

How the new collection of the Ethnographic Museum came about



- The article will present the museum project entitled *The World of Toys* which included the exhibition *The Toy Has a Heart*. In its recent activities the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb endeavours to dovetail with all modern museum trends, including the understanding of the role of a museum institution as part and parcel of modern society which can certainly influence its progress. One of the postulates shaping the work of modern museum institutions is the acquisition of objects which can fit into everyday life in a multilayered way. This is certainly the case with the objects included in the new Collection of Children's Toys and Games. The article analyses the development of the collection from the accessioning of objects into the Museum to their final analysis and recording. Specific objects in the new Collection are also analysed and their substantial value highlighted, and the historical review of the manufacturers' endeavours to show the long and continuous production of children's toys worldwide.

Key words: Ethnographic Museum (Zagreb)
Collection of Children's Toys and Games, museum collections

INTRODUCTION

The Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, as a central museum¹ and one of the oldest institutions², the holdings of which also conserved, in addition to nu-

1 Pursuant to the Museum Act, (*Official gazette*, 142/98, 120/02, 82/06).

2 "The National Museum was founded as late as 1846. Along with cultural and historical material, acquiring of ethnographic material was also envisioned." (Gjetvaj 1989: 12). "Subsequent work on the acquisition of folk artefacts was left to the initiative of private collectors who ac-

merous ethnographic artefacts, children's toys for more than a hundred years, launched in 2012 the *World of Toys* project³ intended to sensibilise the public to this issue, especially after the inscription of the *Traditional Manufacturing of Children's Wooden Toys in Hrvatsko Zagorje* on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Heritage of Humanity in September 2009.⁴ Along with the already known mission of museums – the acquiring, conservation, research and exhibition of material – international conventions, especially the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*,⁵ oblige society, and thereby the museums as well, to sustain by an active approach the phenomenon, an activity which, unfortunately, is not commercial, and to support its survival. The Ethnographic Museum is a good example of such practices. Within the scope of the project launched in September 2012, and in cooperation with Radio Sljeme, the reporter Anamaria Šnajdar started to edit her show *The Toy Has a Heart*. It was stimulated by the exhibition *World of Toys* (Biškupić Bašić 2012: 7-94) realised in, the Museum by Iris Biškupić Bašić. It was conceived as cooperation between the Museum, the radio and the public. Its ultimate goal was an exhibition under the same title during the project but it was also meant to encourage the creation of conditions for the foundation of a new children's toy museum which was missing in Zagreb and Croatia.⁶ The radio show was aired for six months every Sunday afternoon. Many guests invited by the show editor or by the author of the exhibition spoke about toys and games. They included toy owners Jasmina Reis, Živko Parac, Josip Cugovčan, the collectors Ivan Špehar, Ante Dlačić, Neven Budak, Toni Politeo, Jura Gašparac, the toymakers Ružica Vavra, Matej Joč, Tomo Kovačić, Zvonimir Majdak, the psychotherapist Zlatko Bastašić, the museum advisor Dubravka Balen-Letunić, the writer Božica Brkan and many others (Šnajdar et al. 2013: 11). The objective was extending knowledge about the role of toys in children's lives through the

quired objects according to their own interests and personal criteria. They acquired a large number of ethnographic artefacts which were incorporated into the collections of the Ethnographic Museum after its foundation in 1919." (Ibid.)

3 More on *The World of Toys* project in Matija Dronjić's text, under the same title, in this double issue of *Ethnological Research*.

4 At present, a major role in the protection and preservation of cultural goods is played by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation – UNESCO.

5 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, (Paris; *Official gazette*, 5/05).

6 Peek&Poke, Childhood Museum, was opened in Rijeka on October 2013.

statements of the many participants in the shows. As they spoke about the toys in the Collection of the Ethnographic Museum and about the toys produced in masters' workshops, the toys made by children, ceramic and wooden children's toys, many listeners remembered their own childhood and their maybe already forgotten toys and games, and brought them to the Museum. There the curators Ivanka Ivkanec, Matija Dronjić and the author of the exhibition took over the toys, noted the comments of the people who had brought them, photographed and marked them, and stored in the storage facilities until the exhibition. About 1100 toys were acquired through the high response of the public; some were loaned, while others were donated and became permanent ownership of the Museum. The exhibition was not conceived as a presentation of Museum holdings but rather as a presentation of acquired objects to the public. As we talked to the toy owners and listened to interesting stories about their history, the idea crossed the mind of producing a film: it was realised on cooperation with cameraman and part-time associate Žarko Nikin. Quite a few people, our fellow citizens, appeared in it, e.g., Ružica Vavra, holder of many patents for the production of plush children's toys, who was the first producer of such toys for almost half a century with the help of her daughter Dolores until 2000; Ivan Špehar, collector and great connoisseur of children's toys – toy cars and other vehicles; Jasmina Reis, who also loaned us, along with other interesting toys, the first baby rattle from the second half of the 19th century, from the family of the famous Croatian writer August Šenoa; Živko Parac, who remembered many games from the first half of the 20th century. Other people that appeared in the film include Bernarda Ivančić, donor of dolls from the nineteen-fifties, Vesna Zorić, a curator of our Museum, with *Barbie* and *My little pony* dolls from the nineteen-eighties, and Maja Arčanin with her picture books. The film was a valuable document which recorded the authentic statements of the reporters.

The donated and selected toys, urban culture items of culturological value, were displayed at the exhibition from 24 March until 2 June 2013, and were then treated for permanent storage and protection.

THE ROLE OF MUSEUMS IN THE CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE

The social community is a live organism that changes every day, and the same happens to its cultural institutions, museums included. Over time the role of museums and the public perception of their activity has changed, and the understanding of museums as institutions collecting museum material and its

display to the public has been abandoned. The present-day role of museums and museum specialists is much broader and it can be understood as documentation of the life of the community in which the museum operates from the standpoint of a specific profession or science.

The *International Council of Museums* (ICOM) is an international organisation of museums and museum professionals dedicated to the preservation and promotion of natural and cultural heritage, and for the management of natural and cultural heritage and the resources establishing and furthering knowledge”.⁷ It was founded in 1946 as a non-profit organisation with headquarters in Paris. It maintains formal relations with UNESCO, and has an advisory status in the UN Social and Economic Council. ICOM’s first definition of museums from 1946 reads as follows: “The museum is any public institution consisting of collections of art, technical, scientific, historical or archaeological material.” (www.icom.museum/statutes.html). The definition has changed with the development of museums and their role in society. The latest definition, introduced into the ICOM Statutes adopted at the 21st General Conference in Vienna on 24 August 2007, reads: “A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and the environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”⁸

In present-day society the role of museums as cultural institutions is many-sided. It still includes the primary role of acquiring, researching and conserving material; an additional role is communication with society as a whole and the integration of the community in the life of the museum which no longer operates inside the museum building but penetrates deeply into the community with its numerous activities. Along with the role of affirmation of the museums and of culture in general, such a blending of the community and museum institutions is an even more important aspect whereby museums contribute to the benefit of society. The *World of Toys* project covered all these aspects, from the acquiring and conserving of material which expanded the Collection of Traditional Children’s Toys and led to the establishment of the new Collection of Children’s Toys and Games, to communication with society beyond the museum building through the media which

7 ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums (<http://www.icom.museum/ethic.html>).

8 ICOM Statutes; (International Council of Museums) 2007, Art. 3, (<http://www.icom.museum/statutes.html>).

connected the visitors, the public and the Museum, field research of our curators, linking of international and inter-museum cooperation, cooperation with other institutions (publishers, theatres, writers, artists and storytellers), monitoring and integration of new technologies, a modern display stimulating visitors to active participation in museum presentation, educational work and many workshops and play-rooms (which are currently very popular among children), and involvement of the Museum and its activity in other institutions (kindergartens and schools). These and many other activities within the project have confirmed that we are on track regarding current international trends.

The Ethnographic Museum has been for years the leading ethnographic museum in Croatia. Its numerous studious exhibitions have displayed new ways of museum operation, of communication with the community and cooperation with other cultural institutions, especially other museums. The current policy of the Museum is dedicated to the freedom of research work and tolerance of the author's approach in research and exhibition work, as well as to frequent inter-museum activities such as exhibitions, lectures, field work, joint participation at manifestations, film production, publishing and organisation of scientific meetings. The only thing that can slow us down or stop in this activity is funding.

Since the establishment of the Ethnographic Museum its curators have endeavoured to acquire museum material and secure valuable objects and records documenting them for the Museum collections. As early as 1946 Marijana Gušić, then director of the Museum, started her long-standing work in Hrvatsko Zagorje. In the same year she held a lecture "... insisting on the study of 'material and social culture', 'social structure', 'fixing and conservation of rural folk life', 'parallelly with the acquiring of material, study folk life through critical assessment, 'photographic and phonographic recording', 'museum research and presentation, journal publication...','strictly museum work in museum facilities and didactic, educational work'" (Đaković 2001: 88).

After her field work in Hrvatsko Zagorje, she published her *Proposal for the arrangement of the old village of Kumrovec*. Already at that time she developed her idea of an outdoor museum, and she is one of the originators of *ethno-museums* in Croatia. In her Proposal she referred to a museum complex "the mission of which would be a live presentation of the historical truth about the life of serfs in the 19th century. The venture should put a stop to time, check the flow of time, and turn time into an eloquent testimony about the life of the Zagorje serfs over long centuries, stooped under the heavy load of penury,

exploited by the privileged and left to his own resources on depleted soil...” (Gušić 1979: 65).⁹

One of the basic differences between the former understanding of the Museum mission (with regard to the example of the *Old Village* at Kumrovec) as proposed by ethnologist Marijana Gušić, and the understanding of current ethnologists refers to conserving heritage but not stopping at that point but rather developing it. Field research is still the starting basis of the research ethnologist and the basis of subsequent exhibitions, but also of projects (as overall museum presentation is currently called) encompassing the researching of material, cooperation with a range of specialists, publishing, educational and marketing activities, and souvenir sales. Presentation of material is unimaginable without experts, exhibition designers already specialised for such work. Through their research museum experts endeavour to revive specific segments of traditional culture, and contribute their knowledge and advice to projects initiated by ministries, development agencies, counties, associations or other museums, nationally and abroad. In this way museums have become an unavoidable link in the chain of factors contributing to the prosperity of society.

In our current world it is extremely important to keep stressing the existence of natural and cultural diversity, and to be aware of our collective responsibility for its conservation. Hence the great importance of the conclusions adopted in 2008 by the European Union Council and the representatives of the member country governments concerning the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the Union and its member countries. The Department of Tourism, which attaches greater importance to cultural tourism, was also established. “Trends in cultural tourism show that it is a key factor for sustainable development and intercultural dialogue, and it is therefore especially emphasised within the theme of cultural tourism.” (Jelinčić et al. 2010: 117).

Already in 1970 Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin considered a concept of culture that “does not only imply the so-called folk, traditional culture, or culture understood as art and education, but a complex whole of value patterns and standards influencing behaviour and everything created by human behaviour” (Rihtman-Auguštin 1970: 11). In his analysis of cultural tourism Hollinshead calls it “heritage tourism” – as do other authors like Fyall and Garrod (1998: 213-228), Zeppel and Hall (1991: 467-55) – and concludes that “... heritage

9 Report presented to the Council of the Marshal Tito Memorial Museum in Kumrovec on 17 April 1956.

tourism includes folklore traditions, art and crafts, ethnic history, social customs and feasts.” (Hollinshead 1988: 183-198).¹⁰

The integration of heritage into tourism is the basic postulate of development documents, and it is precisely the *World of Toys* project that demonstrated that it is possible. There is no better indicator of a successfully complete job than figures, and the higher sales of souvenirs and tickets, and 40,000 visitors over six months, many of them foreigners, confirm the success achieved by the Ethnographic Museum.

OBJECT ACQUISITION

For us, the Museum staff, cooperation with the public has been a positive and precious experience. On the one hand, we have acquired a lot of material we might not have ever obtained; on the other, we heard and recorded many valuable statements about toys and games, mainly from the preceding century. We did not stop at the year 2000, as confirmed by the fact that we also followed in our exhibition the current state of affairs regarding toys and trends in their development. Our young fellow citizens were involved in the project and brought us toys and games, but did not talk a lot about them because they were still using them. Such an approach has dynamised the relations between the curators and the users, between the Museum staff and the public. In other words, we are linked not only with the past but we also, as a result of our profession and new achievements, follow current developments.

There are many ways in which objects are acquired for the Museum holdings, and reasons for it. First, this depends on the personal considerations of the curator – collection manager, but also on funding. The objective of our *The Toy Has a Heart* exhibition was not only cooperation and acquisition of material, written records, photographs and audiovisual records, but also drawing the attention of the public to the topic. Such communication and cooperation proved to be extremely productive, as demonstrated by this exhibition. We have acquired valuable data on the toys people brought us, about the time in which they were used, about the people that played with them or made them. Stimulated by this, we also embarked on new research regarding the manufacturers, their history and current status. By noting the stories of all these people we left written records of every toy, which thereby acquired a

10 More in the doctoral dissertation *Traditional Crafts in Krapina-Zagorje County* (Biškupić Bašić 2012).

new dimension – it became a museum object. The films that were made in the process also left audiovisual records. All these activities afford our conclusion that we fully followed modern museological methods. In accessioning objects and completing the necessary records we noted that most of the donors or lenders were middle-aged or elderly people. Older people brought toys and expressed their wish that the toys be kept permanently in the Museum as a memory, a witness to past time, in a space where will be properly cared for as their childhood memories. Many donors experienced the Museum facilities as a place for the permanent storage of their memories, their childhood and their dearest objects that are no longer interesting to their families. After talking to a donor curator Matija Dronjić noted the following: ... my grandchildren will only scatter the toys about, while in the museum they will be interesting at least to some people.” Some people left objects with great apprehension and concern about their proper conservation.

The act of donation or sale to the Museum should also be assessed in economic and historical terms. In present-day crisis times, people are often forced to sell even their dearest objects in order to survive, and that was also the case in the past. Here is a statement of a man who loaned us some objects for the exhibition: “During World War Two life was very hard. My brother and I had expensive and beautiful German toys – war planes, toy soldiers, boats and tanks. One day, I remember, mother went out because father was gone for a long time, and we were hungry. She came back with food. We were happy and ate the lot, and then I noticed that one of my toys was missing.” All that shows that toys, especially high quality ones, mainly manufactured in German children’s toys factories, were prized and valued even in the hardest times. At our exhibition we even had individuals donating the most valuable toys. Toys are not only the indicators of times in which they were produced or localities from which they originated; they also reflect the income status of the individual and his family. Thus, the holdings of the Ethnographic Museum acquired an extremely valuable porcelain doll from the late 19th century, manufactured in a well-known German factory, with all mark and dates on its back, with an almost impeccably conserved dress, in a box in which it was sold, and a dedication showing who donated it and why. Unlike that object, a “tank”, how the owner called his toy – i.e., as it was called by the children that played with it – was made by a child’s hand from a serrated tailor’s thread spool, small sticks and a rubber band – “produced” from scraps at no cost.

In the first half of the 20th century there were few toys, unaffordable to many, and children often made them themselves, or adults made them for children,

as shown by the foregoing example. In addition to toys, the Museum collection also acquired children's games. Some excellently preserved games were donated by the wife of a man who cherished them all his life and never parted with them. She decided to donate them to the Museum for permanent care in memory of him. One of them attracted our attention because its box had the stamp of a toy shop which used to exist in Ilica Street, in Zagreb, in the first half of the 20th century, memory of which had waned in public memory; we had long been searching for it. She confirmed the story of the donor: ... it was a big shop, and after school I used to stand in front of it and watch longingly the toys in the show-window." Such things give us hope and encourage us in our research and in the quest for new knowledge.

Already in the second half of the 20th century the relation toward toys changed. People became more mobile, living conditions improved, supply increased, people travelled more and donated toys, especially for festivities or birthdays. The industrial revolution and large-scale production supported serial toy manufacture, and toy became more affordable. Owing to the use of new materials such as plastic, the spread of production like China and Japan, toys became consumer goods. The same situation prevails today when toys are a mass phenomenon, especially those related to new technologies. Notwithstanding the huge development of technology, children still prefer dolls and rocking horses. The exhibition presented a range of toys from the second half of the 19th century to the present day; in other words, from porcelain and celluloid dolls, wooden and metal dies and models to the most advanced toys such as *Lego* bricks, plastic *Barbie* dolls, *Action Man*, *Transformer*, *Winx*, *Bratz* and *Monster High* toys.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COLLECTION OF CHILDREN'S TOYS AND GAMES

Numerous objects were acquired thanks to radio shows, actions inviting people to cooperate, communication with visitors and the *World of Toys* project itself, which was in full swing after December 2012, and the citizens' great interest in the holdings of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb. After the loaned toys were returned to their owners, a part of donated objects underwent another selection before final research and assignment of the inventory number¹¹ by Jasna Mokos, documentalist. After that Matija Dronjić, curator, co-author

11 The ethnographic material of the Museum is entered in the Museum Inventory Book starting with number Et 6 (cf. Gjetvaj 1989: 19); today it is processed through the M + + computer program.

of the *The Toy Has a Heart* exhibition and project associate, photographed the objects from several angles for secondary documentation purposes. In cooperation with preparation workshops and Jasminka Vujičić, senior preparator and contributor to the *World of Toys* project, all the objects were cleaned, protected and restored as required.

The material was then researched by the manager of the new Collection of Children's Toys and Games, senior curator Iris Biškupić Bašić. Every object had to be processed on the M++ computer program with input including the inventory mark, object dimension, material, technique, time of production, donor data and object description; all that had to be combined with the pictorial record from Mmedia¹² in which the photographs were stored after processing by the curator in charge of photography and assignment of the respective number. Finally, in line with Museum regulations, the Collection was reviewed for confirmation that all the objects were entered in the Museum records, processed in the M++ computer program and stored in appropriate boxes in the storage facility.

The Collection was founded in 2013 and by July 2014 it acquired 1,657 objects. In addition to the already existing toys, purchased and donated since 1993, most of the toys were donated to the Museum by citizens stimulated by the mentioned exhibition. The material is varied: from dolls, plush, rubber, mechanical and wooden toys to picture books and children's social games. Further growth is anticipated. In 2014 the collection was registered by the Ministry of Culture on the List of Protected Cultural Goods as a movable cultural asset of the Republic of Croatia.¹³

OBJECTS IN THE COLLECTION

Toys reflect the time in which they were made as confirmed by the fact that their design, motifs, material and manufacture help us to follow the development of fashion, industry and technology. The acquired objects can be analysed according to the period in which they were made, to the materials and techniques used, to the theme and to the manufacturer. The Collection presents many objects, e.g., dolls, children's tableware (plastic, metal, porcelain),

¹² Mmedia is a pictorial data base storing visual documents serving to identify objects entered in the M++ data base.

¹³ Pursuant to the Law on the Protection and Conservation of Cultural Goods (*Official gazette* 69/99, 151/03, 157/03, *Official gazette* 87/09, 87/10, 61/11, 25/12, 136/12, 157/13).

doll attire, doll prams, cars and other vehicles, tin, elastolin and plastic toy soldiers, plush, rubber and mechanical toys, and games. Some of them are analysed below in terms of manufacture and time of production.

The Collection includes toys produced after the second half of the 19th century. A case in point is the oldest dated toy – a doll marked Et 50039 from 1894, manufactured in the German factory “Armand Marseille”, and a very similar doll from the same period, Et 50095 (Fig. 1/p. 332),¹⁴ preserved in the original box with the original dress. Born in St. Petersburg, Armand Marseille bought in 1884 Mathias Lambert’s doll factory in Sonnenberg, Germany, and only a year later the “Lieberman&Wegescher” porcelain factory in Köppelsdorf near Sonnenberg. In 1892 the firm started to manufacture porcelain dolls’ heads. “Armand Marseille” soon became one of the world’s major manufacturers and exporters of porcelain heads (Ernst et al. 1999: 331).

Dolls manufactured by the German factory “Rheinische Gummi und Celluloid Fabrik” (“Schildkröt”) in Mannheim-Neckarau, founded in 1873, are of more recent date. Celluloid was discovered in the mid-19th century, and doll manufacture started in Germany – Mannheim – in the late 19th century. That was the first German celluloid doll factory, and its production grew continuously and was extended to other toys as well. It also produced for other factories, and sold raw materials and semi-finished products (Ernst et al. 1999: 360). Three dolls manufactured in Mannheim were donated to the Museum (Et 50080, 511908, 51109).¹⁵ The second largest manufacturer of celluloid toys, mainly dolls, was “Buschow&Beck”.¹⁶ The “Buschow&Beck” factory operated after 1890 in Reichenbach, and after 1896 in Nossen. It was the second largest manufacturer of toys, mainly dolls. Until 1903 it purchased celluloid heads and raw material for its own dolls from “Schildkröt” (Ernst et al. 1999: 354). The Museum has a doll, Et 50080, which is a good example of the synergy of two major factories.

With the appearance of new materials in the nineteen-thirties porcelain, metal

14 According to the mark on the back of the head and the number, 390, these were standardised *Kürbelkopf* heads which could turn, with a semi-open mouth and porcelain teeth, and so called *Schlafaugen* – sleeping, light blue glass eyes (Ernst et al. 1999: 332).

15 The *Schildkröt* dolls carried the recognisable trade mark of the company – the tortoise (i.e., “Schildkröt”). They were also made with movable eyes, legs and arms. They were very light, and that was their great advantage (Ernst et al. 1999: 360-362).

16 The dolls have a helmet and “Minerva” on their back, the trade mark of the “Buschow&Beck” toy factory.

and biscuit (Et 50096), dolls were no longer in fashion, and were not manufactured any more. The time of composite dolls started.

Manufacturers kept looking for new break and impact resistant materials, and experimented with paper, saw dust or cloth, mixed, pressed, cast or glued. The recipes were jealously guarded. Such toys were manufactured until the nineteen-fifties; celluloid toys were produced until the nineteen-seventies. Another material used to produce toys around 1940 was natural rubber. However, it was not applied long because of its porosity and sensitivity to weather influences. Another reason was probably the appearance of vinyl, PVC and hard plastics. Such dolls were assembled from separate parts – head, arms, legs and trunk – connected through the doll's hollow body. The dolls' eyes could open and close, and the dolls were also often movable. Big dolls with nice hairdos and sumptuous dress were very popular in the nineteen-fifties and –sixties, but they were used as decoration rather than for play, such as dolls Et 50387, 50178.¹⁷

Because of their resistance, plastic dolls have kept their market position for the longest time, and they are being continuously upgraded. In Croatia, the “Jugoplastika” Company in Split manufactured toys, including dolls, e.g. Et 48814, 48815, 48816. They had movable limbs and eyes, long or short hair and, in most cases, small plastic shoes on their feet. Although they often attracted attention, during play their dress was soon torn or was inadequate, and mothers knitted or sewed dress for them (Et 48823, 488824, 488825); girls also learned the first sewing skills on small sewing machines (Et 48059, 48807).

Some citizens donated rubber dolls manufactured by the “Biserka” factory in Zagreb – Et 48823, 48824, 48825 – which no longer produces toys, and toys manufactured by “Mehanotehnika” in Izola – Et 48807, 50082, 50133. “Biserka” was the only factory in the former state which obtained the Walt Disney production and distribution licence for the whole East European market. The known characters manufactured by “Biserka” included Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Pluto, Little Red Riding Hood (Fig. 2/p. 332), Pinocchio, Gargamel, etc. The factory also produced many other rubber characters, balls and dolls, and it was also renowned for its children's games. Some of them e.g., *Ludo* (the German variant, *Mensch...*) and *Mill*, are also in the new Collection.

The “Mehanotehnika” factory started producing in Izola, Slovenia, in 1952. It is still in business, but under the name “Mehano” after 1990. It manu-

17 During my ethnologic field visits I used to see such dolls, looked after with great care, on well-appointed beds, on pillows or in the middle of the bed.

factures toy trains, didactic toys, remote control vehicles, car race-tracks, car models, children's plastic furniture, children's machines – typewriters, sewing machines etc., and plush toys. The Museum Collection also includes toys manufactured by this company: a complete race-track (Fig. 3/p. 333) with all the appropriate parts from the nineteen-eighties (Et 50082), a doll kitchen and bathroom (Et 48805, Et 48806), and a sewing machine from the nineteen-seventies (Et 48807). The Collection was also enriched with plush toys produced in small manufactories¹⁸ or in currently large-scale children's toys factories, like the best known European (or maybe even global) producer of plush toys, the German "Steiff". Along with many plush toys produced by unknown firms (Et 46997, 48671, 50043), the Collection includes several toys manufactured by "Steiff". One of them a plush monkey, Et 45673, is a collector's item (Fig. 4/p. 332).¹⁹

The "Steiff" workshop was begun in 1880 by Margarete Steiff in Giengen an der Brenz. Love for children's toys turned the small family business into a company of worldwide renown. Production began with plush elephants sold as pincushions. They were sold out right away, but as children's toys rather than pincushions. Margarete Steiff was immediately aware of the market demand and started to manufacture toys, e.g., cats, dogs, hares and other animals. Owing to great interest, production expanded, and in 1902 the factory delivered the first small plush toys with mobile limbs and immediately attracted great interest. The small bears soon also soon appeared in the United States, and the Americans linked them right away with President Theodore Roosevelt, known for his hunting. His nickname was Teddy. Soon the small bear became the most popular toy called Teddy Bear. Everybody had to have a Teddy, and already the next year 12,000 bears were exported (Pfeiffer 2005: 80). There was great interest in the toy, as confirmed by the growth of output. Already in 1907 "Steiff" exported 974,000 small bears to the American market. Their slogan was "*only the best is good for the children*". The materials used for the toys were alpaca (wool obtained from the animal of the same name), wood shavings or polyester fibres for the stuffing, and wood or glass for the eyes. The toy monkey, purchased by the Museum in 2003, was stuffed with straw and covered with imitation fur; the beard, snout, ears and feet were made of

18 Like Ružica Vavra of Zagreb, who produced plush toys and sold them throughout Croatia to department stores, and in her own shop.

19 The toy had to have a distinguishing sign – a small metal button attached to the left ear; it was changed in some periods, and this facilitates dating.

plush, and the eyes were two small, brown glass balls. The monkey sits on a cart made of wood and metal, and drives the vehicle. The toy was manufactured in the early 20th century, and its picture was published in a monograph about the Steiff family (Pfeiffer 2005: 139).

Boys have always loved to play with toy soldiers made of various alloys of other materials (tin, zinc, elastolin, plastic); every period had its own distinctive materials and paints. In 1993 the Ethnographic Museum received a donation of several sets of toy soldiers (Et 27730), produced about 1970 by casting a zinc alloy into moulds. Six military units were mounted on different bases. They were manufactured in the renowned Austrian factory “Josef Kober” in Vienna, founded in 1886. The factory became one the leading toy retailer and wholesaler in its time, and one of the leading exporters. After 1955 the firm began its own production of small zinc alloy figures from Wollner moulds²⁰. It is still one of the major world exporters of such toys. Along with the toy soldiers, the Collection includes a product catalogue and price list.

Along with porcelain, metal and plastic children’s tableware, a space vehicle, cars, a tricycle, mechanical and rubber toys, a slide and film projector walkman, doll pram, small paper dolls, children’s picture albums, picture books and many other toys which became part of the Collection of Children’s Toys and Games, due mention also needs to be made of the many children’s games deserving particular attention because of the factories from which they spread all over the world.

As already mentioned, donations to the Museum include about twenty interesting games. In 2002 The game *Märchenlotto* was donated in 2002; the pictures are by Otto Kubel,²¹ and the manufacturer is the well-known German factory “J. W. Spear&Sohne” (Et 30107). It was founded by Jakob Wolf Spear in Fürth near Nuremberg in 1879. The factory employed six hundred workers until 1932, when it moved to England and the United States (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._W._Spear_%26_Sons). The game is played on cardboard boards with small embossed windows. The child places small pictures for the proper fairy tale into the windows. The same manufacturer also pro-

20 In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Michael Wollner of Vienna was the best known producer and designer of small zinc alloy figures; in addition to toy soldiers of all kinds he also produced other figures (Rose 1990: 22).

21 Otto Kubel was born in 1868 and died in 1951. He attended the School of Arts and Crafts in Dresden, worked as an illustrator in Leipzig and studied painting at the Art Academy in Munich (<http://d.metapedia.org/wiki/kubel,Otto>).

duced a loom with beads and instructions for producing jewels (Et 30108)²², and *Old Maid* (German: *Schwarzer Peter*) playing cards in 1930. Another interesting and internationally known game (produced in 1920) was also donated to the Collection: *Ludo* (US: *parcheesi*). In 1905 Josef Friedrich Schmidt developed in Munich the game *Mensch ärgere Dich nicht!* for his sons, using the well-known English game *Ludo* as the model. In 1911 Schmidt set up a factory and started exporting the product all over Europe. The game donated to the Museum (Et 50078) also confirms its international popularity because the board also carries, in addition to the original German name, the name in Serbian, written in Latin and Cyrillic script, and the initials “J.F.S.M.”. These initials were in use up to 1936 when the firm was taken over by Schmidt’s son Franz, who changed the logo to “F.S.N.” and moved the firm to Nuremberg. Because of large-scale destruction in WW 2, the firm moved back to Munich, and the logo was changed again to just “Schmidt”. It is still in business (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz.113792.html>). Another interesting game from the same period and by the same manufacturer was *Halma*.²³ It is played on a double board by up to six players. On one side of the board is the *Stern-Halma* (star Halma) and on the other the square version. The game was invented in 1883 by the American surgeon George Howard Monks, who named it *Halma* (Greek for “leap”). The star-like version was subsequently developed in Germany in 1892 (<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halma>).

Two more games in the Collection date from the first half of the 20th century: the *Box with wooden construction blocks* and *Kinder-Post* (Children’s post) (Et 50059 and 50071, resp.). Both were purchased in Croatia, meaning that the country was abreast of the latest international production of children’s toys and games. Resourceful retailers sold them in Croatian cities like Zagreb and Split. Both boxes carry the mark “D.R.G.M.” for *Deutsches Reichsgebrauchsmuster*, confirming that the product was patented and registered for Germany. The mark was used until 1952.²⁴ Another interesting game was manufactured

22 The game is still popular; along with beads it also uses many other materials. In 2014 the firm achieved great success in the international market with the production of bracelets with rubber bands made by different manufacturers. In Croatia the leading product of the kind are *rubber loops* by Max Bringmann KG of Wendelstein, Germany.

23 The words on the board read: “A very interesting game for the young and for the old. Halma is the name of an ancient Greek game. It is so interesting and funny that it is worth saving from oblivion.”

24 In 1952 it was changed into D.G.B.M. (*Deutsches Bundesgebrauchsmuster*, German Federal Patent and Trade Mark Office) (<http://www.assistedknife.com/index.cfm/fa/subcategories.main/parentcat>).

by *F.Ad.Richter&Cie*, later *Ankerwerk* (today *Anker-Steinbaukasten GmbH*)²⁵ of Rudolstadt, Thuringia. The core product lines of the company were drugs and pharmaceutical-chemical products. It soon extended its operation to other cities and countries.

One of its major product lines were children's toys, e.g., jigsaw puzzles with marble, stone or wooden blocks. The company was founded in 1876 by Friedrich Adolf Richter. It discontinued production in 1963, and started again in 1995. It is still in existence. One of its games (Et 50081), dated in 1920, is also on display in our Collection. It is called *Meteor* (Fig. 5/p. 333), and consists of 144 marbles arranged in a cardboard box with a description of possible options. Mention is only made of some interesting toys and social games in the holdings of the Ethnographic Museum.

CONCLUSION

The new Collection of Children's Toys and Games of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb owes its existence to the donations of dedicated individuals, and it has enriched the Museum with 1,675 objects. The institution and the new collection are continuously open to cooperation, and their growth trend is obviously present. Along with the enrichment of the museum heritage such cooperation has developed and enhanced the attitude that donations to the Museum are one of major ways for conserving cultural heritage. The *World of Toys* project has clearly shown that the Museum, through coherent consideration and involvement not only of its staff but also of the community, can give birth to a "cultural product" beneficial to society, and provide a permanent value for future generations. The project covered the many aspects covered by museum conventions and rules, from acquisition of material to its conservation and communication with society outside the museum building through media linking visitors, citizens and the Museum (such as cooperation with Croatian Radio – Radio Sljeme). Furthermore, the scope of activity has also been developed by continuous field research of our curators in the field but also in the central institution as witnessed by the new Collection of Children's Toys and Games, coordinated linkage through international and inter-museum cooperation, and inter-disciplinary cooperation with other institutions not primarily of museum character. The implementation of the project necessarily involved the integration of new technologies in developing a modern display

25 The toy boxes carried the anchor mark, the logo of Anker-Steinbaukasten GmbH. ([http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ankerwerk_\(Rudolstadt\)](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ankerwerk_(Rudolstadt)))

stimulating visitors to active participation in museum presentation, education work through many workshops and play-rooms, and numerous other activities within the scope of the project.

All this clearly shows the need for creating a data base by using state-of-the-art computer technology providing experts and other users accurate and up to date information on heritage and thus secure the basic conditions for top quality communication between the museum and other users – tourism, the economy, science.

Since the task of the Museum is not only to attend to the past but also to the present – which, owing to accelerated progress, especially of engineering, quickly consigns material objects to the past – the museum staff and the museum institution itself are faced with many new problems which will certainly bear on the design of new collections, but also on the perception of the collection itself, its substance, selection criteria and, finally, the feasibility of its storage considering the hyper-production of the consumerist age. Such a dynamic development obviously calls for continuous education of the museum staff, better funding, and higher investment into human resources and technology.

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