**Type of Contribution: PAPER**

**Personal cultural heritage management of Croatian expatriates in New Zealand[[1]](#footnote-0)**

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# Introduction

This paper will present a portion of results from a larger survey that explores how people manage personal documents and information relevant to their personal lives in the process of moving from one country to another.

Personal information management practices in the moving process require handling different types of information and documents (such as official documents, health records, personal heritage collections that contain photos, books, videos, social communication etc.). It also requires making a range of decisions on how to organise, backup, discard, and share documents and data. In the heart of these decision lies value assessment. Every decision making of such kind is influenced by knowledge as well as emotions and memories that determine value. One is often faced with making a decision on values in today’s rapidly changing world full of information overload, and cultural abundance and scarcity at the same time. The process of moving alters the perception of value items have in our life.

One aspect of managing personal information when moving is related to culture and cultural heritage. In other words, managing information related to one’s own (native) culture and a culture of the country one moves into. People who have chosen to live and work outside their native country, whether temporarily or permanently, might find themselves in a situation where they feel an increased need for consuming their own culture as well as increasing demands for getting to know and assimilate within the culture of the country they have moved to. Focus of this research is therefore on attitudes, practices, and needs that shape “personal cultural heritage management”, and determine what one will do with the culture within oneself and around oneself.

**Theoretical framework**

This research draws on the theoretical concepts of personal information management and information behavior related to the use of cultural heritage collections. The research aims to set basis for developing a concept of “personal cultural heritage management” that looks at complex, diverse and interdisciplinary (multi)cultural issues from an individual perspective and helps individuals take a proactive approach to personal cultural heritage and actively manage their own cultural heritage experience.

This paper takes into account and tries to establish relations between a body of literature exploring personal information management practice (such as Huvila et al. 2014, Hawkins (ed.) 2013, Lee (ed.) 2011, Marchall 2008a and 2008b, Jones and Teevan (eds.) 2007) and those investigating participatory culture in the context of memory institutions (for example Giaccardi (ed.) 2012, Roued-Cunliffe and Copeland (eds.) 2017). Also, different initiatives and projects focusing on participatory practice in relation to social inclusion are considered; for example, The POEM programme (Participatory Memory Practices) that aims to influence future heritage politics and contribute to creating socially inclusive society through culture (<https://www.poem.uni-hamburg.de/>).

**Research questions**

The aim of the part of research presented in this paper is to explore how Croatian expatriate community in New Zealand engage with cultural heritage collections, both collective ones (in libraries, archives, and museums in New Zealand and in Croatia), and personal ones.

Research questions:

* How much do expatriates of Croatian origin use LAM services in New Zealand and for what purposes?
* Do they use digital LAM services and collections from Croatia and for what purposes?
* Do they, and how much, participate in creating cultural heritage collections or take a role in the participatory community that develops around specific cultural heritage collection?
* What are their attitudes, habits and practices in safeguarding personal heritage?
* What emotions, affections and identity issues Croatian expats and immigrants face when using heritage collections?
* Does the choice between analogue or digital form of the same content makes a difference for them, and in what way?

**Methodology**

Ethnographic research approach will be used to collect data from Croatian expatriate communities in New Zealand including individual interviews and focus groups, observations and surveys.

Expatriates are chosen as a population for this research because it is expected that they have experienced different range of emotions and different needs related to cultural identity issues, both personal and collective: At least once, and often many times, this population needed to assess the value of personal documents and data they possess and interact with. At least once, they needed to consider what cultural customs they wish to preserve and pass on, and how to overcome cultural differences and learn about another culture.

**Research Results**

As this is a research still in progress, it is expected that the results of this research would offer an insight into the information behaviour and needs of expatriates related to personal information management, and cultural heritage use (personal and collective), including participatory culture, and be of relevance to libraries, archives and museum when developing tailored services for these groups of users.

**Conclusion**

This paper will present results of research on how Croatian expatriates community in New Zealand use cultural heritage collections, including:

* Creating, managing and preserving personal cultural heritage collections
* Finding and using cultural heritage collections in libraries, archives and museum (both Croatian and New Zealand ones)
* Participating in creation, presentation and preservation of cultural heritage collections

A range of issues related to cultural heritage, such as values, emotions and cultural identity, will be explored in the paper.

Results presented in this paper are a part of larger research project that explores how people manage personal documents and information relevant to their personal lives in the process of moving from one country to another. Overall results will be used as a background for developing a concept of “personal cultural heritage management” that combines concepts of personal information management and participatory culture in LAM, and explores cultural heritage issue form an individual perspective.

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