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1.04 Strokovni članek

1.04 Professional Article

POSSIBILITIES FOR THE DIGITIZATION OF CRAFTSMEN ASSOCIATIONS FONDS IN MEĐIMURJE AND KOPRIVNIČKA PODRAVINA

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Abstract:

The authors discuss the issue of digitization of craft associations' fonds kept by the State Archives for Međimurje and the State Archives in Varaždin, in the Archival Collection Centre Koprivnica. The paper includes an analysis of possible models of digitization of the aforementioned archival records, i.e. its individual series, which would be interesting to researchers.

Key words:

archives, archival records, digitalization, crafts

Izvlaček:

Možnosti digitalizacije gradiva obrtniških združenj v Međimurju in Koprivniški Podravini

Prispevek obravnava problematiko digitalizacije arhivskega gradiva fondov obrtniških združenj, ki jih hranita Državni arhiv v Međimurju in Državni arhiv v Varaždinu (Zbirni center Koprivnica). Prispevek podaja tudi analizo možnih modelov digitalizacije, npr. posameznih serij fondov, ki bi bili zanimivi za raziskovalce.

Ključne besede:

arhivi, arhivsko gradivo, digitalizacija, obrt

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to better understand the issue, it is necessary to offer an explanation for certain terms such as archival records, archives, digitalization. An archives is a legal entity or an organizational unit within a legal entity, whose primary task is to preserve, process and enable the use of archival records in accordance with the provisions of the law (Law on Archival Records, 2018). *Archival records* are chosen from current records because of their lasting value for culture, history, science and other social activities: archival records are permanently preserved for the protection of the rights and interests of individuals and the community (Law on Archival records and Archives, 2018). Digitization as a term in a strict sense refers to the conversion of the text, image, sound, moving images or three-dimensional form of an object into digital form, as a rule in binary

code written as a computer file with or without data compression that can be processed, stored or transmitted to computers and computer systems. (<http://enciklopedija.hr>)

2. DIGITIZATION OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS

The issue of the digitization of archival records has been the topic of papers held at conferences in Radenci over the past several years, in which presenters discussed various aspects of the issue. Several papers have been devoted to describing the implementation of digitization projects in individual archival institutions (Alibašić-Fideler, Zaimović, Jerlagić, 2017; Anžič-Kemper, 2018; Szerényi, 2018; Nikolić, 2018; Mušič, 2019) and describe the preparation, implementation and digitization experience. One of the papers deals with digitization in Croatian archives as a contemporary trend, which depends primarily on the capabilities of individual institutions, and among other things, the paper argues that information infrastructure and digitization are related to the institutional and administrative capacities of many segments of public administration in Croatia, with the introduction of European legislation, standards and policy (Lemić, 2017). One paper discusses the practical and theoretical aspects of digitization (Filipič, 2017). In addition to describing the implementation of the archival records digitization project in his own institution, the author emphasizes the hypothesis that in order to achieve a simple and functional way of searching archival sources, regardless of several stages of digitization of the essential needs of users, in this case there is a divergence between the content of digital copies and the original archival records. In this case, the optimal solution is to arrange digital copies by content. Considering the descriptions of digitization as a project from these or those aspects that have been given in papers over the past few years, some conclusions can be drawn.

Digitization of archival records is a complex project and represents a synergy of several factors such as staffing capacity, financial capabilities, supporting information infrastructure (equipment, server, software...), the organization of the archives to be digitalized, the representativeness of the material itself, as well as the assumed potential benefit for future users and the archival institution itself. The implementation of digitalization ultimately brings benefits in terms of attracting new users to the archival institution and indirectly affects the reputation and activity of the user institution itself.

Taking into account these factors, the process of digitalization requires a strategy or planning. If it is an institution with a large number of employees, then it is not a problem to borrow at least one, if not more, employees to do the work of digitization, while for smaller institutions, planning such a project is a particular problem, both due to the low staff capacity and the workload of employees with various responsibilities. In addition to the above, financing is an additional problem in the planning of digitization projects. Since the state archives in Croatia are public institutions founded by the Ministry of Culture, the source of their financing are funds from the state budget that are earmarked for various items, from material costs, employee salaries, etc. As for the various projects, they are also predominantly funded by the Public Cultural Needs Program, to which institutions can apply each calendar year after a call is issued by the Ministry.¹ For this reason, for smaller archival institutions, the implementation of projects such as the digitization is a considerable problem.

¹ *The call for applications for the Public Needs Program is announced by the Croatian Ministry of Culture at the beginning of the summer, and the application deadline is generally about two months. The notice of the call for applications is usually posted on the Ministry of Culture's website and the results of the call can be tracked on the finance link.*

In addition to the items mentioned, one of the most important factors is the goal to be achieved as well as the possible presumed benefit for some future users as well as the archival institution itself. It is also important to note that smaller archival institutions are most often focused on digitizing the most valuable material they store in their repositories. For example, economic funds are generally out of focus in terms of professional work such as processing, description, presentation, or use.

3. THE POSSIBILITY OF DIGITIZING MATERIALS OF CRAFT ASSOCIATIONS IN MEĐIMURJE

The State Archives for Međimurje preserves a considerable number of fonds from the G classification code, economy, i.e. industry, mining, banking, crafts. With regard to the sub-category of crafts, several fonds have been preserved in the State Archives for Međimurje dating from 1891-1950 and from 1950-1962. From the period between 1891-1950, three archival fonds pertaining to craft associations, craft corpora, were preserved: HR-DAM-140, Crafts Association for the City and District of Čakovec (1895-1950), HR-DAM-141, Craft Assembly for District of Prelog (1906-1950) and HR-DAM-142, Association of Craftsmen for Kotoriba and Donja Dubrava Municipalities in Kotoriba (1908-1945) (General Inventory of the State Archives for Međimurje). These fonds were created by the work of the creators of the same name, the so-called craft associations, assemblies of craftsmen who gathered the craftsmen population in a certain territory (the district of Čakovec and Prelog, the municipalities of Kotoriba and Donja Dubrava). Creators, such as the Craft Association Čakovec and The Association of Craftsmen for the Municipalities of Kotoriba and Donja Dubrava in Kotoriba, began operating towards the end of the 19th century and remained active until the outbreak of the First World War, when their activities ceased, and renewed their activity following the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, joining the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, while The Craft Assembly for the District of Prelog began operating in 1925 when it was founded and operated until its abolition in 1950 (Požgan, Posedi, 2017, Proceedings of the 5th Congress of Croatian Archivists, 368-370). The legal successors of the aforementioned creators of archival fonds operated from 1950-1962, namely HR-DAM-152, The Chamber of Crafts for the District of Čakovec (1950-1962) and HR-DAM-153, The Chamber of Crafts for the District of Prelog (1950-1956).

These fonds were created by the creators of the same name during the period mentioned, which was marked by much less autonomy for these associations, as their activities were under the control and influence of state institutions, which is not unusual given the political, social and economic circumstances after 1945. With regard to creators, such as the assembly of craftsmen and associations of craftsmen, they acted on a territorial principle and brought together craftsmen of various professions in a certain territory. The Craft guilds were composed of the following bodies: the board of directors, the supervisory board and the general assembly. These creators differed from their legal successors in that they had a greater degree of autonomy, although their activities were also under the control of the state institutions of the time (Royal Banske Sava Banina), which manifested in situations such as the mandatory presence of representatives of governing bodies at the sessional Annual General Meetings, Confirmation of Association Rules, etc. All three fonds, numbered 140, 141 and 142, have been subjected to archival processing and described in accordance with international standards.² Regarding the

² *This means that finding aids, summaries of fonds in accordance with the General International Standard Archival Description ISAD(G) have been produced.*

amount of records that they preserve, apart from the fonds the Craft Assembly for the town and the district of Čakovec, the other two belong to small fonds.³

For all three fonds, the archival records contain the following series: Management, Members of the Craft and General Affairs. The fonds entitled The Craft Assembly for the town and district of Čakovec, in addition to the mentioned series of material, also contains the following series: Finance, Assets, Normative Acts and Other. The Management series contains material created by the work of the governing bodies of craft associations and trade assemblies such as the minutes of sessions of the board of directors and annual meetings of the general assembly, records of members of the board of directors and supervisory boards, etc. The series Members of the Craft Assembly contains material on the members of the Association, such as registers, directories, records, indexes for apprentices, assistants and master craftsmen, decisions on craft licenses, learning contracts, minutes on taking exams, etc. The General Affairs series mainly contains documentation concerning the general work and business of the creator and accompanying records such as the conscript records. With regard to the integrity of the series, it should be noted that series such as the Management and the Members of the Quorum, are, for the most part, completely preserved.⁴

Regarding the possible digitization of craft associations material that could be planned in the future, or at least considered to be the most interesting and content-rich, would be series on management and members of the craft corps. The series on management is important primarily because it documents the way management and other bodies of craft associations operate, as well as all relevant decisions made by these bodies to protect the interests of their members, promote the reputation of their own profession, etc. In addition to the aforementioned series, management often contains information about the impact that an association has had in its area, that is, the relationship between the association and the wider community. For example, the series contains notices of various actions involving members of the association, their support regarding the general benefit to the wider community, etc. In the fonds The Craft Assembly for the Town and District of Čakovec in fragmented minutes and associated reports on the work of the Assembly they included information on actions to solve the problems of their own space for the Assembly and their decision to buy the Old Town House? in Čakovec in 1933 to solve their problems concerning space, and at the same time saved the property from collapse due to the lack of maintenance and neglect by the owners at the time. The Series Management in the fonds entitled tThe Craft Assembly for the District of Prelog and The Association of Craftsmen for the Municipalities of Kotoriba and Donja Dubrava in Kotoriba also provide information on their creators' activities, such as providing financial support for the protection of cultural monuments such as sacred buildings, supporting the work of local firemen associations, and various humanitarian associations, etc.

³ *Fonds 140, The Craft Assembly for the Town and District of Čakovec, contains records comprising 7 meters in length, while Fonds 141, The Craft Assembly for the District of Prelog, is 3.6 meters in length, and Fonds 142, The Association of Craftsmen for the Municipalities of Kotoriba and Donja Dubrava in Kotoriba, is 1.43 meters in length.*

⁴ *The fonds The Craft Assembly for the town and district of Čakovec series has not been preserved in its entirety, for example, it is missing a significant portion of the minutes of the board of directors and the general assembly and has been preserved partially or even in fragments.*

The series on members of the association primarily contains information on the professions that the association has gathered in a particular territory, especially those related to branches of the economy such as industry, agriculture, services and the like. In addition to these notices, the series contains notifications that can be read from records such as registers, indexes related to master craftsmen or their apprentices such as the type of profession performed by the master, residency of the master and apprentice, age, sex, duration of apprenticeship, etc. For example, in the fonds The Craft Assembly for the Town and District of Čakovec information on apprentices whose places of residency, other than the districts of Čakovec or Prelog, were also from neighbouring regions such as Zagorje, Podravina, Slovenia (Styria, Prekmurje) and even some from Slavonia can be found in the above records. Similar notices can also be found in the fonds of The Craft Assembly for the District of Prelog.⁵

When it comes to the digitization of fonds in the State Archives for Međimurje, the digitization of materials is mainly done by outsourced contractors or legal entities engaged for this reason, therefore it would be most economical for the planning of digitization operations, and therefore considerable financial resources would have to be invested to carry out this work. When it comes to the series on management, they could possibly be digitized in the Archivew itself, since these are mostly A4 session papers and thus do not pose a problem in terms of the size of the documents to be digitized, while digitizing the series on members would represent a significantly greater financial outlay for the archival institution. Namely, a considerable part of these records is larger than A4 and the archives does not have the equipment needed for the digitization of records of larger sizes, and the procurement of such equipment would be expensive. Although it might be possible to digitalize A4 material in the archives, this is not done in practice, because there are no employees whose job description includes the digitization of material, and it is not possible to reassign someone to those jobs because there are too few employees. Therefore, it is, of course, necessary to analyse and calculate the financial resources that would be invested in the digitization of such material, and of course the long-term benefits for the institution itself, as well as to anticipate approximately the number of users who would be attracted by such material to the institution and use it in digital form.

Of course, these series would be preserved in the long-term on the carrier on which they originated (paper), although the material of these three fonds is mostly preserved in good physical condition. In addition to the physical preservation of the material, digital copies of the material would certainly attract various categories of users, both natural and legal persons such as companies, crafts and similar entities, as well as professional associations that bring together economic entities such as chambers.⁶ In any case, the benefits to the archival institution would be multiple and the material itself would not be neglected in terms of use as well as possible presentation, use for scientific purposes, etc.

⁵ *This information was observed during the processing of these fonds by the author of this chapter and can be found in the apprenticeship registers as well as in the learning contracts.*

⁶ *This could primarily be attributed to the present-day Chamber of Crafts of Međimurje County, which is the legal successor to the former chambers of trades, craft chambers and other entities that operated until the early 1990s.*

4. THE POSSIBILITY OF DIGITIZING MATERIALS OF CRAFT ASSOCIATIONS IN KOPRIVNICA

At the State Archives in Varaždin, in the Archival Collection Centre Koprivnica, one fonds is preserved relating to craft associations, The Association of Craftsmen for the Town and District of Koprivnica. The Association was founded in 1932 with the enforcement of the Law on Actions,⁷ but even before that, there were several associations operating in the Koprivnica area, of which one was the Local organization of the Association of Croatian Craftsmen in Koprivnica.⁸ In 1941, the Association of Craftsmen for the City and the District of Koprivnica changed its name to the Crafts Assembly for the town and district of Koprivnica,⁹ and continued its activity under this name until 1950, when the Decision on the Liquidation of Crafts and the Association of Craftsmen in the Territory of the People's Republic of Croatia came into force, The Union of Crafts Cooperatives of the People's Republic of Croatia, and the Chambers of Crafts in Zagreb, Osijek and Split, and the Koprivnica Chamber of Crafts was established as a legal successor.¹⁰

The fonds of the Association of Craftsmen for the town and the district of Koprivnica has been archived and described in accordance with international standards.¹¹ Although this fonds belongs to smaller fonds, the records created by the work of this creator is well preserved and can be traced to the work of the creator throughout the period of its operation,¹² and the fonds is divided into four series: Organization and Management, General Organizational Affairs, Financial Documentation and Jobs Association of Craftsmen. The biggest, and also the most interesting for researchers, is the Jobs Association of the Craftsmen Association, which provides documentation on craftsmen and assistants, information on the beginnings and endings of craftsmen's work, as well as information on the illegal conduct of craftworks can be found, craft registers, membership records, business booklets, student registers, student contracts, student personal documentation, minutes of exam boards for passing exams, submission of certificates of master's exams and records of assistant's work experience. Although the General Files have been preserved for almost the entire life of the creator, the records of sessions (board of directors, supervisory board, expert committees, commission and honorary court) preserved throughout the life of the creator are more interesting for researchers.

When it comes to the digitization of fonds at the State Archives in Varaždin, digitization is partly done in the archives, mainly the digitization of archival records for exhibition purposes and the publishing of books or archival records that are digitized at

⁷ *Law on Actions, Collection of Laws in Decree 292/1931. Part of the material is preserved from an earlier period, there is no information on the possible activity of the creator in the period before 1932. HR-DAVŽ-SCKC-323 Association of Craftsmen for the town and district of Koprivnica. 1.1.1. Session minutes. The founding assembly was held on October 30, 1932.*

⁸ *HR-DAVŽ-SCKC-718 Files of various institutions and enterprises prior to 1945. Official record of the Local Organization of the Association of Croatian Craftsmen in Koprivnica (1920-1940).*

⁹ *Legal provision for changing the name of chambers of commerce, Official Gazette 134/41. Art. 1.*

¹⁰ *The Decision on the Liquidation of the craft Assembly and the Association of Craftsmen in the Territory of the People's Republic of Croatia, the Union of Craft Cooperatives of the People's Republic of Croatia, and the Chambers of Crafts in Zagreb, Osijek and Split, Official Gazette 37/50.*

¹¹ *This means that finding aids, summaries of fonds in accordance with the General International Standard Archival Description ISAD(G) have been produced.*

¹² *HR-DAVŽ-SCKC-323 The Association of Craftsmen for the town and district of Koprivnica. The Association of Craftsmen for the town and district of Koprivnica contains 3.32 m of records in length. The creator operated from 1932-1950.*

the request of researchers, mainly for the same reasons. The shortage of employees is certainly crucial in the realization of these tasks. External associates are engaged in the digitization of the rest of the material and because of the costs incurred by hiring external associates for digitalization, it was decided the oldest material should be digitized, since fonds created from the 13th century onwards have been preserved in the State Archives in Varaždin. Although the archival records of the Association of Craftsmen are very interesting, because they contain exhaustive data on the Association of Craftsmen, craftsmen and assistants who worked in the area of Koprivnička Podravina, only a few researchers have researched the archival records in search of certain data, and thus far no researcher has researched the whole fonds or even an entire series. Therefore, the cost of digitizing this material is unprofitable. Considering the interesting data contained in this fonds, it might be possible to bring this fonds closer to researchers through digitization, and thus to encourage researchers to research materials in the field of economy.

5. CONCLUSION

Since it involves a synergy of a number of factors, digitization is a complex process. It encompasses the existence of financial capabilities, human resources, supporting information infrastructure (software, server, IT equipment), the preservation of archival material intended for digitization, the representativeness of the material itself and its potential benefit for future users as well as for the users of archival institution themselves. The process of implementing digitization requires planning, considering the long-term benefit and cost-effectiveness of the archival institution. The planning of digitization also depends on factors such as the number of employees in the archival institution, since in larger institutions there is a possibility of incurring one or more employees with work responsibilities related to digitization jobs, while in smaller planning such a job is a significant problem. In the end, smaller archival institutions are predominantly focused on digitizing their most valuable material, such as charters, documents, etc. Archival fonds in the field of economics are usually not the focus of interest in terms of professional work, such as processing, use, preparation for exhibition, and other purposes. In institutions such as the State Archives for Međimurje and the State Archives in Varaždin, the Archival Collection Centre Koprivnica, fonds from the field of crafts and crafts associations which brought together the artisan population in a particular area have been preserved. , The State Archives for Međimurje preserves three archival fonds created by the activity of the Crafts association, the The Craft Assembly for the Town and District of Čakovec, The Craft Assembly for the District of Prelog and The Association of Craftsmen for the Municipalities of Kotoriba and Donja Dubrava in Kotoriba. Two of the creators of these fonds operated from the end of the 19th century until the outbreak of World War I, renewing their operations during the 1920s and operating until 1950, while one was established in the mid-1920s and operated until 1945. In The State Archive of Varaždin, the Archival Collection Center Koprivnica preserves one archive fond, the Crafts Association for the Koprivnica District, whose creator operated from 1932-1950. The fonds of the mentioned craft associations, which are kept in the State Archives for Međimurje and the State Archives in Varaždin, the Archival Collection Centre Koprivnica, are preserved mainly in complete form as far as documentation units are concerned. The series in these fonds that would be interesting for digitization would be on management and members of the association, since they provide comprehensive information on the activities of their creators as well as craftspeople, and thus their work and general craftsmanship in these areas can be monitored.

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POVZETEK

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Digitalizacija kot proces zajema sinergijo več dejavnikov, kot so kadrovske kapacitete, finančne možnosti, podporna infrastruktura (IT-oprema, programska oprema, strežniki ...), urejenost gradiva, ki se bo digitaliziralo, reprezentativnost tega gradiva ter ocena koristnosti za bodoče uporabnike in samo arhivsko ustanovo. Navsezadnje pa prinaša digitalizacija koristi tudi v smislu privabljanja novih uporabnikov.

Na podlagi navedenih dejavnikov zahteva postopek digitalizacije strategijo oz. načrtovanje, ki upošteva tudi dolgoročno korist za arhivsko ustanovo ter finančno vzdržnost. Pri manjših ustanovah prevzame načrtovanje postopkov digitalizacije običajno ena oseba. Manjše ustanove so tudi pretežno osredotočene na digitalizacijo svojega najvrednejšega gradiva, to so običajno zbirke listin, matične knjige ipd. Arhivski fondi s področja gospodarstva že pri rednem arhivskem delu (obdelava, urejanje, priprava na uporabo, razstave itd.) niso pogosto v središču zanimanja.

Državni arhiv za Međimurje hrani s področja obrtništva tri arhivske fonde, ki so nastali pri delu obrtniških združenj, tedanjih obrtnih zbornic: Obrtna zbornica za mesto in okrožje Čakovec, Obrtna zbornica za okrožje Prelog in združenje obrtnikov za občine Kotoriba in Dolnja Dubrava v Kotoribi. Navedeni fondi obsegajo gradivo od 1,5 do 7 tekočih metrov, so celoviti, gradivo pa je v dobrem fizičnem stanju. Dva ustvarjalca fondov sta delovala od konca 19. stoletja do prve svetovne vojne, potem sta svoje delovanje obnovila v dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja in delovala do leta 1950. Gradivo fondov je strokovno obdelano in popisano ter pomeni pomemben prispevek za proučevanje lokalne in gospodarske zgodovine, dokumentira pa delovanje obrtniških združenj na področju tedanjih okrožij Čakovec in Prelog ter občin Kotoriba in Dolnja Dubrava.

V Državnem arhiv v Varaždinu, Arhivskem zbirnem centru Koprivnica, hranijo en arhivski fond s področja obrtništva, tj. Združenje obrtnikov za srez in okrožje Koprivnica, katerega ustvarjalec je deloval med letoma 1932 in 1945. Ta fond vsebuje 3 tekoče metre gradiva, je urejen in popisano ter pripravljen za uporabo. Tudi ta fond je pomemben vir za proučevanje lokalne in gospodarske zgodovine.

V fondih Državnega arhiva za Međimurje bi bile za digitalizacijo zanimive serije uprave in članov obrtne zbornice, saj dokumentirajo način delovanja samih združenj skozi upravna telesa (upravni odbor, glavna skupščina) in dajejo širok spekter informacij o samem članstvu združenj (prebivališče obrtnikov, veje obrti, prebivališča pomočnikov in vajencev, starost in spol ...). Te serije so ohranjene v obliki registrov, imenikov ali protokolov kot knjige večjih dimenzij in tako predstavljajo za digitalizacijo zahtevnejše gradivo.

Od serij v fondu Združenja obrtnikov za srez in okrožje Koprivnica bi bili za digitalizacijo zanimivi zapisniki sej, ohranjeni za celotno obdobje delovanja ustvarjalca, ter serija, ki se nanaša na poslovanje obrtnikov in vsebuje dokumente o obrtnikih,

njihovih delavnicah, pomočnikih in vajencih. Pri tem se postavlja vprašanje ekonomske učinkovitosti digitalizacije gradiva, saj ga je po količini veliko, formati so večji od A4, potrebno pa se je tudi vprašati, kolikšno povpraševanje po tem gradivu je s strani uporabnikov.