EXPLOITATION OF MODERN IT SERVICES TO RECOVER THE POLISH LOOTED ART BY THE EXAMPLE OF THE LOST MUSEUM

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| Abstract | The article presents the exploitation of global modern IT services required to create the new museum project called virtual museum. Its premise is to acknowledge the museum objects around the world. The example of The Lost Museum shows how the modern IT solutions give the possibilities to generate contemporary and peculiar museum projects. The international virtual museum project called The Lost Museum is created to meet the needs of the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Its aim is to gather information and to show the Polish pieces of art stolen after the Second World War by the Nazi German and Soviet forces. The works of art were lost. The Lost Museum publishes the art images being on the list of war losses to help their recovering. The IT services facilitate the publication of information about the huge amount of Polish pieces of art robbed during the war on unimaginably enormous scale in the history. The virtual museum brings them back in memory, showing at the same time their importance for Polish heritage and explaining to the young generation how they were engaged in constructing the national identity. |

Introduction

The rapid development of informative society gives the possibility of the exploitation of e-services in culture, particularly in museums. It is facilitated by the massive information needs and character of information spread as well the general way of use, technical possibilities of their gathering and stocking without taking into account time or space. The main feature of the informative society is using the information the way it gives unlimited access to the

internet (Bujak, 2010, p. 96). The e-service market is accessible to the greater number of e-clients. The traditional access is often restrained and expensive (Dąbrowska, Janoś-Kresło, 2010, p. 46).

One of the basic functions of informative society is education which popularize the acquisition of the knowledge in common way. Internet as a cheap and global media takes part in promoting the culture. It englobes the way of social human conduct, material and spiritual human heritage gathered and strengthen from one generation to the other. Its development depends on the learning and teaching possibilities (Dąbrowska, Janoś-Kresło, 2010, p. 125). On the one hand, nowadays we observe the phenomenon of homogenization of culture where people become less sensible to cultural differences as part of consolidated world (Bujak, 2010, p. 97). On the other hand, the broad access to information database, the fast exchange of numeric data open the door to cultural distinctness, absorbing information on global scale which would be restrained in traditional way. The local cultures can be spotted more easily in that modern way. The contemporary society and culture become numeric (e-culture). The digitalization together with new medias and informative technologies used in practice are the fundamentals for the culture development . The technical progress started the online promotion of art. The new ways of transformation and popularization of art objects have been desired. The digitalization permitted the full access to the cultural database (Dąbrowska, Janoś-Kresło, Wódkowski, 2009, p. 86). Due to the digitalization process, the traditional cultural institution changed its function and let internet take place in cultural life. There is an ample range of websites exposing all branches of art. New technologies change the way of art functioning. The art comes out from traditional museums and galleries and find its place in virtual world, a place of art distribution, promotion and presentation (Dąbrowska, Janoś-Kresło, Wódkowski, 2009, p. 95). The internet connection is the only condition to become the e-culture connoisseur. The cyberculture, new domain emerges, together with the virtualization of cultural goods.

Virtual museum

The virtual museum was created thanks to the strong development of tele-information services. It gave the possibility to see museum objects almost from four corners of the world. It wouldn't be at hand in traditional way. The function of a long-established museum as an institution is gathering, preserving the cultural human heritage, material and unmaterial one, informing about the importance of stocked collections, promoting the basic Polish and worldwide historical, scientific and cultural values, forming the cognitive and esthetic sensibility and of course the consultation of gathered collections. The museum as the public institution becomes today the service provider for the citizens as part of the informative society where the information is a product and the area of services is strongly developed. The evolution of multimedia technologies in tele-information and cultural transformations related enlarge the notion of a museum. New functions that even recently have been excluded from the meaning of a museum institution, today they gain interest in museology (Bentkowska-Kafel, 2013, pp. 159–166).

Digitalization process permit to share the collections of cultural institutions with the users which are welcome to take part in cultural knowledge acquisition. The online gallery and museum visits become familiar. The e-museum uses the latest informative technologies to present its collections. It can exist partially as a traditional museum, represented by a museum website or it can become entirely virtual. The last one was at first created to serve as a honeypot to attract people to visit the traditional museum, custom way to acquire knowledge or alternative to traditional museum for those who cannot have a wander because of distance or any other reason. Many museums in Poland join this idea (www.e-muzeum.eu). There are ones that propose only to have a look at the photos of the objects and others invite to a virtual walk. The last proposition like online tours is more advanced and exclusive way

to present art (Dąbrowska, Janoś-Kresło, Wódkowski, 2009, p. 95). The museum in Versailles (France) is a perfect example of online tour where a visitor can relocated to sit in a coach thanks to the gallery in 3D.[1] Today, the Polish museums like National Museum in Warsaw (http://cyfrowe.mnw.art.pl/dmuseion) often choose the online presentation of their collections e.g. paintings. They expose works of art but also their digital images and data about works of art.

The aim of the article is presenting the possibilities of modern multimedia solutions to create the virtual museum project. Modern IT solutions make a vast range of museum projects work and popularize Polish museum collections worldwide thanks to the Internet. Moreover, new particular projects are created like the exposition of collection of Polish heritage lost during the second world war. Basing on the case study method of the Lost Museum, the possibilities of application of the modern and customized IT solutions in museum projects were described. The article is based on the analysis of The Lost museum websites.

The idea of the Lost Museum

The Lost Museum is a particular form of the virtual museum. There is only one museum of this type in the whole world. The Lost Museum is an outstanding project existing only in virtual world (https://muzeumutracone. pl). The museum collects special objects- works of art and applied art which had been exposed before the second world war. They were robbed and till today they remain unknown. The objects presented are unique because they are on the list of Polish war losses. The online publication aims at helping to find them out. In the article, the case study method is of use to promote The Lost Museum in Poland and around the world. It's a project organized by the Association of Marketing and Communication SAR and Art Foundation Ad Artis SAR supporting the actions of Culture and National Heritage Ministry to recover the lost collections. The fundamental role of the museum is making people aware about the objects wanted and those already founded. Following the citation that "publishing an image of looted art is the first step to recover it", The Lost Museum has an online gallery on the website www.muzeumutracone.pl where it presents the photographical reproductions of paintings, graphics, sculptures, archeological collections or art crafts. The project is realized with the collaboration of Royal Palace and the Warsaw City Hall. The museum project is a starting point for further discussion about the education and promotion of looted art during the second world war. According to the founders of the project, the chances of recovering the lost pieces are very low. It's much more the mental restitution of the works of art for society. From 1992, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage gathers information about the war losses which means the mobile cultural goods looted after 1945 due to the second world war. The losses are tremendous. The huge amount of objects were robbed. It's the phenomenon on worldwide scale. At first, all the documentation was done as part of the Bureau of the Government Plenipotentiary for Polish Cultural Heritage Abroad. Today, the works are continued by the department of wartime losses incorporated in the department of cultural heritage which collects the information about the wartime losses. It also does researches to recover the looted museum objects in the country and abroad (*Czym są…*, 2018).

The department has its Database of wartime losses - the electronical register of cultural goods in Poland, lost due to the second world war. It is composed of 23 branches e.g. paintings, sculptures, graphics, cloth, porcelain, glass, gold, militaries, numismatics and archeology. There are 63 000 of lost objects counted and registered. Robert G. Storey, American attorney, a participant of Nuremberg trials attested how Polish culture was parceled out. The Nazi – German loot was greater than the collections from Metropolitan Museum in New York, British

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[1] www.chateauversailles.fr/decouvrir/domaine/ecuries-royales.

Museum in London, Louvre in Paris, Tetraykov Gallery in Moscow put together. Over one million of single works of art disappeared from Poland. Because of the destruction of catalogues done before the war, many objects didn't find their place on the list.

The preparations for loot of the Polish culture goods were launched in Germany long before the war. The Nazi – Germans focused on the most precious works of art, from the museums and private collections. The list was elaborated by a group of Art Historians who were well-informed about the Polish art. After the end of September campaign 1939, the systematic confiscation regulated by the specific occupant laws took place. It was realized by the institutions purposely created for that action. It was quickly transformed into illegal thefts by enemy forces and their officials. At the end of the country occupation they took form of seized loots. Many cultural goods were massively transported away, mostly from west and north part of Poland by special forces of soviet war administration.

Poland suffered from the colossal war losses. It's impossible to estimate the quantity of them because there is no sufficient sources and registered documentation of the losses done just after the war. The majority of the information like inventory books was transported away or destroyed on purpose by the Nazi German occupant or the soviet forces. In this case, the total reconstruction of the content of the important collections is practically impossible. The estimated number of 516,000 of single lost pieces of art (transported away and destroyed) is based on archival data and it doesn't indicate the immensity of losses. It contains only the objects registered after the war. Particularly, they are objects of ancient art. It's not possible to define the totality of war losses in art (after the year 1992, only 63,000 of museum objects lost in Poland were registered by the Ministry of Culture and Art).

The information gathered in the database is regularly updated on the Ministry website (http://kolekcje.mkidn. gov.pl) and on the international websites like Central Registry of Information on Looted Cultural Property 1933–1945 (www.lootedart.com) and Art Loss Register (www.artloss.com). The information is also published in the departmental series edition *Losses of the Polish Culture*. There have already been 19 volumes of catalogues presenting the wartime losses for Polish and international paintings, ancient art, graphics and drawings. The catalogues of wartime losses are sent to the national museums, the most exclusive auction houses in the world, diplomatic posts, consular offices, institutions and organizations doing provenance trials. Thanks to the efforts of Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, many works of art have already returned to Poland. The majority of them was recovered due to the information passed by the museum staff, collectors or simply the art enthusiasts.

Presentation of lost objects

The Lost Museum has its own website where there is a presentation of looted objects (it's usually a black and white photography). It has about 40 collections for example Entail of the Princes Czartoryski – Castle in Gołuchów, Gierymscy, Stanislas August, Graphics and Drawings, Polish Paintings, National Museum in Poznań etc. There is a browser founded to do the research of the objects.

Since 2010, the animation films have been realized. It's a kind of multimedia show of The Lost Museum where looted pieces of art and those which have already been recovered, are displayed. It's a main attraction of the museum during the Night of Museums organized in the biggest cities of Poland. The films are projected in the Castle Square in Warsaw, in front of the Presidential Palace and in Łazienki Park. The Minister of Culture and National Heritage is present. The DVD with the film is sent to the national museums and culture institutions. The last film dated from 2018 is entitled *Royal dream*. It presents the Łazienki Park, the palace of the last king Stanislas August Poniatowski, the history of Łazienki and the pieces of art collected there. The films tell about the history

of the Polish works of art. It's dedicated to the youngest generation. The film from 2014 presents four histories of lost collections belonging to Czartoryski family. The Polish actors relate the history of travels of the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci, Rafael Santi, Rembrant van Rijn which citizens tried to hide during the November Uprising or the Second World War. The film tells also the history of 259 ancient vases coming from the Entail of the Princes Czartoryski in Gołuchów. Almost all the vases were destroyed during the war. It was the most precious one after the British Museum vase collection. On the museum website, in the overlap reporting, there are coverages from Nights of Museum and film shows. It's a proof that the Lost Museum is of great interest for Poles.

Educational campaign Lost Recovered

In 2013, the Ministry together with famous Poles organized the campaign entitled *Lost Recovered*. It realized 50 films where people were telling about lost paintings. The campaign *Lost Recovered* was organized as part of a project of the Lost Museum. The campaign makes people aware of the scale of the loots and damages of Polish works of art. Among famous people we find the representants of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, main art historians, directors of the greatest museums in Poland, writers, actors, sportsmen- Olympiad participants , philanthropists, popular musicians, satirists, reporters, ad agency employees and confectioners. The National Museum in Warsaw together with National Museum in Poznan, National Museum in Gdansk, Historical Museum in Cracow, Royal Castle in Warsaw and the Foundation of the Princes Lubomirski were the co-organizers. The polish radio and television sponsored the action.

Contemporary museums face new challenges which are generated rapidly by the continuous changes in science and technics, the development of informative and communication technologies. The museum visitors is accustomed to the common use of the multimedia and internet. They learns by experience awaiting interesting and various guided tours. In the last few years, the blossom of massive culture was observed together with its commercialization. It englobed the area reserved to high and elitist culture (Rottermund, 2005, p. 13). The museums were forced to learn marketing technics and analyze the needs of the public. They had to find new ways to make the museum object more authentic and one-off and inform more efficiently about their importance in the history than it had been done so far (Rottermund, 2005, p. 14). The contemporary museums have to almost fight for their clients. For traditional museums, the exploitation of new informative services and creation of new exposition areas is an alternative. For contemporary ones, it's a question of life or death. For the Lost Museum, it's the only way of existence. It's based on numeric image. In first place, the museum project is orientated toward the recovery of the works of art, education and science.

The latest multimedia solutions and mobile technics make way to the promotion of the looted art which had constituted a big part of national culture and had been constructing the national identity through ages.

Art Scherlock

As part of the project of recovery of Polish Art around the world, a free mobile application is designed. It is sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Every user can easily spot if a painting, a drawing or a museum cloth isn't a looted art lost during the second world war. The application uses the electronical database of wartime looses shared by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. In any place in the world, a user can take a picture of an object that is verified on the spot. The application automatically gives an answer if a photographed object is a wartime loss. A user can stay anonymous (without filling in any credentials or publishing the ones

registered in the mobile system where the app is installed). It is extremely important in case of precious works of art. The application has already brought positive results.

In September 2017, one of the application users identified the painting *Exotic view* of Frans Post (1612–1680). It's registered in the database of wartime losses under the number 29861 (*Aplikacja…*, 2018). The same goes for the recovery of Oswald Achenbach's painting "Via Cassia Near Rome", returned to the National Museum in Poznań in 2014.[2]

Conclusions

The looted Art is an exceptional project of e-culture which uses the high informative technology to recover the lost works of art belonging to Polish national collection. The notion of looted art is promoted thanks to the high-tech solutions which guarantee the existence of the museum. The Lost Museum is a perfect example of virtual museum. It plays an influential role in historical and cultural education. It performs also a social function. It brings back memories about the precious mementos of Polish culture counted as wartime losses which were crucial for building the national identity. The lost pieces of art may never be recovered but they will always remain part of national heritage. The contemporary museum is a product of high technology of the informative society. It teaches how to exploit the IT services to enhance contact with the culture and to level it up within different communities. The results of the analysis show that the museum projects of this kind are valuable in first place for general knowledge acquisition and for the other they have practical use. In this case, they serve to recover lost pieces of art. In brief, it's not only learning the history but also using it in practice.

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