

STALNA RAZSTAVA SLOVENSKEGA
ETNOGRAFSKEGA MUZEJA
*THE PERMANENT EXHIBITION OF THE
SLOVENE ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM*

O NESTALNOSTI STALNEGA NA MUZEJSKIH RAZSTAVAH

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199

Prispevek je esej na temo stalna razstava in njena vpetost v muzejsko realnost na primeru prvega dela stalne razstave Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja *Med naravo in kulturo*.

Naj svoje razmišljanje začnem s citatom Maje Žvanut (1988: 62), zapisanem v prispevku o načrtovani stalni razstavi Narodnega muzeja: “/.../ pri nas pa imamo ambicijo predstaviti preteklost naroda, /.../. Zato se je dela treba lotiti zelo racionalno, da se prikaže bistveno, tipično, predvsem pa tisto, za kar po vesti in znanju lahko trdimo, oziroma domnevamo, da je bilo res. /.../ Na začetku dela nikakor še ne moremo vedeti, kaj natančno in s katerimi sredstvi bomo prikazali določene stvari. Muzejska razstava namreč ni pisna razprava, pa še pri razpravi avtor na začetku ne more vedeti, do kakšnih rezultatov bo prišel, ko bo delo končal. Muzejska razstava terja drugačen izbor tem, drugačen način razmišljanja, predvsem pa veliko navdiha in inovativnosti, kar vse se rojeva ob delu. Taka zgodovinska razstava bo imela vrsto učinkov, zaradi katerih je vredno, da si zanj na vso moč in vsemu navkljub prizadevamo. Stroki bo pokazala ne to, kaj o svoji preteklosti že vemo, marveč predvsem to, česar še ne vemo in v kaj je torej nujno treba usmeriti bodoče raziskave.”

Ta kratek citat je izhodišče za razmislek o nekaj temeljnih dilemah, ki jih sproža vsak začetek snovanja stalne razstave:

Muzejska razstava je interpretativni vizualni medij določenega disciplinarnega teoretskega modela, ki določa in vpliva na izbor bistvenega in tipičnega; torej tistega, na osnovi dosedanjega znanja, izbranega kot splošno ali tipično pričevalnega. Še toliko bolj to velja za stalne razstave, ki so po svoji naravi sintetične, pa vendar le na videz stalne. Nastajanje razstave je ustvarjalni proces, pri katerem naj na začetku še ne bi vedeli, kakšen bo končni rezultat. Pa vendar je treba v svetu omejenih finančnih možnosti in časovnih razsežnosti stremeti k čim bolj dodelanim strokovnim konceptom z jasno definiranimi detajli in čim manjšimi spremembami, če želimo, da bo materializirani

končni rezultat, ki je odvisen od oblikovalca, tiskarja, mizarja, električarja in še koga, čim bližji idejnemu konceptu in ne bo presegel začrtanega finančnega okvira.

Misel, da bo obstoječa razstava šele pokazala na bele lise, je pravzaprav iluzija. Vemo, kar vemo, smo, kar smo. Interpretiramo v času in prostoru tisto, kar prepoznavamo kot pričevalno in relevantno. Tisti, ki nam bodo sledili, bodo, morda in zelo verjetno zopet pogojeni s svojim zgodovinskim in strukturalnim trenutkom, razmišljali, utemeljevali in interpretirali popolnoma drugače.

Pa vendar rečemo stalnemu da, kajti v človeku je, da stremljeva k stalnemu, h gotovemu, k dokazanemu in dokazljivemu. In stalna razstava je iluzija prav tega; je zgodba, temelječa na sistemiziranem znanju; je jasno strukturiran roman, ki temelji na nešteti malih zgodbah, zbranih s strani raziskovalcev; in je hkrati reka v jasno začrtani strugi, iz katere lahko obiskovalec ob soočenju svoje izkušnje z njo izpelje nešteto odvodov in stranskih rokavov.

Tako smo v marcu 2006 v 3. nadstropju razstavne hiše Slovenskega etnografskega muzeja odprli prvi del stalne razstave z imenom *Med naravo in kulturo*. Če rezultat primerjamo z načrtovanim, lahko ugotovimo, da je razstava doživela nekaj modifikacij. Po konceptu I. Smerdel naj bi bila vir znanja o posameznih predmetih in kulturnih sestavinah z imenom Urejeni svet predmetov ali "Enciklopedija stvari" (Smerdel 1996: 36), medtem ko jo je A. Dular (Dular 1996: 71) poimenoval Stalna postavitev SEM – galerijski del in jo koncipiral kot predstavitev predmetov in dejavnosti, ki bi morali biti prikazani tako, da bi zadostili potrebam raziskovalcev pri preučevanju v muzeju shranjene dediščine, hkrati pa bi nudili splošne in posebne informacije o kulturi tudi drugim muzejskim obiskovalcem. Njegov idejni koncept galerijskega dela je obsegal šest enot: prikaz regionalnih značilnosti slovenskega etničnega ozemlja, razstavo posameznih muzejskih zbirk, razstavo nepremične dediščine, abecedarij gospodarskih in drugih dejavnosti, razstavo Slovenci in svet ter raziskovalno sobo (Dular 1996: 72–74).

Ta ambiciozno zastavljeni koncept, ki je galerijo zbirk razumel prvenstveno kot vrstni red študijskih zbirk, opremljenih z natančnimi podatki o klasifikacijah (krajevna, časovna, tipološka, uporabno-namembna, oblikovno-estetska) in opisih (velikost, material, razširjenost) (Dular 1996: 71), je v teku nastajanja dobil obliko, ki vse te podatke bolj ali manj vsebuje, vendar na drugačen, na prvi pogled manj strogo študijski in slehernemu obiskovalcu dostopnejši način. Regionalne značilnosti s poudarkom na ljudskem stavbarstvu skupaj z izbranimi modeli ter dediščina ljudskega plesa so dobile svojo razlago v uvodnem multimedijem prikazu skupaj s predstavitvijo dialektov. Temu razdelku sedaj sledi v etnološko sistematiko vpeta razstava posameznih muzejskih zbirk, umeščeni v širše etnološke teme. Izbor predmetov znotraj posameznih zbirk skuša slediti klasifikacijam. Rdeča nit, ki teče vzporedno s predstavitvijo zbirk, pa je odvisnost/pogojenost materialnega sveta z naravnim, kar je vizualizirano s talnimi vitrinami, v katerih so naravni materiali in plodovi. Polšje kožice tako korespondirajo s polšji pastni znotraj razdelka o lovu kot viru za preživljanje, pa satovje s panji znotraj čebelarstva ... Predmete spremljajo vizualni zapisi na ekranih, katerih namen je prikaz funkcije ali načina izdelovanja tipov predmetov, razstavljenih v vitrinah. Poseben del je zlasti otrokom namenjeni *Etno-Abecedaž*, v katerem so v labirintu nanizani etnološki

predmeti in teme od A do Ž in katerih namen je prijazno seznanjanje otrok z etnološko dediščino. Celoto mnogoterih zbirk SEM zaokrožajo oblikovno drugačna in z bistveno manj predmeti prikazana Srečevanja z drugačnostjo, ki so v osnovi predstavitev izbranih zunajevropskih predmetov iz zbirk SEM in njihovih zbiralcev.

In odzivi obiskovalcev? V poglavitem zelo pozitivni, kajti stalna razstava SEM je trenutno vsekakor najobsežnejša in najsodobnejša stalna razstava v Sloveniji, na kateri si je moč ogledati zbirke nacionalnega pomena, ki so dolga leta ostajale skrite v depojskih prostorih. Koncipirana je tako, da bo možno posamezne zbirke znotraj določenih vsebinskih sklopov zamenjati z drugimi. Stalna razstava kot identitetna izkaznica muzeja je v svojem bistvu tako nestalna. Od strokovnega znanja, znanja projektnega vodenja in inventivnosti muzealcev ter od finančnih virov, kakršne si bom(d)o znali zagotoviti, pa je odvisno, v kolikšni meri bo svet predmetov, ki je stalno na ogled ali pa varno shranjen v depojih, deležen nadaljnjih tako rekoč neskončnih nestalnih kontekstualizacij.

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Stalna razstava SEM *Med naravo in kulturo*, foto: N. Žgank, 2006

THE IMPERMANENT NATURE OF THE PERMANENT IN MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

Bojana Rogelj Škafar

203

The article is an essay on the theme of the permanent exhibition and its integration in museum reality in the case of the first part of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum's permanent exhibition – *Between Nature and Culture*.

Let me introduce these reflections with a quotation by Maja Žvanut from her article on the planned permanent exhibition of the National Museum (Žvanut 1988: 62): “...it is our ambition to present the nation's past,... And this must be done very rationally in order to present what is essential, typical, and above all what our conscience and knowledge tell us what is true or what we can assume to be true. ...At the beginning, we can have no idea what exactly and by which means certain things will be presented. A museum exhibition is not a written treatise, and even in a treatise the author does not know at the beginning at which findings he will arrive when the work will be finished. A museum exhibition requires a different choice of themes, a different way of reflecting, and above all a great deal of inspiration and innovativeness brought about by the work itself. Such a historical exhibition will have a range of effects and these make it worth every effort in the face of any obstacle. What the exhibition will show to the professional circles is not what we already know about our past, but in particular what we do not know yet, and what further research will have to address urgently.”

This brief quotation is the starting-point for my reflections on some basic dilemma which are inevitable when starting to conceive a permanent exhibition:

A museum exhibition is an interpretative visual medium of a defined scientific theoretic model that determines and influences the selection of what is essential and typical; or, in other words, of what has been selected in the past as generally or typically informative. This is all the more true of a permanent exhibition, which synthesizes, but is only seemingly permanent.

The production of an exhibition is a creative process in which the authors do not know at the beginning what the final result will be. In our world of limited financial means and temporal dimensions we must strive to arrive at optimal professional

concepts with clearly defined details and as little changes as possible, if we want the materialised final result, which depends on the designer, printer, joiner, electrician etc., to be as close as possible to the conceptual project and within the planned financial framework.

The idea that an exhibition will show us uncharted territory is actually an illusion. We know, what we know; we are, what we are. We interpret in space and time what we recognize as informative and relevant. Our successors will perhaps or even quite probably reflect, substantiate and interpret things in totally different ways, because they will be determined by their own historical and structural circumstances.

204 Nevertheless, we say yes to the “permanent”, because it is inherent in man to strive for permanency, certainty, to what is proven or provable. And a permanent exhibition is precisely the illusion of all these endeavours: it is a story based on systematized knowledge, a clearly structured novel, based on uncountable little stories collected by researchers; and it is also a river flowing in a clearly drawn riverbed from which the visitor, faced with it and with his own experiences, can derive uncountable outlets and arms.

In March 2006, the first part of the permanent exhibition, entitled *Between Nature and Culture*, was opened on the third floor of the SEM’s exhibition building. Comparing the results with what was planned, we can establish that the exhibition underwent several modifications. According to the original concept by I. Smerdel the exhibition was to be a source of knowledge about individual objects and cultural elements entitled *An Ordered World of Objects* or an “*Encyclopaedia of Things*” (Smerdel 1996: 36), while A. Dular (Dular 1996: 71) called it the *Permanent Installation of SEM – gallery section* and conceived it as a presentation of objects and activities to be presented in a way to satisfy the needs of researchers when studying the heritage kept in the museum, as well as to provide general and specific information on culture to the museum’s other visitors. His conceptual design of the gallery section included six units: a presentation of the regional features of the Slovene ethnic territory, an exhibition of individual museum collections, an exhibition of immovable heritage, an ABC of economic and other activities, an exhibition *The Slovenes and the World*, and a research room (Dular 1996: 72–74).

This ambitious concept, which saw the gallery of collections primarily as a sequence of study collections equipped with exact data on classification (place, time, type, use-purpose, design-aesthetics) and descriptions (size, material, spread) (Dular 1996: 71), was realised in the course of the exhibition’s installation in a form that more or less includes all these data, but in a different and at first sight less strictly scientific way, but more friendly to the general visitor. The regional features, with an emphasis on vernacular architecture and combined with selected models and heritage of folk dances, are explained in the introductory multimedia presentation, together with a presentation of the Slovene dialects. This section is followed by an exhibition of individual museum collections following ethnological systematics and incorporated into wider ethnological themes. The selection of objects within the individual collections attempts to follow the given classifications. The connecting thread which runs parallel to the presentation of

the collections is the dependence/determination of the material world on and by the nature world, visualised by floor showcases containing natural materials and fruits. Dormouse skins correspond to the dormouse traps in the section on hunting as a source of livelihood, bee combs to the beehives in the beekeeping section, etc. The objects are equipped with captions on screens whose purpose is to present the functions or ways of production of the types of objects exhibited in the showcases. A special section is the Ethno-ABC, intended primarily for children, in which ethnological objects and themes from A to Z are arranged in a labyrinth and introduce children to the ethnological heritage in a pleasant way. The whole of the very diverse collections of SEM is completed by *Encounters with Differences*, an exhibition designed in a different way and with much less objects; essentially, it is a presentation of selected Non-European objects from the collections of SEM and their collectors.

And how do the visitors respond to the exhibition? In general quite positively, because the permanent exhibition of the SEM is at present certainly the most extensive and modern permanent exhibition in Slovenia; collections of national significance, which for long years remained "hidden" in depots, are now on view. The installation's concept makes it possible to replace individual collections within thematic units with others. The permanent exhibition as the museum's identity card is thus essentially *impermanent*. Professional knowledge, knowledge of project management, the inventiveness of the museum's staff, and the financial sources they will be able to secure, will together determine to what extent the world of objects that is permanently on view or safely kept in depot, will be the subject of further and practically endless impermanent contextualisations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY see page 201.

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Stalna razstava SEM *Med naravo in kulturo*, foto: N. Žgank, 2006