



METADATA

Title: Documentation of museum collections

Other Titles: Metadata about cultural heritage objects

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Abstract

Proper description is essential for locating objects in collections and for the enhancement of their value. This textbook aims to take a comprehensive approach to the field of museum object documentation in the context of museum collection management. After introducing the concept of museums and the description of their objects, it then specifies the guidelines and standards related to the creation of metadata and the process of knowledge representation. To achieve the above objective, the textbook is based on three main axes. The first axis concerns the concept of the museum as a cultural heritage institution and how descriptions of objects create structured metadata. Finally, it shows how metadata, although not a substitute for resources, can function as such in the context of performing specific tasks. The second axis analyses standards

and guidelines related to museum collections documentation. Specific metadata schemas and description guidelines are analyzed, such as Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO), VRA, etc., whose use is widespread in museums around the world. The third axis concerns how technologies that promote knowledge representation - such as semantic networks, knowledge graphs and ontologies - are transforming the documentation ecosystem of museum objects. In this context, the focus shifts from the mere description of an individual object to the context in which it is conceptualized and interpreted. For this approach, the reference point is the CIDOC-CRM ontology, which is captured in the international standard ISO 21127:2023. This ontology was developed - and continues its development - under the auspices of the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

