Chapter IV

**Documentation of the Objects in the Collection**

Documentation means effective and accumulated arrangement of information, documents and records relating to acquisition or collection management. Museums are knowledge organization which means that knowledge and information are their most important raw materials in delivering services to users. So, in its simplest version, Documentation is textual information that typifies exhibits or images, registering its physical traits, origins and class and then putting the exhibits in its display context. It is the essential on set or the primary duty of museum management to put in writing all the authentic information of the museum objects. To manage incoming and outgoing of objects on lending and gift in a systematic and scientific way, either in bound ledger or single cards or multiple cards or in computer – thus systematizing a museum collection and its documentation to a high standard. The entire process presents the basics of documentation which clearly and consciously assist these with no previous museum experience and those with little experience for an easy reference guide to take the essence of Museum Records at nail tip.

Keeping in view the modern academic approach, the new-age documentation of collections is intended to encompass the detailed description of both of individual items within collection as well as groups of items and collections as a whole. The goal of integrating and exchanging information between
heterogeneous sources determines the storehouse of concerned museum. It also
determines its perspective which is necessarily super-institutional and by nature
abstract from any specific local context.

The present-day museum is conversant with a dictum – 'Museum, is of the
people, for the people and by the people.' But this social accountability was not a
declared objective of a museum at its conceptual stage. Museums were then mere
repositories of antiques, acting as custodians of treasures and beneficial only to the
learned persons and researchers. Gradually, it grew as an institution to impart
knowledge open to all. A conscious society feels that men within it should know
about their history, geography and also their own behavioural patterns and
diversities. Thus, in the present age, Museum, as an academic institution covers a
far-reaching area and taken for many usage. Hence, society as an entity would
notice in it an invaluable device that would meet their all-academic requirements.

Thus, the term 'Scientific Documentation' is to fulfil the requirement that the
depth and quality of descriptive information can be handled by the concerned
Museum authorities who should be sufficient for serious academic research into a
given field and also for other non-academic casual requirement. Hence, the next
generation of documentation specialists will be able to focus on issues such as
organization-wise knowledge management and also relate between Museum and
other ancillary organizations.

So, Documentation is not a mere compilation and maintenance of a
cumulative inventory of objects in the museum’s custody. It is more than a written
portrayal. The process of gathering and recording information is thus a not-too-easy
task. During the time of entry, exit and safekeeping of exhibits, the documentation
specialists must be aware of the following parameters — temperature and relative
humidity of the particular area; microbial infestation on record book, book binding
and cabinet; regular checking of the safety vault for keeping of master record;
scrutiny at the time of unpacking, packing, transportation and insurance; quality
control of the ink and paper etc., used for marking on objects and for documentation register and virus-free software for on-line and off-line documentation etc.

**Objective of Museum Documentation**

Throughout the world, modern museums perform with three major activities, i.e., collection, care and communication. The Collection management arena involves the accurate management of different types of information. Managing this information helps the organization to –

- Provide access to their collection (both physically and online) and improve collection management procedures.
- Provide other museums and users with the data from the documentation unit enabling searching to be undertaken.
- Provide educational establishments with resource materials, learning materials for both formal and informal necessity and also encourage for research.
- Providing facilities for conservation and care.
- Meet statutory and civil duty to be accountable.
- Interpret for local residents and visitors the history and culture of the area.
- Deliver services more cost-effectively and with greater impact.

So, Museum Documentation is a vital aspect of effective and accountable collection management. The following are the key objective of Museum Documentation:

**Ensure Accountability for Objects:**

For ready reference to the exhibits and for smooth and efficient functioning, they can be employed to ascertain the individual and total number of exhibits and to classify the objects and register their exact location. Furthermore, by this, a referential link between the objects and their records is maintained with
the help of accession number put on the exhibits. The whole process will provide adequate information to the researchers and scholars.

**Ensure the Safety and Security of Objects:**

The process includes physical verification of exhibits which can be used to save information regarding the status of objects and provide description and evidence of ownership in case of theft.

**Arrange a Historic Archive of Subjects:**

For qualitative and quantitative assessment, they can be used to maintain information about the production, collection, ownership and to maintain the long term value of data.

**Provide for Tangible and Intellectual Access to Objects:**

They can be used to aid approach to objects themselves and information about the objects.

Thus, to save the natural, cultural and historical property against damage, loss, vandalism, theft and various other offences, systematic documentation is essentially needed. The UNESCO Convention of 1970 had provided with some safeguards on the support of banning and stopping of the illegal import, export of the objects and an up-to-date documentation system was processed. So, with the fulfillment of the aforesaid objective on one hand can avert loss and help to aid the restoration of decaying exhibits and on the other, ensure communication process.
Information and Knowledge – The Super Pillars of Museum Documentation

The general definition of information is the ‘essential food of knowledge’. It is that kind of vital resource, which is the basic of all the activities of an organization and forms a component of all products and services. The noted authority in the field Mr. McPherson said, “Information permeates all organizations; it is the raw material of cognitive activity ... and ... the means whereby the organization obtains its windows on the world.”1 Any museum of worth is serious about using its exhibits’ information for the benefit of the society, in the light of its own mission statement. Objects without information have little historical, aesthetic or curio value. This information, when transformed into knowledge and consciously applied to purposes conducted by the museum management, achieved the desired result. For example, to form a gallery, single object or group of objects is needed, where intervention of a curator is essential to generate and record knowledge of the objects. This system maintains necessary knowledge and transfers it to the future providing the museums and galleries with their ultimate value. In Museum organization, individuals and different groups apply different kinds of knowledge to perform their work, and so they have particular ‘stakes’ in different kinds of information. If a museum is to make productive and profitable use of information, it need not only to define what information means for it, but also to understand itself as a community of users of information, to recognize the ‘stakeholders’ in information, and to provide them with the means of negotiating over the use of information. The 21st century museums and galleries are concerned not only with the traditional object, but also with things that exist only in electronic form as sound, images or raw material data. The task of handling information about both object and electronic collections has to take place in the context of new approaches to the management of public museums and to disseminate information to all and sundries. Information is a tradable commodity, placing museums and galleries in a world market-place in which investment can offer financial returns.
Thus, knowledge-enriched information which museums can communicate to other people is immensely required for modern museums. And, knowledge is what, it acquired from the interaction with the world; it is the results of experience organized and stored inside each individual's own mind. It comes in two main kinds - knowledge about things, and using know-how, which is indeed the most precious and essential. In other word, information is itself a knowledge that is visible or audible, in written or printed words, or in speech, and put into external 'containers' like books, articles, diaries, secret papers or databases. So, information is nourishing food of knowledge maintained for the good health and knowledge of mankind.

Museum – Custodian of the anecdotes of Indian Freedom Movement – Its Various Types

The present undertaking deals with the freedom struggle exhibits collected and displayed in the museums and the chapter based on documentation of the exhibits' information. The museums, under study, are the safe keepers and interpreters of history of Indian nation, where one can explore how the liberation movement served as a major catalyst for similar movements in other parts of the world. As India's struggle for freedom is characterized by many unique and historic efforts, including the world's first and largest non-violent, civil resistance mass movement, this thesis will focus on the point, with special emphasis on the role of Bengal.

Without Museological studies, proper evaluation of concerned exhibits in museum is not possible. So, the chapter ‘Documentation of Objects in the Collection’ acts as a key role. Actually, document, information and date, in proper sense cannot be documented, but can be registered. But Registration is a conventional method and before the invention of new-age automation, this was the only system through which information is kept in a bound register. And in later times, like in other sectors, world-wide museum administrations have
entered also the domain of technology and register its exhibits in the name of the process ‘Documentation’.

Now, the question is – what type of museums possesses freedom struggle exhibits? When the exhibits of the museum is limited only to the collection of freedom struggle activities, it/they is/are named History Museum, Specialised History Museum, Historic House Museum, Biographical/Personalia Museum, Memorial Museum, Period House Museum and a section of General Museum. In this project, enlisted museums are generally termed as History Museum, and then are classified according to their types, keeping in mind their institutional philosophy, scope and responsibility, which is usually called museum’s own mission statement.

In true sense, History Museum is likely to possess many acquisitions having intrinsic value. Unlike Science Museum, the history field has no universally accepted nomenclature for exhibits that would facilitate identification and description. For History Museums, the context or associations of an artifact with people, places or events may be as important to record as the object itself. Moreover, they deserve special attention, because the exhibits had relevance as part of local or community history.

Historic House or Heritage Centre is recognized as phenomena of 1980s. During European Architectural Heritage Year, 1975, the United Kingdom sponsored the idea of ‘Architectural Interpretation Centre’, which later renamed as Heritage Centre, with objective of conservation and protection of buildings and environment. Heritage Centres are not always collection-based, as in the case of other museums, but they are theme-based. Objects are used here to authenticate the theme. So, the atmosphere at the Heritage Centre is somewhat different from that of the other museum. Here, the presented theme is not so pinpointed, but more broad-based as it belongs to age-old past, but sometimes events of near-past are also highlighted with which mental communication of the next generation can easily be made. Here, Mahajati Sadan and Indian Association are
necessarily Historic House Museums concerning the history of Indian freedom struggle.

The philosophy of history has unfolded itself through various ways, but mainly through the activities of the relationship between the individual and the society. Though the civilization is developing day by day and new values are imported there, but at the same time old values are reoriented. And in this regard, society is realising the benefit of respecting a great thinkers and leader's works and deeds. Thus, comes the necessity of setting up museum on lives and works of the masterminds. These museums depicting the master mind’s thought process will be lighthouse in the vast sea of unending human problems and mental agonies, setting forth before them the right way to follow and the right act to practice. Accordingly, the Biographical/Personalia Museums have been set up all over the world and also in India. In memory of important personalities, Biographical Museums are founded with the object of understanding his meaningful life, who has contributed to the progress of his country or the world at large. These museums are generally established within the building, where a great person had spent his life in full or in part. In some other cases, after collecting exhibits related to the person, it is established in a new building, but mostly at the site, where he had been born or had died or worked for sometime. Here, 'Ancestral House' of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Rabindra nath Tagore is the important examples of Biographical/Personalia Museum.

Also, for commemorating a great historic personality, along with events of his time, Memorial Museums are established. But the said museum is situated not necessarily in a building in which the person concerned had lived. Here are collected and preserved materials connected with him with the object of attracting people to the great personality’s life and activities. Thus, Victoria Memorial Hall and Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalya though not a habitat of these two stalwarts, these contain objects used by or associated with them. Here, a pertinent question may be asked why a particular Gallery naming 'Calcutta Gallery' of the Victoria
Memorial Hall is selected for the project. The Calcutta Gallery provides materials to the beginning and development of British Calcutta, the city being the citadel of British power. This is also the place from where great movement of resistance grew up against the then ruling power. It has also included the life of the great personalities who ushered in Indian regeneration that spurt in the fields of education, literature, art and the science.

Calcutta Police Museum is a specialized History Museum. It is ‘specialized’ in the sense that it contains historical objects mainly concerned with the revolutionary movement. The city police force of the British period had to deal with the armed revolutionaries, and in the process searched the hideouts of the revolutionaries or caught them red handed, when they were in action. At the time of court cases, the seized articles were produced as evidence. Those are preserved by the Lalbazar Police Archives and later displayed in the Calcutta Police Museum providing invaluable first-hand records of the revolutionary movement.

To display historical objects of certain periods, Period House Museums or Period Rooms are organized. This category of museums connected with important personalities or events of historic importance. To make the period alive to the visitors, some museum use music, film, son et lumiere, theatrical performance or state-of-the-art communication technology. Kolkata Museum of the Town Hall is one such important museum of the said category.

_Necessity of Collection and Documentation in view of its Classification_

The aforesaid museums under study are based on their own mission statement, as is said earlier, have been set up keeping in view of its declared objective of social accountability to the society at large.
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

The history of freedom movement starts with the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857 against the expanding British domination and ends in 1947 with the political independence of the truncated India. In the intervening period, various types of big and small upsurges took place. These had many facets – constitutional agitation, passive resistance, boycott, non-cooperation, civil disobedience and armed struggle – secret and open. Cultural Revolution was also there. Moderates, Extremists, non-revolutionaries revolutionaries and great thinkers, all joined together and contributed in their own ways to the desired end. So, on one side was the mighty British imperialism, having tremendous power accumulated through exploitation of its colonies, spread the world over, and on the other side, hungry unarmed millions, trodden under the feet of the powerful for hundreds of years remained thus far as mute-multitudes.

So, the conflicts between rulers and the ruled are the prime concern. The history of liberation movement can not be thought of without individuals and individuals cannot be visualized without the historical panorama. In this way, a personality influences the society by opening up new vistas for its development and further evolution.

It is an undeniable fact that till today the so-called civilized persons are still considered themselves as members of the Guild, community or race and cannot think in any higher term. But if the present generations of the Indian Republic analyze the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as the pathfinder of the present independent India from colonial oppression and social backwardness through museums, it will create a tremendous love for the country. Thus, by analyzing their thought-process, new vistas in the horizon of learning and culture will appear.

The under-sketched tables show different types of exhibits, documents, information and also process for documentation.
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

Table 1.

Documentation process

| Manual | Automated |

Table 2.

Documents of Freedom Struggle Exhibits

Information

1. Voice records (intangible)
2. Photographs (two dimensional)
3. Literary works (two dimensional)
4. Personal belongings
   - Used articles
     - Dress (three dimensional)
     - Furniture (three dimensional)
     - Pen, inkpot, utensils, walking stick, shoe, etc. (three dimensional)
     - Correspondence (two dimensional)

5. Location map of important places
6. Arms and armours
7. Works of art on struggle
   - Paintings on great men (two dimensional)
   - Paintings on events (two dimensional)
   - Sculptures of great men (three dimensional)
   - Sculptures on events (three dimensional)

8. Physical remains
   - Bodily remains (three dimensional)
   - Ash (three dimensional)
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Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

Collection Information: Owner and User

Museum as an institution is the owner of its collection’s information. For museum’s requirements of information and knowledge, collection plays the pivotal role. If that core area is not properly maintained, none of the aims can be achieved. But, if there be a rich store which performs all the promotional, interpretive, commercial, financial and administrative use, there will be a black hole if information and knowledge are not properly assessed.

From administrative and functional point of view, museum can be identified as ‘Stakeholder’ and ‘Guardian.’ Individual knowledge is the property of an individual who holds it in his/her mind. But museum as an institution holds responsibility for individuals as well as for the mass. They are, practically, the guardian of this information. A Documentation Department for example, may be the Guardian of the master records of the objects in the collection. The Stakeholders include Curator, who manages to use information in all respect; the Registrar’s Department which is responsible for the acquisition and accessioning of the database and for keeping movement and location information up to date; Conservator, who provides conservation details; and the Fund-raising department which needs information from database for developing its strategy sustenance policy and products.

In consequence with the above it can be said that a museum runs efficiently, based on its collections information. But when the question comes in regards to its usage, the collection-information forms the bulk of transaction with an integrated information system.

Collection Manager as User:

At the centre of the museum’s requirements for information and knowledge, collection stands as base. Collection Managers are such museum professionals who are responsible for overseeing the mattes relating with
collection, there location and possible necessary movement and thus coordinating with other users within and outside the museum to supply the collection to themselves for various uses. While doing so, they need easy access to the refined information of the collection and in the case of moving of the exhibits, they should have to be more acquainted with the latest. For the case, they require an additional specialist on handling or packing.

**Curator as User:**

Curator is one, who has responsibility for the care, research, exhibition and increase or improvement of the museum collection. So, they themselves require access to the refined information about the collection and to explore and enhance further information.

**Documentation Specialist as User:**

In a museum, Documentation Specialist and Database Manager usually incorporate the refined information into the integrated information management package. They must have sufficient general background on the subject and maintain familiarity with the related vocabulary, literature, documentary sources, record management, business procedure and data processing. For this, they need access to the information, either supplied by the Curator or data-input staff. Documentation Specialist will also need to make and check the necessary interlinking of the data in the system, making sure that entry receipts be safely filed. So, Documentation Specialist is an individual with broad responsibilities in the development and enforcement of policies and procedures pertaining to the acquisition, management, and disposition of collection information. An efficient Documentation Unit might consist of Registrar as supervisor, the Documentation specialist, Assistant for record keeping, cataloguers and person trained to handle, pack and unpack storage, shipping, customs and insurance duties.
**Conservation Specialist as User:**

Conservation Specialist enters into the integrated museum information management at the time of restoring the exhibits. Usually Conservator applies science to the technical study, preservation, and treatment of museum objects. They are responsible for condition report on items entering or leaving the museum, and therefore the information system will need to accommodate these changes linked to the items concerned. After treatment, the Conservation Specialist may change some parts of the existing information to the record, noting the treatment the items have received and the apparent results of these treatments. Such records in future will become important for long-term preservation.

**Display Specialist as User:**

Display Specialist or Exhibition Designer depends upon the refined information supplied by the Curator. To these visual people, image is much more desirable than text at the time of arranging of exhibition or graphic designing of catalogue, guide book and poster.

**Researcher as User:**

Researcher uses the database of the interested items of the collection. While doing so, researcher is likely to spot errors or omission and to wish to offer necessary corrections. Now-a-days research loans are a common feature in the case of interchange of information between museums and other allied organizations. And, in the case of research loan, it is the responsibility of the museum administration to ensure that all the explored information is well in custody with the item when the research loan is terminated.

**Educational Institution as User:**

School, college, university and other academic institution use the mediated or interpreted information in various ways. Mediated information is scholarly and popular, which can be supplied in the form of gallery label, worksheet, guide book, published article’s book and in other ways. Mediated
information can also be oral, when Curator answers queries or give interviews. In this way, museum information is useful to students which they can see, touch and feel.

Business Organization as User:

Museum publication, viz, colour-plate books contain a large number of illustration prepared from museum objects and specimens. The business houses are looking for interesting illustrations for their annual reports, advertising agencies wanting an unusual object for their campaign, and television companies select some objects for their show which serve easy-to-read information.

Visitor as User:

To huge extent the image of a museum is reflected by visitors. Visitors consist of a variable and heterogeneous group being based on age, profession, abode, education, socio-economic background, motivation etc, with a qualitative as well as quantitative range. Visitors are free to see exhibits at their will. Thus, the best use of museum information is acquainting the general visitors with basic data and supply data to the target visitors so as to encourage them to visit the museum again and again.

Process of Documentation Systems relating to Freedom Struggle Exhibits

Whenever any object enters a museum or taken as a collection of a museum, it is obvious that it must be identified immediately by some clear and ready means and its entry and subsequent disposition must be accurately and permanently documented. ICCM Code of Professional Ethics states,

"It is an important professional responsibility to ensure that all items accepted temporarily or permanently by the museum are
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Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

properly and fully documented to facilitate provinces, identification, condition and treatment.\(^2\)

The documentation procedure of the freedom struggle exhibits must take into account several distinctions from General to Art, Archaeological and Scientific exhibits. For example, Science Museum has the advantage of a defined terminology, Art Museum whose objects are usually identified with titles; and Archaeology Museum maintains automation to facilitate management of information about large number of objects and sites. Here, this specialized collection-field achieves its relevance as part of the liberation movement of India. The acquisitions of an art museum may be relatively few during a given year, having high monetary and aesthetic value, whereas a freedom struggle museum is likely to process many acquisitions, though perhaps of small intrinsic value individually. In a freedom struggle-based collection, an itemized procedure is befitting, depending upon both manual and computerized recording policy. This simple, at the same time minimal registration procedure gives much emphasis on relatively more information in regards to the basic and detail data of the struggle, according to its own criterion.

In view of the above, the procedure of documentation differs from country to country, from one museum to other, according to their kind and scope of collection. This documentation system, in other word, a Registration System has the primary purpose of providing an immediate, brief, and permanent means of identifying each object in the collection, a record of the size or amount of the collection for which a Number for each object is provided. Hence, written records of what the object is, how it is acquired, its description for easy identification and a number for quick identification and record and the nature of the material for proper upkeepment and its association with the event or person concerned is needed. This process of documentation or recording of information is not an easy task, but it is one of the most important and interesting tasks which fell on museum administration. Also, for handling the freedom struggle exhibits, concerned staff must have specialized knowledge and regard for the objects.

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The under mentioned procedure may be ideal for documenting the freedom struggle exhibits.

Step 1

**Records of Temporary Object Entry, its Selection and Final Decision**

It is the management and documentation in regards to the initial records created on an object upon its arrival at Museum. Entry records should identify the object and serve as a basis for later and final documentation. This pre-accessioning study is done about physical characteristics of objects which have come for inspection before entry. Sometimes, not necessarily museum objects may be deposited for mere identification, conservation treatment and valuation.

The objects which are brought into the museum for entry are recorded on a numbered ‘Entry Form.’ The person bringing it is given a receipt, which includes the following documents —

- **Brief object description**
- **Data of Entry**
- **Number of objects**
- **Name of owner**
- **Unique identifier**
- **Name and signature of the museum employee receiving the object (Receiver)**
- **Name, address and signature of the person bringing the object (Depositor)**

The Form is filled up in presence of the donor or vendor and he signs to validate it. Three true copies are made from it. The first one is for the owner, the second one for the Temporary Entry File and third one remains with the object.
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Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

This process requires proper presentation of information before Accessioning. A temporary label is attached to the object with the number of its Entry Form.

Three more sub-steps are there to complete the procedure.

In the first sub-step, the object is entered in a Register with numbered pages and columns for the following data –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brief description of the object/objects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A unique local number which is different from Accession Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of arrival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose for entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique identifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and address of the owner or person bringing the object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary storage location.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the second sub-steps, the group of experts selecting the exhibits, keeping in minds the following three options –

- The exhibit/exhibits won’t be acquired for the collection
- It will only be accepted as loan
- It will become the museum’s property.

In the third sub-step, inclusion or rejection of artifacts is done –

1. Inclusion
   - Registration is completed as the object becomes the museum’s property.
   - Sometimes, object/ specimen lots are temporarily deposited to the museum.

In that case, recording of data in register is completed in the case of short-term and long-term loan. The process is different. Short-term loans are temporarily recorded and finally de-accessioned at the time of expiration of the terms of loan. Long-term loans are recorded in registered with a loan number.
2. Rejection
   • Name of the object/objects
   • Date of return
   • Reason for return (Rejection particulars)
   • Name and address of the owner to whom the object is sent back.

Step 2

Accessioning

Accessioning is a methodical process or recording or documenting information of tangible objects/specimens or fabricated exhibits and managing the addition of objects/specimen lots to the permanent collection relating to human culture, which is artistic in nature, or valuable to history, culture, science and technology. This documentation process is done on first come first serve basis, provides an abstract as well as permanent means of identification of each object in the collection and its data recording is kept in the Accession Register, after assigning a permanent number. Hence, Accessioning, an elementary function of a museum, serves public duty, since it is a means of saving objects/specimens against deterioration, destruction and disappearance. Accessioning makes easy identification of a museum piece by scholars and documentation specialists and also stands for easy locating of the relative records in file.

The process of accessioning is done with the help of General Accession Register, Accession Card, Accession File and Accession Number.

**General Accession Register:** It is a multi-page bound register which is treated as a master copy and kept under lock and key for safety. The Curator or Register or Documentation Specialist is expected to prepare classified Accession Register, i.e., Cataloguing for each category of objects for study, quick reference and retrieval of the objects when necessary.
Accession Card: Accession Card contains primary information about an object in the permanent collection. These are filed in numerical order by Accession Number, constitute the Accession File.

Accession File: Accession File is comprised of Accession Cards, one card for each object in the permanent collection.

Accession Number: Accession Number is a control number, unique to an object, whose purpose is identification, not description. At the time of accessioning, each object is given a number, called Accession Number. It is part of the numbering system encompassing the permanent collection of an institution or museum and records the transaction whereby an object enters the collection. Accession Number is mentioned both in the Register and on the surface of object. Permanent Accession Numbers or extended Loan Numbers are to be fixed on the objects, and any preliminary tags or stickers attached at the time of entry should be removed. In case of temporary or special exhibitions numbers are never painted on objects. In these cases, typed numbers, stickers, tape of tags re used which can be easily removed before the objects are returned to lenders.

The most satisfying numbering is the ‘Tripartite’ method which contains three units of numbers. The first unit indicates last two or three digits of the year of accessioning; the second unit is the number of chronological sequence of acquisition lot of the year; the third unit is the serial number of the object in that lot.

The Accession Number will remain with the object as long as it will remain in the museum.

The Accession Form should contain at least the following section –
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Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession Number</th>
<th>Object Name</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Number of Objects</th>
<th>Acquisition Data</th>
<th>Acquisition Method</th>
<th>Acquisition Source</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Exact Measurement</th>
<th>Negative No.</th>
<th>Transfer of Title</th>
<th>Current Location</th>
<th>Location Data</th>
<th>Insurance Value</th>
<th>Permanent Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Accession by lot:

(Assigning a unique local number to a group of objects that are being accessioned together. The separate objects in the lot may eventually be numbered separately).

Previous number:

Source:

- Acquisition source
- Title
- Surname
- Address

Justification of Acquisition:

- Reason for acquisition
- Supporting documentation

Title transfer:

- Method of acquisition
- Evidence of original title
- Signature confirming transfer of title
- Brief description of object

Previous owner Information ________
Step 3

Inventory Control

It means the maintenance of up-to-date information identifying all objects/specimen lots for which the institution or museum has a legal responsibility, including objects/specimen lots on loan, unaccessioned or previously undocumented items and enquiry. When not accounting all objects Spot Inventory Control is used by which an itemized listing of objects is done for which the Museum has assumed responsibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object/Specimen current location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Object/specimen lot status :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unaccessioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Loaned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exhibited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deaccessioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic physical inventory :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Record location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Date inventoried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staff name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spot-checking :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Date of checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checker's name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 4

Location and Movement Control

This is the documentation and management of information keeping in a file concerning the current and past locations of all objects/specimen lots in the collection's care, for which the Museum had assumed responsibility and also to ensure that the museum does locate any object at any time.
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**Permanent location**

Current Location of displaced objects / specimen lots:

History of movement:

Accession number:

Location Search:

Person responsible:

Members of staff responsible for authorizing objects/specimen lot movements:

History of authorization for object movement:

Date moved

Location of parts:

Group relocation:

Transfer from one section to other:

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**Step 5**

**Marking of objects**

Every object in a museum – whether it is part of the permanent collection or on loan for a special exhibition or on temporary deposit - must be identified by a number, tag or copy of its receipt. Its aim is to immediately identify the object and create a link to its documentation.

In a freedom-struggle-based museum specific kinds of objects are marked with different kinds of processes as follows:

**Arms and Armors:** Metal tags stamped or engraved with the number are attached with loops of wire.

**Firearms:** The number is applied in paint or ink on the handle or near the trigger on the floor plate. For long arm, the number is placed on the left side of the barrel at the breach end and for revolving firearms, numbers are placed on cylinders.
Weapons (Knives, armors etc.): The number is applied in ink, generally with a primer and a protective overcoat and placed near the butt end.

Books (including Album, Portfolios, Scrapbook and Sketchbook): For Books, a bookplate bearing the number is attached inside the front cover. All loose pages are numbered in pencil. For Rare Books or Books that are works of art in which every page is precious, an acid-free paper bearing the number in pencil is inserted. Scrapbooks and Sketchbooks are numbered in several places as they are often cheaply bound or in weakened condition for being overused and the pages are liable to be separated from the binding.

Manuscripts and Documents: The number and an ink-stamped identifying symbol are generally placed on the written or black side of the document.

Paper and Cardboard Objects: The number is marked in pencil.

Photographs: The number is marked in pencil, lightly, on the reverse, preferably in a corner of the lower margin. If the photograph is hinged in a mount, the number is placed on the unhinged end. The mount is also numbered, and, if framed, the frame is also marked.

Prints: The number is marked in pencil, lightly, on the reverse, preferably on a lower corner in the margin. Then is followed the same procedure applied in photograph, if the prints are in mount or in frame.

Costumes: A cloth label with the number applied in ink is sewn to the fabric. For dresses-coats, shirts and blouse – the label is sewn on the back neckband; for skirts and trousers, on the back waistband; for hats, inside the band; for gloves, inside; for shoes with heels, the number is written in ink on the heel; for belts, the number is written in ink inside near the buckle.
Jewellery: If possible, the number is applied in paint or ink in an inconspicuous place not likely to be worn. If the piece is very small, a jeweler's tag or cloth tag bearing the number is attached.

Leather User: The number is applied in paint or ink on a smooth, inconspicuous surface on the back side. Cloth labels can also be attached to linings or to the underside of maker's labels.

Rugs: A cloth label with the number applied in ink is sewn to reverse diagonal corners, so that the number is easily found when the rug is rolled.

Furniture: The number is applied in paint or ink, with a primer and an overcoat, especially if the wooden furniture is porous or dark. Chairs are marked at the back of the back left leg; tables at the base or a leg or underside of the top; lamps at the lower right-hand side near the back or on the base; mirrors at the reverse of the lower right and upper left corners of the frame. In the case of extremely heavy cot the number is placed on the inner side of the leg.

Drawings: The number is marked in pencil on the reverse of the work. If framed, the frame is marked as for prints.

Paintings: The number is applied in paint or ink on reverse diagonal corners of the frame. For Loan items a gunned sticker is pasted on the back portion.

Sculpture: The number is applied in paint or ink, with a protective overcoat, at the lower near base, where it can be seen without having to lift or move the sculpture, or if there is no bags, in an inconspicuous place not likely to be worn by handling.
Metal Objects: The number is applied in paint or ink in an inconspicuous place and protected with an overcoat. If the piece is too small for numbering, a cotton tag bearing the number is attached or hanged.

Wooden Objects: The number is applied in paint or ink, with a primer and a protective overcoat, in an inconspicuous place not likely to be worn by handling.

Step 6

Cataloguing

The compilation and maintenance of all relevant information in a published form relating to objects/specimen lots in the collection is called Cataloguing. This is an act of classifying objects methodically, aiming to supply authentic information about the accessioned objects.

The process of cataloguing is done with the help of Catalogue Card, Catalogue Number and Catalogue Photograph.

Catalogue Card: A card containing detailed information about an object in the permanent collection. These cards are handy and can be kept for quick consultation and may be arranged alphabetically.

Catalogue Number: It is used in variety of cases. In some museum, Catalogue Number is assigned to an object or specimen based on its class. In some museum, Catalogue Number (sometimes Accession Number) is used for identification. In some museum Catalogue Number with description of objects is published.

Catalogue Photograph: It is a descriptive type of photograph used for object identification purposes, usually attached directly to the Catalogue Card.
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

Sometimes, this high-quality purpose, usually attached directly to the Catalogue Card. Sometimes, this high-quality photograph is taken for publication or publicity purposes.

Reference to ownership:
Object/specimen historical data:
Ownership history:
Reference to research files/actual research data:
Description:
- Use
- Measurement
- Material composition
- Find spot
- Language used (in case of coin, inscription, manuscripts, books, etc.)
- Audio/video
- Voice description
- Movie description
- Furniture
Publication history:
Reference to archival material and paper files
Whole or parts relationship

Step 7

Conservation Management (Storage and Care of Objects)

It is the documentation and management of information about the application of science to the examination and treatment of museum objects, i.e., Conservation, and to the study of the environment in which they are placed from a curatorial and collection management perspective.

Request for conservation:
Technical examinations including reference to archival material and paper files:
Preventative measures taken:
Remedial treatment:
Conservation history:
Notification of treatment callbacks:
Access to information by unique local number:
Step - 8

Rights and Reproductions

It is the process of documenting and managing information about the reproduction of objects, including the preparation of images, casts and models.

Ownership of copyright of the object/specimen:
Ownership of copyright of reproductions:
Information about reproductions of object/specimen, including images, casts and models:
Access to reproductions by unique local number:

Step 9

Risk Management

It is the management and documentation of information relating to potential threats to an institution’s collection and the objects for which it is responsible. It includes the provision of information enabling preventive measures to be taken as well as documentation supporting disaster planning.

Information of potential threats:
Preventative measure:
Contacts in case of a disaster:
Accountability during and after a disaster:
  * A list of objects by location
  * Conditions of objects
  * Museum’s liability
Step -10

Insurance Management & Valuation Control

It means documenting and managing the insurance needs of objects both in museum’s permanent collection, and those for which it is temporarily responsible (such as loans or deposits) and valuation control (the management of information relating to the valuations placed on individual objects, or groups of objects, normally for insurance/indemnity purposes). The Registrar or Documentation Specialist, on behalf of the museum read and understand the information of the insurance policies covering the museum’s collections, including all endorsements and policy modifications, discuss with the insurance representative anything that is not clear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appraisal:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appraiser:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of History:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Valuation information confidentiality:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Objects appropriately insured:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Report or Insurance values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Policy numbers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Policy expiry date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance claim:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification or renewal:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 11

Exhibition Management

"An exhibition is a means of communication aiming at large groups of the public with the purpose of conveying information, ideas and emotions relating to the material evidence of man and his surrounding, with the aid of chiefly visual and dimensional methods." Thus Exhibition management means the management and documentation of temporary exhibition and permanent displays,
including the process of developing, co-ordinating, and implementing an exhibition and display programme.

Object/specimen lot reservation:
Document research for exhibition:
Exhibition itinerary:
Object/specimen lot exhibition history:
Exhibition history of object:

Step 12

Dispatch

It is the management and documentation of object/specimen lots leaving the museum's premises. Every country has a series of customs laws and regulations designed to protect its cultural property. The safety of museum collections must be the first consideration in preparing them to safe despatch which includes its fragility, size, weight, and value, the date it is needed at its destination, the climate or climates through which it is to travel and the cost of despatching involved.

Location information of accessioned object/specimen:
Location information of unaccessioned object/specimen:
Responsibility:

- Person responsible for authorization of the dispatch of an object/specimen
Transportation:
(Details about transportation of object/specimen)
Step 13

**Loans**

Museums go for borrowing and lending objects, following specific procedures, and it is called Loan. It is a transient reassignment of objects from one museum (outgoing process) to another museum or institution and vice versa (incoming process). Loans may be of short-term or long-term, allowed for exhibition, research and educational purposes.

**Incoming Loans**

It is the managing and documenting the borrowing of objects for which the institution or museum is responsible for a specific period of time and for a specified purpose, such as display, research, education or photography.

- **Automatic loan number**: 
- **Designing of fixed periods**: 
- **Specimen considerations**: 
  - *Information about the security of borrowed objects/specimen lots.
- **History of incoming loans**: 
- **Loaned objects/specimen**: 
  - *Whether one object from group of loaned objects to be returned sooner than the rest.
- **Incoming loan agreements**

**Outgoing Loans**

It is the process of managing and documenting the loan of objects to other institutions for a specific period of time and for a specific purpose, such as display, research, education, or photography.
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

Automatic loan number:
Designing of fixed periods:

Specimen considerations:
* Information about the security of loaned object/specimen

History of outgoing loans:

Loaned objects/specimen lots:
* Whether one object from group of loaned objects to be returned sooner than the rest.

Records of loans:
* Details of the borrower
* Venues
* Loan period
* Purpose of the loan

Payment by the borrowers:

Overdue loans:

Incoming and Outgoing Loans

Insurance activities:
* Requirements
* Insurer
* Appraisers
* Valuation

Shipping activities:
* Schedules
* Reference to files

Packing cases and object/specimen link:

Location tracking:

Tracking of packing cases:

Packing list:

Associated costs:
Existing Documentation Procedures of the Museums under study

The Museum under study are possessing periods of the Indian liberation movement and the biographical and personalia items of the stalwarts concerned in the form of photographs, books, letters, telegraphs, newspaper clippings, manuscripts, voice-records, period furniture, costumes, arms and armours, paintings, sculptures and personal belongings. There are recorded and documented information about the above mentioned items according to the primary Museological method of documentation. But these museums usually suffer from staff shortage. So, they failed to follow an elaborate update scientific documentation system. Only a bound Accession is maintained. Of course in some museums computerization documentation microfilming and of various documents are now on progress. In the Accession Register, objects are given with a bipartite accession number, the first part of which is the chronological number of acquisition; the second part is the serial number of the category of the object. Sometimes, Card Indexing facility is supplemented to the system.

The documentation system of these museums aims to achieves –

1. A central data bank of objects.
2. A resource-repository of paper documents and photographs for the scholars along with global transmission and intra-museum information facilities.
3. Extending all assistance to co-operating related museums in developing collection documentation and also presentation and conservation of the objects.
4. Building up a two-way link between the participating museum and the mother documentation organization (nation and world-wide) for continuous reciprocal enrichment of knowledge and professional resources.
Documentation of Photographs

Here, photographs of the great events of the Indian freedom struggle and its great sons draw a vivid story and also make a long-standing impact on visitor’s mind.

Form for Retrospective Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Inventory Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronological Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet/Album/File Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Acquisition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Acquisition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title/Subject of the photograph</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black &amp; White/Colour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showcase/Almirah/Panel Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph taken by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date and Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Copies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price and Costs, if any</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Documentation of Books

Here, Books written by great liberation movement leaders, particularly their first editions have immense historical, archival and emotional value. Along with this, books written on the movement and masters are also having historical significance.

Form for Retrospective Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Inventory Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronological Number</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Serial Number</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

Documentation of Period Furniture

Period Furniture used by great national leaders, their family members and associates make the exhibition space vibrating with life.

---

Form for Retrospective Inventory

Classification
Inventory
Chronological Number
Serial Number
Date of Acquisition
Source of Acquisition
Name and type of the furniture
Used by
Description
Size
Medium/Material
Present Condition
Repair or not
Nature of repair
Present location
Remarks

---

Documentation of Costumes

Dresses of the great national leaders and freedom fighters of the by-gone days feel the visitors with palpable emotions.

---

Form for Retrospective Inventory

Chronological Number
Serial Number
Date of Acquisition
Source of Acquisition
Name of the Book
Edition
Date of Publication
Name of the Publisher and Press
Number of Pages
Bound or unbound
Present Condition
Repaired or not
Showcase/Almirah Number
Present Location
Remarks
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

Documentation of Letter, Newspaper Clippings and Telegrams

Here are documented corresponding letters of the freedom fighters and the British Government, newspaper clippings and telegrams related to the struggle. These are important historical and archival documents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form for Retrospective Inventory</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronological Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference and Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original / Photocopy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book/Journals published herein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showcase/Almirah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Documentation of Manuscripts

Here, reminiscences of the great masters in the form of manuscript (written by him/her or by association) or description of events and revolutionary literatures are preserved with utmost care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form for Retrospective Inventory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inventory Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronological Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serial Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written in ink/pencil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original/copied/partly copied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press copy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

Source of Acquisition
Name / type of costume
Used by
Description
   Size
   Material
Present Condition
   Repair or not
   Nature of repair
Showcase/Almirah Number
Present Location
Remarks

Documentation of Arms and Armours

Seeing the arms and armours feel the visitor with a sense of glory and reverence for the testament sacrifice, the freedom fighters had made for the liberation of India and feel the essence of their devotion, commitment, dedication for the mother land.

Form for Retrospective Inventory

Classification
Chronological Number
Serial Number
Date of Acquisition
Source of Acquisition
Name/type of the arms and armours
Used by (if information available)
Maker
Model Number
Repaired or not
Nature of repair
Microfilm or not
Showcase/Almirah
Present location
Remarks

Documentation of Voice-records

Here are preserved voices of departed great souls which draw inspiration and joy to the visitors.

Form for Retrospective Inventory

Classification
Inventory Number

775
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chronological Number</th>
<th>Inventory Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serial Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Acquisition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Acquisition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disc/tape/wire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents and Sequence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorded by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of copies</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Price/cost, if any</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present Condition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Showcase/Almirah Number</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Present Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Documentation of Paintings**

Here is documented information of paintings, murals, sketches, drawings on the great fighters and events by the artists.

**Form for Retrospective Inventory**

| Classification          |                  |
| Chronological Number   |                  |
| Serial Number           |                  |
| Cabinet Number          |                  |
| Date of Acquisition     |                  |
| Source of Acquisition   |                  |
| Name of the Artist      |                  |
| Title of the painting etc.  |               |
| Description             |                  |
| Size                    |                  |
| Medium                  |                  |
| Paper                   |                  |
| Mounting/Framing        |                  |
| Whether signed by the Artist |             |
| Repair or not           |                  |
| Publication             |                  |
| Present Location        |                  |
| Remarks                 |                  |
Documentation of Sculptures

Here are displayed sculptures of Indian national worthies and British rulers executed by the renewed sculptors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form for Retrospective Inventory</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronological Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of the Sculptor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair or not</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present Location</td>
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<td>Remarks</td>
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</table>

Documentation in the New Age

Documentation of the new age is the analogue of Information Technology. Modern framework of computerization and choice of a software as per specific needs deals with the sequence of activities relating to analysis of existing manual system and points to the steps needed for future improvement. It is true that till today, majority of the museums in the world use Accession Register, Catalogue Cards and Index Cards etc. But it is also true that in developed and also in developing countries information technology in the form of computer consecutively substituting these methods. “What computerization will do is to allow the museum staff to achieve far more than they could achieve with a manual system. If well planned and well-managed, it will give the museum much greater control over its collections and its information.” Now, it is the high time of building an interactive information system through the Internet, i.e. a global network through computers. And the application of computer technology to museum documentation requires a through analysis and examination of the
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects in the Collection

current state of the museum’s records, and the goals, the museum has for its proposed record system.

The aforesaid analysis and examination makes an integrated record-keeping system, and while doing so, some necessary steps are required in implementing such a system that is important for the evaluation of museum’s information management.

Analysis Phase is the first important stage which includes an examination of
• The management philosophy essential to the creation of a Museum-wide record system.
• The Activities within a museum that require written records and the various data files that are desirable to support these activities.
• The process of identifying, defining and controlling data categories that must appear in the museum’s file.
• The design of interrelated files.

The Application Phase includes an examination of
• The design for forms for recording data.
• The creation and specification of rules to control the flow of information and the museum-wide management of the record system.
• The selection of updated computer system and designing of a versatile report system to facilitate the actual use of data records.

Usually, documentation of museum collection depends upon the encyclopedic database of structured text records. The process of creating a record-keeping system requires systematically organizing and recording all observations that are pertinent for a thorough description of a group of people, places, things, events or ideas. A ‘Data Category’ is defined as standardized frame within which is expressed an observation about or classification of an object. The ‘content of a data category’ is the actual descriptive information. A
‘record’ is an organized collection of observations, recorded in data categories, presumably containing all pertinent information necessary to describe the entry. A ‘Pointer’ is a logical connector between separate records, which may be in the same or different files. An ‘Integrated Record-keeping System’ is an information system with interrelated data files, either manual or computerized.

The application of computer in museums has got all implications right from conceptualization of exhibits/models/galleries to research projects and public programmes. Multimedia is being used as documentation tool, building on-line museum database that record information about collection. These may be used solely an internal collections management or documentation tools, or they may be approachable to outside researchers. It refers precisely to the use of computer technology to human communication. It is a synthesis of data, images and sound within a single digital information environment, Multimedia means some technologies and operations like electronic mail, on-line publishing, CD-ROM, the Internet and digital television. The WWW (Web) is now the most popular user-friendly means of communication which is based on the hypermedia technology. Links are made between images, texts and sounds from different museums, places, chapters and documents by this technology.

In documentation computer can be used in a museum in the following cases:

**Inventory and Research Management**

- Exhibit conceptualization
- Designing and drafting of exhibits/models/galleries
- Exhibit fabrication
- Collection Documentation (objects, photographs, archive and bibliographic collection), Cataloguing, Filing of information, Digital image management.
- Text and image retrieval.
- Maintaining specimen information and site information.
- Storage and Conservation management.
Chapter IV

Documentation of the Objects In the Collection

- On-line Museum libraries maintaining Biographic information, Forums, and accessing external data bases.
- Data exchange programme
- Analytical and documentary Museological research on scientific, commercial or organizational aspects.
- Museum-L providing a list of general discussion topics for museum professionals, scholars and other interested persons.

Office Automation
- Word procession
- Publishing
- Daily record maintaining
- Internal communication network setting
- Internal and external mailing
- Bulletin board setting

International Bodies and Their ab-initio Framework —
Guidelines for Museums

International Bodies

The International Council of Museum (ICOM) is an international organization of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the conservation, continuation and communication to the society of the world’s natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible. Created in 1946, ICOM is a non-governmental organization maintaining formal relations with and having a consultative status with UNESCO. As a non-profit organization, it carries out part of UNESCO’s programme for the operation of the world-wide museums. Based in Paris, the ICOM Headquarter houses both the ICOM Secretariat and the UNESCO-ICOM Museum Information Centre. ICOM comprises of a few international committees, of which ‘Committee on
Documentation of the International Council of Museum' (ICOM-CIDOC) is the pioneer institutions for the documentation interests of museums and similar organization. This ISO International Standard (ISO 21127) Committee provides a formal and extensible ontology for cultural heritage information and also is a part of the International Guidelines for museum object information. ICOM-CIDOC has defined a conceptual Reference Model (CIDOC-CRM) which focuses on the documentation requirements and standards of museums achieves and similar organization all over in 60 countries of the world.

The CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model (CRM) provides definition and a formal structure for describing the implicit and explicit concepts and relationship used in cultural heritage documentation.

The CIDOC CRM is intended to promote a shared understanding of cultural heritage information by providing a common and extensible semantic framework that any cultural heritage information can be mapped to. It is intended to be a common language for domain experts and implementers to formulate requirements for information system and to serve as a guide for good practice of conceptual modeling. In this way, it can provide the 'semantic glue' needed to mediate between different sources of cultural heritage information, such as the published materials by museums, libraries and archives.

Over the years, CIDOC and the CIDOC Documentation Standards Working Group (DSWG) are engaged in the creation of a general data model for museum, with a particular focus on information interchange. Until 1994, the products of these activities had been the CIDOC Relation Data Model. In the interim meeting in March 1996 in Create, the DSWG decided to engage in an object-oriented approach in order to benefit from its expressive power and extensibility for dealing with the necessary diversity and complexity of data structure in the domain. This effort resulted in 1999 in the first complete edition of the ‘CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model’ (CRM) a product of the intensive voluntary work of a variety of contributors. In order to exploit fully the potential
of the CRM as a means for enabling information interchange and integration in the museum community and beyond, CIDOC decided in its meeting in London, 1999 to submit the CRM to ISO for standardization. ISO, in contrast to CIDOC, has the procedures and authority to create and declare well-defined, valid editions of international recommendations. The CIDOC CRM has been accepted a working Draft by ISO/TC 46/SC4/WG9 in September 2000. Since 09.12.2006, it is official standard ISO 21127: 2006.

The Guidelines

The International Guidelines for Museum Object Information describe the Information Categories that can be used when developing records about the objects in museum collections. An individual museum, national documentation organization or system developer, as the basis for a working museum documentation system can adopt the Guidelines. The Guidelines incorporates the following elements: -

✓ A definition of the information categories that should be used when recording details about objects.
✓ An outline of the format rules and conventions governing how information is entered in these categories.
✓ Comments on the terminology that can be used in these categories.

Format of the Information Group and Information Categories

1. Acquisition Information: It supports security and accountability. It is needed to provide evidence of the legal status of the object as part of the museum’s collections.
   Acquisition Method/Type – The method by which an object entered the collection (e.g. gift, purchase, bequest, unknown).
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 Acquisition Date -- The date, the object entered the collection and title was transferred. (e.g. 2005.01.01). It should always be used all four digits for the year of a date, e.g. 2005, not '05.

 Acquisition Source -- The name of the person or organization from whom the object was acquired. (E.g. Mahajati Sadan, Kolkata) It is recommended that an authority file is used for this Information Category. Where an object or specimen was acquired from more than one source this Information Category should be repeated.

2. **Condition Information:** It ensures the physical protection of the object and also supports the identification of objects. It also helps in providing physical protection for collection.
   - **Condition/Examination History/Physical Condition** - A single term or code describing the overall condition of an object (e.g. good/fair).
   - **Condition Summary/Condition Note/Condition Narrative** -- A short description of the overall condition of the object, including observations on the stability, blemishes, repairs and completeness (e.g. fading of bromide paper photograph).
   - **Condition Date** -- The date, the condition of the object was checked (e.g. 2005.02.02). It should always be used all four digits for the year of a date (e.g. 2005, not '05).

3. **De-accession and Disposal Information:** It supports security, accountability and access. Without this information it is not possible to tell whether an object is missing or whether it has been actively de-accessioned.
   - **Deaccession Date:** The date, the object was formally struck from the accession register. (e.g. 2005.03.03). It should always be used all four digits for the year of a date, (e.g. 2005, not '05).
   - **Disposal Date** -- The date, a de-accessioned object was actually disposed of. This date may be later than the de-accession date (e.g. 2005.04.04). It
should always be used all four digits for the year of a date, (e.g. 2005 not '05).

Disposal Method/Disposal Type – The method by which a de-accessioned object was disposed of (e.g. destruction/transfer/loss/sale).

Disposal Recipient – The person, group, or organization to which a disposed object has been transferred (e.g. Netaji Research Bureau, Kolkata).

4. Description Information: It supports security, accountability, access and a historic archive. In the absence of an image it provides a detailed description of an object and a retrieval facility, which would not be available using an image alone.

Description information can be used for a variety of purposes including research, hand lists, exhibitions and publications.

Physical Description – A description of the general visual appearance of the object (e.g. a cabinet of Burma Tick wood with marble panels and also with gilt brass).

Specimen Status – (It is only for natural history specimen).

5. Image Information: It is particularly valuable in the recovery of mission or stolen property.

Without an image it may be impossible to prove ownership or certain identification of an object. Image Information also supports visually the textual information about the object recorded elsewhere.

Image Type – The format of an image or relating to the object (e.g. Digital/Colour print). This information group may be recorded as many times as required. An object can have multiple images.

Image Reference Number – A reference linking the record to an image of the object either stored outside the documentation system or digitally within the system (e.g. 2005-32). It should be recorded according to the standard agreed within an institution or required by a system.
6. **Institution Information:** It is essential when exchanging object information with other institutions as it provides a location for the documentation of an object, and in many cases for the object itself.

   - **Institution Name/Organization Name/Body Name/Custodian Name:** The identifying name of the institution legally responsible for the object and its documentation (e.g. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya).
   - **Institution Sub Body Name/Organization Sub Body Name/Department Name/Sub Body Name/Custodian Sub Body Name:** The identifying name of the sub body of an institution legally responsible for the object and its documentation (e.g. Documentation Unit, Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata).
   - **Institution Address/Organization Address:** The address of the institution legally responsible for the object and its documentation (e.g. The Kolkata Museum, Town Hall, 4 Esplanade Row (West), Kolkata –700001).
   - **Institution Country:** The country of the institution legally responsible for the object and its documentation (e.g. India).

7. **Location Information:** Without this, it is not possible to fulfill the basic responsibilities of a museum, in that the custodian should always know where objects are and be able to provide physical access when necessary.

   Except for objects able to be made accessible under controlled conditions (e.g. on exhibition, in a study collection), location information should not be made publicly available in order to protect objects against theft.

   Location information should be recorded for all objects in the custody of museums, including those on loan or temporary deposit.

   This information group can be recorded more than once. Details of past current location and dates form an audit trail of the objects movement.

   - **Current Location:** A term or code identifying the place where an object is known to be physically located at the present time (e.g. Gallery
5/Showcase 2/Shelf A. (Russia Room of the Netaji Bhavan, Kolkata). It should be precise, including, where appropriate, details of the building, room, cupboard, shelf and box where an object is known to be. It may compromise a hierarchy of different location units, from the general to the specific, each unit separate by an agreed character.

Current Location Type/Location Status/Location Description – The nature of the current location assigned to an object (e.g. Display/storage/conservation studio).

Current Location Date – The date of an object was moved to the current location (e.g. 2005-05-05).

Normal Location/Present Location – A term or code identifying the place where an object is normally to be located and to where the object will be returned from the current location where this is different. (e.g. Asia Room, Netaji Bhavan, Kolkata/Cupboard 3/Shelf 2/Box 14).

8. **Mark and Inscription Information**: It enables the retrieval of lost property and the unique identification of otherwise similar objects and can be of particular research significance.

**Mark / Inscription Text** – The text inscribed on an object, recorded in the original language (e.g. signature on a book). The mark should be recorded exactly as it appears on the object, using the same capitalization and punctuation. A slash (/) or other character may be used to indicate line breaks. If the alphabet is different to that normally used by an institution then the inscription should be transliterated according to the standard scheme normally used by the institution.

**Mark/Inscription Type** – The form or function of the inscription/letter (Signature/Stamp).

**Mark/Inscription Description** – A description of any non textual marks inscribed on an object (e.g. capital A in a circle with a line underneath). An image can be useful in recording this information.

**Mark/Inscription Technique/Mark/Inscription Method**: The method used to inscribe a mark or text on an object (e.g. engraved/painted).
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Mark/Inscription Position – A term describing the position of an inscription on an object (e.g. on obverse).

Mark/Inscription Language – The original language used in a textual inscription on an object (e.g. Pali/Sanskrit).

Mark/Inscription Translation – A translation into the institution's first language of a textual inscription on an object.

9. Material and Technique Information: It can be primary importance in identifying high values, and therefore high risk objects. It is also a key information area for the research of man made objects. It should be always specified objects parts comprising multiple materials and techniques, recording them in descending order of importance where appropriate. It may also be necessary to record a contextual description using the description information group to clarify the relationship of the materials.

Material – The material used in the creation, decoration, and any subsequent adaptation of the object (e.g. Paper/Metal/Wood).

Technique/Manufacturing Methods / Creation Process/Decorative Techniques – All procedures, methods and techniques used in the creation of the object (e.g. carved/appliqué).

Part or Component Description – The part or component of the object for which the material or technique is being described (e.g. whole/neck/base/arm/support/medium).

10. Measurement Information: It may be only way of establish in whether or not an object is really that which is described in the documentation. Measurements can also indicate how easy it is to access and move an object. Measurements can include linear measurements as well as trade sizes, weight and volume. Measurements may change after conservation treatment, or as a result of use, in which case the up to date measurements should be recorded. It is advisable to always measure similar objects in
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the collection in the same way so as to ensure consistency of measurement.

**Dimension** – The aspect of an object being measured e.g. height/width/depth/weight/volume/circumstance.

**Measurement / Numeric Value / Dimension Value** – The numeric value of the measurement of a dimension (e.g. 23/14.5).

**Measurement Unit** – The unit of measurement used when measuring a dimension (e.g. cm./inch.)

**Measured Part / Dimension Qualification / Measurement Remarks** – The part of the object being measured (e.g. Plate area/excluding frame/wing fully extended).

11. **Object Association Information:** It can be recorded for all types of collection disciplines. It can be repeated to describe multiple events in the history of an object, including usage, historical ownership, etc.

**Associated Place** – The name of a place associated with the history of the object or specimen (e.g. Alipore Bomb Case, Battle of Plassey).

**Associated Date** – The date or date range associated with the history of the object or specimen (e.g. 1857/1947-08-15).

**Associated Group/Person Name/People Name/Folk Name/Organization Name/Nation Name** – The person, group or organization associated with the history of the object or specimen (e.g. Indian History Congress).

**Association Type** – The way in which the person/group, date or place is associated with the history of the object or specimen (e.g. Collection/Gift).

**Original Function / Use:** The way in which the object was known to have been used (e.g. Letters wrote by Mahatma Gandhi to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose during Quit India Movement).

12. **Object Collection Information:** It can be applied to collections management areas as well as object history and description areas. It supports the documentation of the collection of country’s history and
other cultural history objects and can be recorded for all types of collection disciplines.

**Collection Place / Excavation Place** – The name of a place associated with the collection of the object or specimen (e.g. Jalliwalanabag / Cellular Jail).

**Collection Date** – The date or date range associated with the collection of the object or specimen e.g. 2005 / 2005-12-26).

**Collector/Excavator** – The person, group or organization associated with the collection of the object or specimen (e.g. Gandhi Smarak Nidhi).

**Collection Method** – The means by which an object or specimen was collected (e.g. Purchase/Gift/Found).

13. **Object Entry Information**: It enabling the recording of the information about objects in museum’s custody but which it does not necessarily own. Object Entry Information should be recorded for objects deposited temporarily or on loan to the museum. For large number of similar objects, object entry information may need to be recorded once only and linked to the entire collection provided it is clearly labeled. All deposited or loaned objects should be clearly labeled with object entry information unless on display.

**Current Owner** – The person, group or organization or group of people who owns the object or specimen deposited at the Museum (The Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math). It should be confirmed ownership with the appropriate national legislation before accepting responsibility for deposited objects.

**Depositor** – The name of the person, organization or people responsible for depositing an object with the museum (e.g. Sri Gautam Gupta).

**Entry Date** – The date, the museum accepted custody of an object or specimen (2005-01-01).

**Entry Number** – The number assigned to an object or collection of objects or specimens at the time of deposit in the museum (e.g. E. 125. 2005). The museum should agree on a standard format for the entry number. This
might comprise of a running number and the year of entry, separated by a single character.

**Entry Reason / Entry Method** – The reason why custody of an object or collection of objects or specimens was accepted by the museum (e.g. Loan/Study).

14. **Object Name Information**: In this collection level the object name is of primary importance in establishing the range of object or specimen type available.

Object Name / Specimen Name / Common Name / Local Name / Classification / Object Category / Object Group / Object Type / Simple Name.

Object Name Type – The nature of the object name recorded (e.g. Taxonometric/Common Name/Classification).

Object Name Authority / Object Name Information Source – The name of the person responsible for identifying the object name.

15. **Object Number Information**: Without an Object Number it is not possible either to uniquely identify an object or to link an object with. It is essential to provide at least the current object number. Older numbers should also be recorded, with an explanatory description in this category.

When an object comprises of separable or separate parts, the object number may be qualified using a different suffix for each part.

Object Number Type / Identity Number Type – The type or function of the object number recorded (e.g. Accession Number / Previous Accession Number / Previous Loan Number).

Object Number Date/Accession Number /Identity Number Date/Inventory Number Date/Catalogue Number Date / Registration Number Date – The date that the object number was assigned to the object, (e.g. 2005-01-21).
16. **Object Production Information**: It can be applied to collections management areas as well as object history and description areas. It supports the documentation of the production of man-made objects. As such it is required for all types of collection disciplines.

*Production Place / Creation Place / Place of Manufacture* – The name of a place associated with the production of the object (e.g. Kanthalapara, 24 Parganas (N), Jorasanko, Kolkata).

*Production Date* – The date or date range associated with the production of the object.

*Production Group/Person Name/Artist/Designer/Maker/Manufacturer* – The person, group or organization associated with the production of the object. It is recommended that a controlled list of authorized name is used for this information category.

17. **Part and Component Information**: Without this information it is not possible to maintain proper control of the collections by ensuring that parts of objects are not mislaid or lost, nor is it possible to provide more detailed description of objects for research purposes.

*Number of Parts or Components / Amount / Number of Items / Quantity* The number of physically separated or separable parts of an object or a set of objects described by separate records at the next record level.

*Description of Parts and Components* – A brief description of the physically separated or separable parts of an object or set of objects.

18. **Object Title Information**: The primary identification of fine arts and other high value objects, the objects, the object title is essential for describing such collection.

*Title* – The name assigned to an object or group of objects by the artist/creator/collector at the time of origin or subsequent titles either specifically assigned or generally understood to refer to the object (e.g. Untitled).
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Title Type - The nature of the title recorded (e.g. collection/artist's/popular/series/trade).
Title Translation - A translation of the title recorded.

19. **Recorded Information:** Without this information it is not possible to establish when object information is created or establish the accuracy of the information, both of which are essential for maintaining inventory control and supporting research activities. It can help to prevent unauthorized alteration of documentation.

Recorder: The name of the person recording an Information Group or Category (e.g. Gupta, G).
Record Date: The date of creation or modification of an Information Group Category (e.g. 2005, not '05).
Authority/Information Source - The person or reference providing the information recorded in the Information Group or Category (e.g. Gupta, G).

20. **Reference Information:** It is significant in providing ownership of the object, e.g. where reference is made to documents supporting the legal title.

Reference - A number or code for linking the object documentation to any additional documentation about the object or another object in the collection (e.g. 2005.34).
Reference Type - A description of the type of reference recorded (e.g. object/acquisition file/bibliographic).

21. **Reproduction Rights Information:** The recording of this information ensures that a museum is in a position to ensure that intellectual, reproduction, and usage rights relating to the objects are protected.

Reproduction Right Note - A description of the nature of the reproduction rights, which are owned and the restriction of use of the object, which
apply (e.g. not-for-profit reproduction permitted but only after confirmation with owner).

Reproduction Rights Owner/Copyright Holder – The person, organization or group of people who own the reproduction or other rights of use to the objects (e.g. Gandhi Smark Nidhi).

22. **Subject Depicted Information**: Without this information it is not possible to provide even rudimentary access to pictorial collection beyond that required for accountability purposes. It also supports the identification of objects.

Subject Depicted/Iconograph/Depiction/Component – A term describing the abstract or figural composition of an object or the decoration on an object, or the interpretation of the composition (e.g. Sword).

Subject Depicted Description / Iconography / Subject Content – A textual description of the abstract or figural composition of an object or of the decoration on an object, and the interpretation of the composition (e.g. rising sun).5
Notes and Reference:

2 ICOM Code of Professional Ethics, 1990, p. 31, nr. 6.2.