlled vocabularies or thesauri also represented a regular issue in ethnological collections and documentation, which was the case in the project of digitalisation of the collection in the Straw Hat Museum in Domžale [38].

The lead partner, the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology (ISN ZRC SAZU), had previous experiences with information archival projects, having developed two applications for its own needs: an institute photo library (i.e. a digital archival collection of scans and digital photographs) and a metadata database of the video archive of the Audiovisual Laboratory of the Institute.² Between 2011 and 2014, the institute participated in the Etnofolk international project, whose aim was to preserve and promote ethnological cultural heritage. In the framework of the project, ethnological research and university institutions from four Central European countries organised and digitalised parts of their archives; digital units were enriched with additional information and transferred to the central federation, where its content is available to all users. The ICT aspect of the project included adjusting various metadata schemes and establishing a local repository with the OAI-PMH Protocol that would continuously be harvested by the central harvester [14]. As a similar way of functioning was not applicable in the case of the ZBORZBIRK Project, the central portal of the Etnofolk Project served as an example of linking interspersed sources of metadata.

For the purposes of the ZBORZBIRK Project, new solutions and suitable compromises had to be reached, which would respond to the different needs of the partners-owners and guardians of collections, representatives of local communities, and participating institutions. Adjustments were mostly necessary in the field of linguistics due to the multilingual character of the area; in addition to entries in Slovenian and Italian, the metadata scheme also required Friulian, German, and dialectal denominations when relevant. Ethnological documentation has very often left this linguistic aspect to the inventiveness of those responsible for registration. Adjustments were also necessary due to the private status of the majority of the collections and consequently uncertain ownership. Collection items can be exchanged or sold; the long-term fate of entire collections is likewise unpredictable, as they might come into the hands of an owner with other interests in the future. Local partners, such as regional museums and local communities, therefore introduced procedures that would make it easier to monitor the status of the collections that, in the case of ownership changes, might appeal to the interest of local communities and museum experts.

3.1 Overview of collections. This project took place between 1 October 2012 and 31 March 2015, and included fifteen cultural heritage collections from the Slovenian side of the border and nineteen from the Italian side. Fifteen collections were compiled in the 1970s and 1980s, sixteen in the 1990s and 2000s, and three collections that were made in the framework of the project. The majority of these collections (21) are in private hands; most of them (18) were developed through collecting, three of them belonged to a family and were based on bequest, and other collections belonged to associations (8) or local communities (4). The project also included a museum branch. Only four collections are regularly open to the public, six of them are physically inaccessible, while the rest can be viewed by prior arrangement with the owner or guardian of the

² Both collections are available on the ZRC intranet [3].

collection (Figure 1).

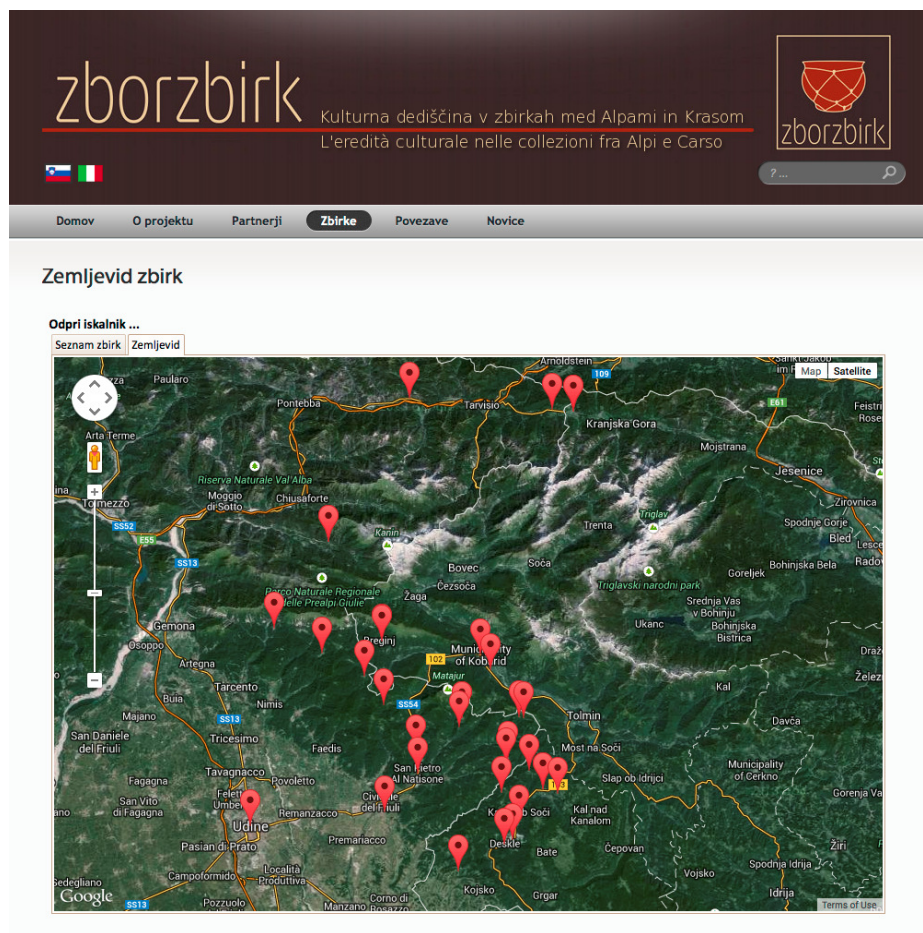


Figure 1: The ZBORZBIRK Project website featuring a map with locations of the collections

The collections differ according to typology and content. Typologically, there are two collections of holy cards and one collection of postcards. Concerning the content, many collections focus on local crafts (carpentry, blacksmithing, sharpening of knives, scissors and tools), certain types of objects (clothing, carnival characters, carvings) or individual objects within one type of objects (rakes, irons). Eight collections share the thematic content of objects from the First World War.

In addition to expert ethnological standards with which the collections had to comply, a selection of collections for registration was defined by the project partnership and influenced by the willingness of collection owners to participate in the registration process. A major impediment was the potential consequences of a formal record of collections and material as prescribed by the Cultural Heritage Protection Act (2008) [48]. Individual collectors raised the issue of publication of the material on the Internet, which would enable further open reproduction and distribution of digital objects. Because a completed collection is the result of many years of effort and associated costs and investment, Internet publication and material distribution might devalue the collector's efforts and the collection's integrity. In order to prevent such misuse, collection owners, managers or legal representatives had to sign a statement about the use of material, allowing registration and publication of the recorded and digitalised data on the Internet and in the printed and electronic media. According to Articles 50

and 62 of the Copyright and Related Rights Act (2007) [47], it was decided that author works that are not freely accessible (in the case of collective works, the copyright shall run for seventy years after the official publishing of the work) might only be reproduced, if so allowed by the collector, but not distributed. Nevertheless, some collectors later joined (or wanted to join) project activities solely for the possibility of material distribution through different media tools (websites, brochures, guide books, publications and other promotional activities).

3.2 Registration Process. Specific collection and material characteristics, differences in the interests of collectors, and differences in professional competences of registrars influenced the physical and informational scopes of the registration process. One of the main project challenges was to define a metadata scheme and registration procedures that would be sufficiently flexible in order not to discourage the owners and the registrars from the thorough and comprehensive registration of objects.

In the cases in which the owner of the collection was the main source of information about the objects and knew how to use the application for the administration of the computer database, the registration process went smoothly. In such cases, the collection owner was active in all three roles of the informant, the registrar and the administrator (i.e. the one entering data into a database). In the majority of cases, however, collection owners neither was unwilling or unable to work with the computer and therefore either chose a registrar themselves or were assigned one by the regional museum branch or the institution in charge of the registration process. Registrars gathered data and entered it into a database. Their range of work, however, was different; some only had to enter the data that the owner had provided into a database, while others had to gather all data about the objects first, through interviews with the locals or via suitable written sources, and then enter them into a database. Where Internet access was interrupted, the registration process first took place on a local computer in the form of ordinary text files, which the administrator later used to enter the data into a database. There were two educational workshops (in Kromberk on 17 January 2013, and in Tribil Superiore on 10 July 2013) for all participants of the registration process to learn about the elements in the registration form and the practical use of the Internet application for database administration and photographing of objects.

While registering and entering metadata into the database, registrars took photographs of the objects and scanned textual and image objects, thereby reducing the possibility of object mismatch because the object, its photograph and its metadata were all labelled with the same identification number. There were 7887 digital photographs and 733 scans entered into the repository.³

In order to help registrars and unify the registration process, a system of editors who supervised separate aspects of the process was established. Each collection had an editor who was responsible for appropriate content of object descriptions. There was also a language editor who was in charge of linguistic supervision, and a photograph editor who oversaw the procedures of photographing, checked photographs before they were entered into the repository and published on the Internet and, if necessary, adjusted them. As requested by collection owners, two hundred digital photographs and scans were equipped with a watermark. If limitations of the information system caused any trouble, a database scheme designer and a programmer joined the process. In charge of the whole registration procedure was the editor-in-chief, who monitored the coordination among registrars and editors.


³ Data from 14 February 2015.

3.3 Collection Contextualisation. What all museum items have in common is that they are no longer in use; consequently, the knowledge of their former functions is slowly fading away. Only by placing them in a socio-economic and/or historic-political context can such items regain their meaning and translate their former functionalities to present-day visitors of the collection. In order to contextualise collections and obtain information for the ISN ZRC SAZU archive, fieldwork documentation of stories about the collections and objects ran parallel to the registration of collections. The primary informants were collection owners, who knew their collections and collection items best. Information about collections owned by local communities or other legal entities had to be gathered from people who donated their objects to museum collections or took an active part in the establishment of the collection (secondary informants). If there were no active participants in the formation of the collection, tertiary informants had to be sought, i.e. local people who could tell something about local culture, lifestyle and history, and indirectly about the collection items. Audio recordings were made of all interviews; they were semi-structured, directed narrative interviews featuring questions about: 1) the beginnings of collecting (reasons, incentives, period, role models/colleagues, etc.); 2) the personal selection of most favourite, most valuable or most interesting items and reasons for this choice; and 3) the things or subjects that made people talk about past local life and work from the points of view of social, material, and especially spiritual culture. Most attention was given to verbal folklore, such as fairy tales, stories, humorous stories, prayers, charms, proverbs, songs, rhymes, etc. Interviewers attempted to determine who the past and living bearers of this tradition were. Answers to the above questions, in particular those from the third section, reflected the background of the interviewees, such as their interests, knowledge, participation in the past environment, memory, ability to narrate, and so on. They were encouraged to speak their local dialect.

This fieldwork produced approximately eighty hours of recordings which, regarding their content, could be divided into three groups: 1) stories about collections and collection items, 2) ethnological and related material that is not directly connected to the collections, and 3) linguistic tradition. From the gathered material, one story connected with the collection was chosen for presentation on the web; these stories were also published in a guide book to the collections in the Slovenian (the texts also preserved some particular dialectal expressions) and the Italian languages [31]. The texts as well as some audio and video recordings are stored in the repository available on the website (Figure 2). Some material, such as songs and folk prayers, had already been published in articles [21, 22].

Documented interviews, narrations, and testimonials are highly diverse and, as such, a valuable source for a wide range of further synchronic and diachronic folkloristic, ethnological, linguistic, and similar studies of the Slovenian culture in the Slovenian-Italian border area between the Alps and the Karst. Certain findings had already been presented at the international conference “Ethnological Collections, Oral Tradition and Cultural Tourism between the Alps and the Karst” on 29 May 2014 in Udine [5].


Udati dokumentiranj: 24. 5. 2013
Povezava: <http://as.parsis.si/zborbirk/zbirka.a5w?zid=1021>



Čelebon

Franc Jerončič pripoveduje: Čelebon je priprava za sušenje lešnikov in orehov. V teh krajih ga je imel vsak otrok: že kmalu potem, ko je shodil, so mu ga podarili starši, sosedje ali pa ga je dobil za Miklavža. Čelebon, ki ga imam v zbirki, sem naredil sam: obroči so leskovi, pletenje pa iz sarobotja (srobot). Polnega smo obesili nekam visoko, da miši niso mogle do njega. Vsaka hiša je imela več manjših čelebonov. Nek mož iz Melinkov pa je imel ogromnega. Zemljo je imel daleč tam v Kostanjevici in je cel mesec hodil tja po orehe. Ko je končal, je morala priti vsa vas, da so mu pomagali prinesiti tisti veliki čelebon domov. Skozi nobena vrata ga niso mogli spraviti, tako je bil velik. Žnidarčič Andrej je bilo ime temu možakarju, jaz se ga še dobro spominim. Njegovega čelebona pa nisem videl, je bilo to že prej.

Tip: Besedilo
Pripoveduje/poje/govori: Franc Jerončič
Snema/sprašuje/zapisuje: Barbara Ivančič Kutin
Kraj dokumentiranja: Melinki
Datum dokumentiranja: 24. 5. 2013
Povezava: <http://as.parsis.si/zborbirk/zbirka.a5w?zid=1021>



Reprodukcija bakroreza Beethoven

Jože Gorjanc pripoveduje: Včasih hiše niso imele betonskih plošč, vsa podstrešja so bila lesena. V sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja so ljudje tod okrog množično prenavljali hiše. Takrat so počistili podstrešja in vso staro kramo zvozili na odpad, zato so bila smetišča pravi raj za zbiralce starin. Največ zbiralcev je prihajalo iz Italije. Tudi jaz sem na smetišču pobral veliko zanimivih in starih reči, ki so jih

Figure 2: Presentation of the gathered material on the website: A story about *čelebon*, a container for keeping walnuts and hazelnuts, told by Franc Jerončič, collection owner.

4. Establishment of a Digital Repository and Virtual Access to Collections

As a result of the registration of collections, a repository of digital objects and metadata units was established. The choice of Internet representational tools was based on different system solutions: (a) use of a local base or an application that would be regularly updated to the central server; and (b) a client-server model in which a computer base and an application are on the server, and clients access them through the Internet and a user interface run by a web browser. A local database solution would make it more convenient for collection owners to keep their primary metadata collection at their place, which would increase their sense of ownership and autonomy; however, as such an approach would make maintenance and administration more difficult, a client-server model was chosen instead.

As some of the collections might come to belong to museum institutions in the future, it was reasonable to design the archival application according to the tools that are generally used in museums. An ideal solution would be an application that was used by all or the majority of museums; however, this was impossible since there were different archival applications used on either side of the border. Therefore, for the purposes of the project, a new application was developed for keeping and presenting metadata and digital objects, which used technologies or platforms that are currently in use on ZRC SAZU servers. The MySQL application from the Ubuntu server was used for the metadata database, the archival application for database administration was based on the system of Alpha Anywhere Application Server [1], and the DotNetNuke system [10] was chosen for managing the project website.

Much attention in the programming phase of the project was dedicated to designing a data model and an appropriate metadata scheme. As the typological diversity of objects caused problems, a set of values of the element <type> was adopted

from the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative [12]. One of the goals when designing a metadata scheme was to reach a level of interoperability that, in the future, would enable merging the metadata of individual collections with potential museum applications for museum item inventories. Present and future collection guardians will always be able to access and export metadata in different formats; the repository can automatically export metadata in the XML format via the Open Archive Initiative Protocol [27] in the Dublin Core Metadata format and in the original format of the ZBORZBIRK Project, which included all metadata elements that are kept in the database.

The metadata scheme contains the following data elements about collections (excluding administrative and technical elements): name, location (geographical longitude and latitude, country, place, address), the collection's accessibility for public, founder, owner and manager of the collection, museum institution at which the collection is registered, collection description and data on those involved in the registration process (administrator, registrar, photographer, language editor, editor, and photograph editor). In the web application, every collection was assigned a unique identification number and a label that collection items were then also automatically given. Alongside the already mentioned typological element, other elements were defined for collection items: standard name in the Slovenian and Italian languages (and possibly in the Friulian and German languages, in the case of any etymological connection), a local or dialectal name of the object, state of preservation, completeness, acquisition, materials and production technique, production date, authorship, measurements, object description, object use, object history, sources, inscriptions, and remarks. Later, an element set was also added, because certain items could be put together to form an integral whole, for example, cups and pots make up a tea set, individual pieces of clothing and objects make up a carnival costume, and the like. In addition to certain technical or internal metadata, administration elements also included a registration date, a date of registration change, identification number or label, former or other labels, and the registrar. For the purpose of categorisation and taxonomy, an ethnological decimal controlled vocabulary was used: the version used by the Slovene Ethnographic Museum (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

In accordance with the demands of the Cross-Border Cooperation Operational Programme Slovenia–Italy 2007–2013, a collection of elements was anticipated to be bilingual, i.e. in the Slovenian and the Italian languages. All collection metadata elements, object name and description, and selectable elements (typology, state of preservation, acquisition, and entry) had to be bilingual; however, also recommended was a bilingual registration of elements, such as object use and history, materials and production technique, and completeness. Only five elements were selectable, meaning that they were limited by a selection of values; all other elements were open and had no value-based restrictions.


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  <column name="ImePredmeta_NAR">'Oxcitni č'iewlji 'ohcetni čevlji'</column>
  <column name="ImePredmeta_FUR">Scjarpe nuvizäl</column>
  <column name="ImePredmeta_NEM">Hochzeitsschuhe</column>
  <column name="Opis_SLO">Črni elegantni visoki ženski čevlji z vezalkami</column>
  <column name="Opis_ITA">
    Stivaletti scuri eleganti, con lacci, bassi e leggeri; prevalentemente di tessuto e foderati con cura. Punta e parte laterale rinforzate. Ornati senza interruzione lungo la chiusura e la parte alta posteriore con un motivo di colore bianco. Applicazione di un piccolo fiocchetto dello stesso colore del tessuto nella parte centrale della scarpa. Tacchetto di legno con presenza di una serie di chiodini disposti ordinatamente lungo il bordo e due chiodi centrali. Suola con presenza di chiodini di legno disposti ordinatamente in due file lungo i bordi.
  </column>
  <column name="Uporaba_SLO">Za poročni obred in posebne priložnosti</column>
  <column name="Uporaba_ITA">Per occasioni speciali</column>
  <column name="Zgodovina_SLO">
    Ta 'oxcitni č'iewlji sa ad m'oje st'are m'atere. Sa zw'o m'exče, w'əxče, m'aja žn'ure, n'išče p'ete, l'edrašte padpw'ate z m'ikne las'ene žr'eblice, sa f'uetrane m pa zw'a kam'ot. Sa pad'obne 'niščm št'iflčam. Š'uester, k ix je nar'edu, je b'iw K'icnu st'ari st'ari 'oča, K'icnu Fr'anc ž Ž'abnc, šb'igarf'oter ad m'oje st'are m'atere. 'An je b'iew pr'abi šp'ecjalist. Us'e nav'este ž Ž'abnc, z 'Uku m pa z dr'ujex kr'aju sa pr'išli k nj'em. Moj st'ari st'ari 'oča, xk'e me je pr'abwa m'ama, k je wz'ew m'iera nav'esti, je r'eku s'inu m pa lj'ubi: »T'one, za t'oja nav'esta bom nar'edu ta n'arl'ioiši č'iewlje m pa t'ebi, L'iza, žal'im, da b'oš m'ewa vas'elje z nj'em m pa de jax b'oš d'ogo nas'iw.« Fr'anc je m'ow pr'ow. T'ote č'iewlje b'oja m'eli l'ietas st'u n s'edm l'iet. Poročni čevlji so od moje stare mame. So zelo mehki, lahki, imajo vrvice (vezalke), nizke pete, usnjene podplate z majhnimi lesenimi žeblički, so podloženi in zelo udobni. So podobni polvisokim čevljem. Čevljar, ki jih je naredil, je bil Kicnov praded, Kicnov Franc iz Žabnic, tast od moje stare mame. Bil je pravi mojster. Vse neveste iz Žabnic, iz Ukev in iz drugih krajev so prišle k njemu. Moj praded je, tako mi je pripovedovala mama, ko je nevesti vzal mero, rekel sinu in njegovi ljubi: »Tone, za tvojo nevesto bom naredil najlepše čevlje. Tebi, Liza, pa želim, da jih boš dolgo in z veseljem nosila.« Franc je imel prav. Ti čevlji bodo letos imeli sto sedem let.
  </column>
  <column name="Zgodovina_ITA">
    Le scarpe nuziali appartengono alla mia nonna. Sono molto morbide, leggere e dotate di lacci. I tacchi sono bassi e le suole di cuoio sono munite di piccoli chiodini di legno. Le scarpe, foderate e molto comode, sono simili a degli stivaletti. Il calzolaio che le realizzò su misura, fu il mio bisnonno Kicnov Franz della casa vulgo Kicov di Camporosso, suocero di mia nonna. Franz era davvero un bravo maestro calzolaio. Tutte le spose di Camporosso, di Ugovizza ed anche di altri paesi si rivolgevano a lui. Mia mamma mi ha riferito che mio bisnonno, quando ha preso la misura del piede alla futura sposa, ha detto al figlio Tone e alla sua fidanzata Liza: "Tone, per la tua sposa creerò le più belle scarpe mai fatte fino ad ora." "Liza, porta queste scarpe con gioia; spero che durino a lungo." Franz aveva ragione. Le scarpe compiranno quest'anno 107 anni!
  </column>
  <column name="MaterialTehnika_SLO">
    Ročno izdelani, s črtasto tkanino podloženi visoki ženski čevlji na vezalke. Zgornji del je iz črnega sukna, kapica in obrobi ob stopalih iz usnja. Ob luknjicah za vezalke in nad gležnji okrasni šiv iz belega sukanca. Na robu odprtine za vezalke je z gumb
  </column>
  <column name="MaterialTehnika_ITA">
    Stivaletti di cuoio e tessuto grossolano con punta e parte laterale rinforzate. Tacco di legno con chiodini
  </column>
  <column name="Mere">d = 26 cm; š = 9 cm; v = 20 cm</column>
  <column name="Popolnost_SLO"/>
  <column name="Popolnost_ITA">Alcune parti rovinare e mancanti</column>
  <column name="DridahitevOniano_SLO">

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Figure 3: Part of XML File of One Unit

The screenshot shows the 'zborzbirk' web application interface. On the left, there is a sidebar with navigation links like 'Domov', 'O projektu', and 'Zbirke'. The main content area displays the details for a specific unit (signature ZZ-UKVE-2015021011201171). The metadata is organized into sections: 'Osnovni podatki' (Basic data), 'Materiali in tehnika izdelave' (Materials and production technique), 'Mere' (Measurements), 'Datacija izdelave' (Production date), 'Avtor' (Author), 'Viri' (Sources), 'Opis predmeta' (Description of the object), 'Raba predmeta' (Use of the object), and 'Zgodovina predmeta' (History of the object). A photograph of a pair of blue boots is shown on the right. The text is in Slovenian and provides detailed information about the boots, including their origin, materials, and historical context.

Figure 4: Unit Display

The above described set of metadata elements corresponded to museum standards. As the intention was not to discourage collection owners from cooperation in the registration process, the primary goal was to define a very small number of metadata elements; however, during the project duration, the set of elements gradually increased and reached a total of fifty-seven for visible elements in the registration form, and eleven for the elements that were automatically generated in the background of the application. Museum or archival applications usually contain fewer descriptive elements and more technical metadata. Metadata elements do not necessarily ensure information registration; however, a registration process simulation showed that registrars or informants seemed to remember object data more easily if metadata elements were more numerous and more narrowly defined. This was also the main reason the number of elements increased so considerably over the course of the project.

Likewise, the registration process simulation indicated problems with controlled vocabularies. Typological differences of collections and collection items, historical and linguistic peculiarities of the area, and a typical ethnological interest that places local and personal understanding and interpretations at the forefront, before expected norms, made the use of controlled vocabularies more difficult, which led to use of more open, non-restrictive text fields in the archival application. This, in turn, caused other problems; for example, human errors such as inconsistency in entering data into an individual field, which consequently made machine-readable data impossible. In order to avoid inconsistencies and achieve a unified data entry, guidelines were made and installed as an online help resource in the archival application, and as a manual for

registrars and editors. Procedures for registration and object photographing were practically presented at the abovementioned educational workshops.

5. Conclusion

Project activities, collections registration, the arrangement of collections in exhibitions, and accompanying research for contextualisation of collections evaluated and highlighted the importance of local cultural heritage and collecting for local communities, the general public, and experts (from the fields of ethnology and museology). Preserved objects in collections, stories about collections and collection items, and other local narrative folklore bear witness to (semi-)past culture and ways of life in the area, thus providing insight into economic activities, dwelling culture, nutrition habits, handcraft skills, emigration and seasonality, social relationships, calendar customs and customs of a life cycle, family history and local community history, local dialect, and so on. Furthermore, they make the general public aware of the changed attitude towards material and spiritual legacy of the past, which is valued as cultural heritage. In this regard, cultural heritage has become a medium for the establishment of a local community [16], and a collection and collecting an element of identity of a local community or an individual.

In addition to allowing a wider recognition of and providing direct access to collections, a publicly accessible digital repository also enabled insight into those collections that are otherwise not open to the public.

An important aspect of cultural heritage projects is long-term access to and appropriate preservation of heritage objects, which is even more important in the case of local or private collections whose owner's interests might differ from those of a museum, and whose preservation conditions are generally inferior to those in museum institutions. This issue was addressed by choosing partners who complement each other regarding their status. In addition to collection owners or managers, the project included local communities, museums, and research institutions, which helped find appropriate solutions in different social areas, for example in the fields of regional heritage politics and government.

The project set up a network of experts: museologists, ethnologists, linguists, folklorists, photographers, information specialists, and individuals who were interested in developing their own knowledge about preservation and management of museum objects and about information technologies and standards, not only in the framework of institution documentation, but also in a wider context. The project might be considered a pilot action for the registration of numerous private collections that, through the development of such infrastructure, might become better known to the wider public.

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