

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY at the National and Study Library in Trieste

The Department of History at the National and Study Library is active in three fields:

1. the Department as an archive,
2. the Department as a museum,
3. the Department as a research unit.

ARCHIVE

Since its beginning in 1951 the Department has collected and preserved materials related to the life and work of Slovenians in Trieste and the Trieste region. Not as many resources have been collected about Slovenians in Gorizia and the Gorizia region, Venetian Slovenia, Resia and Val Canale.

Archive materials (overview)

1. Biographical archive: Information collected about 5700 people is kept in this archive. The materials are kept in folders (biographical sheets, photos, articles, data). Most of the information is about Slovenians in Italy. The alphabetical list of persons has been computerised, while the materials are kept in drawers.

2. Phototheque:

The photographic collection of the Department consists of two parts:

2.1. Positives phototheque (around 90,000 photos), encompassing the 20th century. The photos are divided according to historical periods: HA (Austro-Hungary), HI (the interwar period), H NOB (the period between 1941 and 1945), H ZVU (the period between 1945 and 1954), and HS (the period after 1955). Within individual periods the photos are divided according to topics: education, politics, cultural and sports societies, organisations and institutions, places, manifestations, ethnography, etc.

This is also supplemented by the slide phototheque, consisting of approximately 5000 slides. The slides were donated to the Department by the journalist and editor Lojze Abram (the Galeb magazine collection) and photojournalist Mario Maganja.

2.2. The Primorski dnevnik daily newspaper phototheque covers the period between 1945 and 1983 and includes around 250,000 negatives. The majority of the photos were taken by the photojournalist Mario Maganja. They are kept in special metal lockers.

3. The card index of Italianised surnames in what was the Trieste Province during the fascist regime: The card index consists of photocopies of official decrees changing the names and surnames of Slovenians, Croats, and others. The card index is in the alphabetical order.

4. Archive of the private Slovenian school of the St. Cyril and Methodius Society near St. Jacob in Trieste (1888-1930).

5. School archives: The materials are related to the Slovenian primary schools in the Trieste region (1873-1954), teachers from the littoral region, and the Gentile reform. Collection of textbooks. This collection also includes partial archives of the supporting and youth societies (Student Society – Dijaška matica, Society of Slovenian Secondary School Students – Društvo slovenskih srednješolcev, Jadran Academic Society – Akademsko društvo Jadran, etc.)

6. The Albin Bubnič archive: Most of the archive consists of the materials gathered by the journalist and researcher Albin Bubnič about the concentration camp Risiera (Rižarna) in Trieste (1943-1945). The other minor part consists of the materials gathered during the proceedings taking place in 1976 in Trieste. After Bubnič's death in 1978 this archive was taken over by the Department of History, while it had previously been kept in a room at the Primorski dnevnik daily newspaper.

7. Legacies: This archive includes the materials collected by the well known Slovenians in Italy during their lives and active careers. We have gathered various sorts of materials in a single collection. Let us mention some of the names: Jože Dekleva, Roman Pahor, Just Pertot, Angelo Kukanja, Stanislav Renko, Franc Škerlj, Vladimir Turina, župnik Križman, Milan Bolčič, Andrej Budal, Ivan Šavli, Bortolo Petronio, Armid Ukmar, Anton Mirko Kapelj, Zorko Jelinčič, Karel Šiškovič, Ubald Vrabec, Valerija Kocijančič, Eugenio Laurenti, Drago Godina, Jože

Kosovel, Robert Hlavaty, Ivan Novak, Angel Turk, Peter Flander, družina Kolarič, Fran Venturini, Karlo Avguštinčič, Gojmir Demšar, Anton Kacin, and others.

8. The 1918-1941 collection: This archive includes various materials from the period of antifascism: photos, documents, articles, and memorabilia related to the fascist violence, confinement, imprisonment, arrests, and proceedings. The following collections are the most extensive: Trieste National Hall (Narodni dom), the First Trieste Proceeding and the Heroes of Basovizza (several archive files), and the Second Trieste Proceeding (several archive files).

9. The National Liberation Struggle 1941-45 Collection: Made up of 60 archive files. The materials consist of original documents and files relating to the aforementioned period. The whole archive is organised according to topics and places. The collection also includes materials about the Risiera di San Sabba concentration camp, photos of fallen partisans and activists, list and files of the National Liberation Struggle monuments, National Liberation Struggle phototheque, and various items.

10. The Allied Military Administration 1945-54 Collection: The materials cover the period between 1945 and 1954 in the Trieste region. The majority of the collection consists of partial archives of the following organisations: Red Cross, ZDTV-UCEF, SIAU-UAIS, trade unions, SPZŽ, Pioneer Organisation (Pionirska organizacija), and so on. For the same period the Department of History keeps the materials related to Gorizia: Slovenian Democratic Front (Demokratična fronta Slovencev), Gorizia Region Support Society (Podporno društvo za Goriški), and so on.

11. The Slovenians in Italy (after 1945) collection: Includes several types of materials. Let us mention a few complete units: NSZ-USI, Youth Initiative (Mladinska iniciativa), International Minority Conference (Mednarodna manjšinska konferenca) in Trieste (1974), KASTA, Peasant Society (Kmečka zveza), Patronage (Patronat).

12. The emigration collection: The materials are related to the issue of Slovenians emigrating from Trieste and other areas settled by Slovenians in Friuli – Venezia Giulia and include testimonies, memoirs, letters, photos, and other documents.

13. The economy collection: This collection includes partial or complete archives of the Jadranska banka bank in Trieste, Craft Association (Obrtnijsko društvo) in Barcola, Consumer and Economic Society (Konsumno in gospodarsko društvo) in Santa Croce, Undertaking Society in Vrdela, Undertaking Society in Rojan, Undertaking Society in Barcola, and Savings and Loan Bank (Hranilnica in posojilnica) in Bagnoli della Rosandra. The remaining materials consist of photocopied documents from the period between 1880 and 1940, related to around 40 economic societies, financial cooperatives, loan banks, savings banks, banks and joint stock companies in Trieste and the Trieste region.

14. The SPZ-SHPZ-ZSKD collection: This division keeps the archive of the central cultural organisation in Trieste and Friuli – Venezia Giulia, renamed several times after 1945. The archive consists of around fifty files.

15. The toponymy and microtoponymy collection: Card index, lists, censuses, notes, documents, maps and field maps, encompassing the materials collected in the context of three major fieldwork projects registering the local and microtoponymy names in the Trieste and Gorizia regions. Realisation of three maps (1952, 1978, 1999).

16. The ancient history and archaeology topography collection: The materials in this collection have been collected since the time of Zorko Jelinčič until the current group, which collects materials for archaeological topography and outlines of caves, building sites, the Roman period, and subsequent settlements.

17. Card index of Slovenian organisations, societies and institutions in Friuli – Venezia Giulia: The materials consist of articles referring to the activities of societies and institutions in three provinces (Trieste, Gorizia, Udine). The materials have been collected since 1970. The collected materials are divided according to individual societies and places.

18. Card index of Slovenian societies, institutions and organisations in Trieste for the period between 1848 and 1940.

19. The Trieste election (1949-2000) collection consists of 36 files.

20. The maps collection: A collection of a few dozen maps, showing the state and ethnic borders between Slovenians, Italians and Germans in the border territory of Friuli – Venezia Giulia.

21. The memorandum collection: A collection of memorandums adopted by various political, national, cultural and economic organisations of Slovenians in Italy since 1945.

22. The workers' movement collection: The materials, collected during various research projects and exhibitions, are kept in several files.

23. The youth research camps collection: Consists of the materials collected at youth research camps in the period between 1981 and 1998 among Friuli – Venezia Giulia Slovenians.

MUSEUM COLLECTION

Ever since its establishment in 1951 this division has collected and kept objects and other materials related to the past and present of Slovenians in Italy. The majority of the materials are related to Slovenians in the Trieste region, and not so much to Slovenians in the other provinces. The whole collection represents a good basis for the beginning of a Museum of Slovenians in Italy.

1. Ethnological objects:

1.1. Karst chests (3), between 150 and 180 years old.

1.2. Original national garbs, more than a hundred years old. Complete women's national garbs from Trieste and its surroundings. Parts of men's garbs. Individual original parts of garbs, neckerchiefs, stockings, bedding, tablecloths, etc. Women's national garb from Savogna D'Isonzo.

1.3. A collection of diatonic (folk) accordions (12) and other musical instruments.

1.4. Kitchenware, kitchen utensils.

1.5. Tools: stonemasonry (Aurisina), blacksmithing (Santa Croce), viticulture (Piščanci), farm work (San Giuseppe della Chiusa), breadmaking (Servola), etc.

1.6. An extensive collection of illuminants and lamps

1.7. Iron tools, irons, sticks, umbrellas, fireplace accessories, spinning wheel, whisk, etc.

1.8. Original paintings (6) with Istrian ethnological subjects.

2. School items:

2.1. Notebooks, textbooks, gradebooks, minutes from the St. Cyril and Methodius School near St. Jacob and Akvedot street in Trieste (1890-1930).

2.2. School benches (from the Bagnoli della Rosandra school), adding table (Trieste), etc.

2.3. Notebooks, textbooks, books, reports from partisan schools (1944-1945).

3. Banner of the worker's support society from Trieste (end of the 19th century).

4. Original items from the anti fascist period:

4.1. Fascist dagger, studded stick, state official uniform.

4.2. TIGR skull (made of plaster), used for oaths.

4.3. Illegal notes, leaflets, and newspapers.

5. Items from the National Liberation Struggle period:

5.1. Cyclostyle and typewriting machines from illegal partisan units and printing offices.

5.2. Slovenian tricolours from the spring of 1945 (Servola, Padriciano, Trebiciano).

5.3. Materials from illegal partisan units and printing offices: booklets, pamphlets, songbooks, newspapers, leaflets, posters, etc. (several archive files).

5.4. Personal items from concentration camps and illegal resistance.

6. Collection of old money (coins and banknotes).

7. Individual important items:

7.1. Wooden religious artefact from the 18th century (Santa Croce).

7.2. Pinko Tomažič's skis.

7.3. Statues of Pinko Tomažič and Josip Jurčič, paintings of Ivan Cankar and Frane Cegnar, paintings by watercolourist Dimitrij Kodrič (Australian immigrant).

7.4. Stone parts of the Basovizza monument (remains of fascist desecrations).

7.5. Broken plaque of Dorče Sardoč (from Trieste), broken plaque from Santa Croce.

RESEARCH UNIT

The researchers and associates of the Department are active and productive as a research unit in various areas. Permanent and external experts focus on the following fields of research:

1.1. Ancient history and archaeological topography. A special commission (group) of external experts, studying ancient history and archaeological topography in the Trieste region, has operated in the context of the Department since 1983. The group has released several publications and a range of scientific discussions, studies and articles.

1.2. Local names and microtoponymy. This field has been researched since the very beginning.

The associates of this group have made several maps: Trieste and its surroundings (1952), Trieste territory (1978), Gorizia territory (1999).

1.3. Ethnology. The ethnological science has been focused on since the very beginning. The ethnological group has proved itself through research work, exhibitions, writing catalogues and guides to the museum collections in Friuli – Venezia Giulia, as well as by introducing our rich ethnological heritage to the Italian space.

1.4. Emigration and social demography in Trieste and Friuli – Venezia Giulia.

1.5. Slovenian financial business, economy and cooperatives in Trieste and its surroundings.

1.6. Antifascism, National Liberation Struggle.

1.7. Post war period.

1.8. The issue of exiles, refugee settlements and denationalisation policy in the Trieste region.

1.9. Cooperation between Slovenians, Croats and other Slavs in Trieste since 1848.

1.10. The workers' movement.

1.11. The research efforts resulted in a large number of publications, scientific and expert articles, discussions, studies and papers.

EXHIBITION ACTIVITIES

Ever since its beginning the Department of History at the National and Study Library has been very active in the field of exhibitions. It would be hard to encompass the whole period of almost sixty years, so let us limit ourselves to the last three decades.

Historical exhibitions:

1. London-Osimo (1977), the Gregorčič Hall.

2. The 40th Anniversary of the Liberation Front (1981), Cultural Centre in Trieste.

3. The 100th Anniversary of the Sokoli Organisation in Trieste (1982), Cultural Centre in Trieste.

4. The 40th Anniversary of the Partizanski dnevnik Daily Newspaper (1983), Cultural Centre in Trieste.

5. Celtic Coins (1985), Exhibition Hall in the Economo Palace.

6. The 130th Anniversary of the Establishment of the First Slovenian Sports Society in Trieste, Cultural Centre in Trieste.

7. From the History of Slovenian Sport in Italy (1991), Ljubljana.

8. From the Partizanski dnevnik to the Primorski dnevnik Daily Newspaper (1993), Danica na Vrhu sv. Mihaela, Trieste, Gorizia.

9. Slovenian Primary School in Slovenia (2000), Cultural Centre in Trieste.

10. Photographic exhibition: From Timavo to Muggia (photo Maganja), (2001).

11. Photographic exhibition: Bishop Bellomi and Slovenians (photo Maganja), (2002).
12. The 100th anniversary of the France Prešeren Cultural Society in Bagnoli della Rosandra (2004), the Prešeren Theatre in Bagnoli della Rosandra.
13. Youth Societies in Venezia Giulia 1918-1927 (2004), Basovizza, Trieste, Kranj, Ljubljana, Maribor.
14. Zora Perello (2005), Basovizza, Trieste, Gorizia.
15. The 100th Anniversary of Ferdo Bidovec's Birth 1908-2008 (2008), Basovizza, Kranj, Maribor, Ljubljana.
16. Risiera in Trieste (2010), exhibition in the European Parliament in Brussels.

Ethnological exhibitions:

1. Domestic Treasures (1979), Cultural Home in Trieste.
2. Cottage Industry in Bagnoli della Rosandra (1980), the Prešeren Theatre in Bagnoli della Rosandra.
3. National Garb in Trieste (1982), the Karst Museum in Repen.
4. Old Bedding and Linen (1983), Bagnoli della Rosandra.
5. The Sound of Accordion (1984), Domio.
6. Beehive Box Endings in Carinthia (1985), Trieste, Gorizia.
7. Man and Vine (1987), the Karst Museum in Repen.
8. Man and Wood (1988), the Karst Museum in Repen.
9. Old Weddings (1989), the Karst House in Repen.
10. Eternal Charm of the Past (1990), Trieste.
11. These Plants are Precious (1991), the Karst Museum in Repen.

12. Exhibition at the 80th Anniversary of the Photographer M. Maganja (1996).
13. Watercolour Paintings by Saša Šantl (1998), Ljubljana, Gorizia.
14. Exhibition of Musical Instruments (2000), Cultural Centre in Trieste and Gorizia.
15. Faces of Life (2000), Ljubljana, Trieste.
16. Colours of Childhood (2003), Trieste, main post office.

YOUTH RESEARCH CAMPS IN ITALY

In cooperation with the Slovenian Research Institute and Association of Slovenian Natural Scientists and Techicians Tone Penko, the Department of History organised eighteen youth research camps for Slovenians in Italy:

- 1.) Barcola 1981,
- 2.) Doberdò 1982,
- 3.) Veneto 1983,
- 4.) Breg 1984,
- 5.) Savogna d'Isonzo 1985,
- 6.) Val Canale 1986,
- 7.) Duino 1987,
- 8.) Collio 1988,
- 9.) Resia 1989,
- 10.) Monrupino 1990,
- 11.) Laško 1991,
- 12.) Bardo 1992,

13.) Savogna d'Isonzo 1993,

14.) Resia 1994,

15.) Sgonico 1995,

16.) Veneto 1996,

17.) Val Canale 1997,

18.) Resia 1998.

The research findings have been published in eight publications: Doberdò 1982, Val Canale 1986, Duino 1987, Brda 1988, Resia 1989, Monrupino 1990, Laško 1991, Savogna d'Isonzo 1985 and 1993.

SYMPOSIUMS

At various anniversaries and other occasions the Department of History also organised a few symposiums, scientific meetings and gatherings, including the following in the last decade:

1. Symposium on Lavo Čermelj (1999), National Hall in Trieste.
2. The 100th Anniversary of Ivan Nabergoj's Death 1901-2001 (2001), National Hall in Trieste.
3. Scientific meeting on Josip and Jože Vilfan (2002), National Hall in Trieste.
4. Scientific meeting on the National Hall at the 100th anniversary of its completion (2004), National Hall in Trieste
5. Scientific consultation in cooperation with the Slovenian Mountaineering Society Trieste about Henrik Tuma, (2008), National Hall in Trieste.
6. Consultation about Ludvig Karl Moser (2008), Tessitori Hall in Trieste.

Milan Pahor