A Conceptual Model for Identification, Evidence and Description of Heritage Collections

Content and Objectives of the Lecture and Group Work on the Lecture Topic:

Written heritage (e.g. older and rare books, historical manuscripts, maps, archival records etc.) can be found in all types of libraries, within library, archival and museum communities; however it is most commonly gathered in special collections i.e. heritage collections. The state of their development, preservation and presentation for the public is mostly characterized by the institution which they were part of in the past, as well as in the present. Consequently, the written heritage has come to us in different states of preservation and availability.

The best possible solution of how to manage heritage collections today and how to communicate the information about them to their users can be determined by following the concept of total care for the heritage on which the contemporary theory of cultural heritage is founded. Thus, the starting point of this lecture is the fact that the management of the old book collections comprises of complex processes (identification and evidence, as well as collection development, bibliographic control, legal and physical protection) which once put to work next to raising the basic questions What? and How? become intertwined with to the question For whom? the heritage should be preserved.

In order to overcome the present state, it is necessary to link the mentioned strategies of preservation and of conservation through an efficient system of information organization for management and for the access to collections, in particularly to those which lack or have inadequate bibliographic tools. Therefore, the main goal of this lecture is to present a model for the description of heritage collections which would serve as a basis for the development of the necessary system.

The model is designed in accordance with the concept of collection level description (An Analytical Model of Collections and their Catalogues) and it follows the entity-relationship modelling (FRBR, FRAD). Basic entities and their relationships have been defined, the ones that are necessary for the description of a) collection as a set of bibliographic items – old books, b) catalogue as a set of metadata about items gathered in the collection, c) place at which the
collection/catalogue are situated, and agency which, based on certain rules, manages the place and the collection, and d) linking of collections and their virtual gathering in Croatian information environment. The functionality of the model is defined by the user tasks which are retrieval, identification and selection of entities, and obtaining the access to the item.

By accepting the concept of the common information landscape, the proposed model could be applied not only in the library community but also in other related communities, such as archival and museum ones; particularly for the identification and registration of the entire collections of historical materials at each and every physical or digital location.

**Assignment:**

Interest in the concept of collection level description; proposal for a case study is needed.

**Readings:**


Functional requirements for authority data: a conceptual model / ed. by Glenn A. Patton; IFLA Working Group on Functional Requirements and Numbering of Authority Records (FRANAR); approved by the Standing Committees of the IFLA Cataloguing Section and IFLA Classification and Indexing Section. München: K. G. Saur, 2009.


