Chapter IV. DOCUMENTATION

IV. 1. Introduction

In this chapter, I have dealt with the aims and problems of museum documentation, a detailed study of principles and scope of documentation, a full-scale study of documentation system for ethnographic museums, a study of computer documentation for ethnographic museums, a detailed study of procedures of computer documentation and a study of audio-visual data documentation.

The term documentation is based on the word document which means written evidence or material. Commonly a document has been made in the form of a paper. Therefore, documentation system in the past was mainly written on the paper like register books, catalogue cards, etc. Indeed all such museum registers and catalogues were the means of documenting information about museum collections and making them available to the users. Anyhow, documentation system equally corresponds with the data processing, which is the procedure of converting a raw material into a more useful product. "A data field is a smallest unit of information."[1] In fact a data is a raw material while information is refined material or finished product in terms of computerized documentation. Information, therefore, can be obtained after data processing which contains three steps, i.e. input, process and output. Hence, negatively speaking museum documentation deals with only reality of certain facts or phenomena in the museum.

Historically, museum documentation has meant collection documentation."[2] But nowadays it refers to the procedure of recording, handling and managing of data processing regarding museum collections or of relevance to museum activities and

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1. Sarasan, L., "A System for Analyzing Museum", in Light, R.B., et al.(eds.), *Museum Documentation Systems: Developments and Applications* (MDA), London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 92.

2. Lewis, G., "Museum Documentation -- Keynote Address", *International Seminar on Museum Documentation* (Sydney, 15-18th August 1982), Sydney, The Australian National Committee of ICOM, 1983, p. 5.

functions. Thus it is said that the concept of museum documentation has changed and extended from "documenting or recording of museum collections"[1] to "aiding the control and use of collections and ensuring the preservation of information about the cultural and environmental heritage."[2]

Regarding ethnographic museum documentation, the National Culture Policy of the Government of India makes its objectives very clearly: "It would wish to preserve culture heritage in its different ways recognizing the need of preserving classical, rural, tribal and community culture traditions which are in danger of extinction on account of social change, markets forces, technological onslaught etc., particularly of those elements which have so far been sustained through oral communications."[3] In this connection, the National Policy on Culture (NPC) can practically support the museums for documenting and recording not only material culture but also non-material culture.

While discussing the documentation of Dangi culture in the museum context, the above reference becomes very significant. Very wisely the NPC asserts that tribal oral literature, visual

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1. In general, the term documenting emphasizes on the representation of a certain evidence or information regarding museum collections and of relevance to the museum activities and functions while the term recording emphasizes on the representation of data including not only a certain evidence but also essential details of museum collections and of relevance to the museum activities and functions. It can be said that in terms of management of data, a recording department deals with more data than a documentation department. However, at present time, in the Indian museums context, there is no difference between the former and the latter. In case of the Korean Folk Village Museum, Seoul, documentation regarding immovable valuable museum collections like houses and huts is partly managed by the In-charge of Documentation Section under General Affairs Division while recording regarding museum collections and of relevance to museum activities and functions is managed by the In-charge of Recording Section under Folklore Division.

2. Light, R.B., et al. (eds.), *Museum Documentation Systems: Developments and Applications* (MDA), London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 1.

3. Government of India, *National Culture Policy: An Approach Paper*, New Delhi, Government of India, 1992, p. 8.

art tradition, the performing art and the artefacts should be documented. It also maintains that "Documentation of the art forms will be done in their natural context and without uprooting them from the environment, so that authenticity and genuineness are fully ensured."[1] It is necessary that ethnographic materials should be documented or recorded in the natural context. Otherwise the original meaning, function and structure of that will be diminished.

Further, the NPC advocated that "The tribal groups would be actively involved both in the documentation and preservation of their culture."[2] Now it is clear that documentation and preservation of tribal culture are the responsibilities of not only museums but also tribal communities. It is encouraging that "A national documentation centre for tribal and folk tradition with branches at suitable places in tribal areas will be set-up."[3] This may prove the extent of importance of documentation in relation to tribal cultural traditions in India. However, proper and accurate documentation represents a statement of accountability to the public for the museum collections and further museum workers can utilize it for the purpose of various kinds of museum work, in particular, collections management.

In any case, documentation relating to the basic management of collections including, especially, the registration of accessions, the monitoring of inward and outward loans, the maintenance of inventories, etc. is the responsibility of the collecting Department.[4] But in many cases, the registration and the physical handling of museum collections as they move in and out of the museum are basic responsibilities of the registration department.[5] Particularly, in case of the Leicester City Museum, U.K., the Museum Service and the Computing Section in the Record

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1. ibid., p. 20.

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

4. Smither, R.B.N., "The Imperial War Museum", in Light, R.B., et al.(eds.), *Museum Documentation Systems: Developments and Applications* (MDA), London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 144.

5. Dudley, D.H., et al., *Museum Registration Methods*, Washington, D.C., The American Association of Museums, 1958, p.p. 1-2.

Office takes the responsibility of collections documentation.[1]

Regarding manual documentation system, we may find different names of posts in different museums for fulfilling the requirement of documentation like Registrar as in the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, Bombay, Cataloguer in the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda, Documentation Officer in the National Council of Science Museums in India. The nature of their duties is considered as part of curatorial work. For the efficient functioning of a registration department the staff required might well comprise a registrar as supervisor, assistants for secretarial work and record keeping, and a trained workman to handle the museum materials.[2]

The fact that in the past museums of India were not using the term documentation is confirmed by the absence of it in the syllabi of Indian museum training courses. In early days, in the syllabus of the Diploma Course in Museology of the University of Calcutta that part of museum work is referred to as "Registration of Museum Objects". In the syllabus of Diploma in Museology of the Aligarh Muslim University it is referred to as "Registration and Cataloguing". In the syllabus of the Centre of Advance Studies in Indology and Museology of Bhopal, it is referred to by one word "Records". This work was not at all included in the first syllabus of the Museology Course for the degree students of Painting, Sculpture and Applied Arts of Faculty of Fine Arts, conducted in the Department of Museology the M.S. University of Baroda. It was an important part of the syllabus of the Post-graduate Diploma Course in Museology under the heading "Registration, Numbering and Cataloging" which dealt with the museum documents and recordings.

However, gradually the earlier emphasis on registers has been replaced by the term documentation. Indeed, in the syllabus for the "in-service Short Term Course for Foreign Students" at Baroda a 6 credit course is titled as "Museum Documentation". It deals with aims of museum documentation, terminology for describing museum object, relevant filing, photography, storage, security, insurance, identification, classification, registration, cataloguing, measuring, marking, etc. In this connection, an ideal coverage of what constitutes museum

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1.Fletcher, A., "Computerizing Records from Leicestershire's Museums", in Light, R.B., et al.(eds.), *Museum Documentation Systems: Developments and Applications* (MDA), London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 182.

2. op cit., Dudley, D.H., et al., 1958, p. 3.

documentation can be found in *A Curriculum Guide for Universities and Museums on Museum Studies* issued by the American Association of Museums. Under the heading of "Data and Documents related to Collection Items"[1], only main items are given below and the detail of that is shown in Appendix 4-1.

Accessioning objects and specimens (including 9 sub-items)
Identification at the time of acquisition (including 5 sub-items)
Reference files (including 3 sub-items)
Check on displaced collections (including 4 sub-items)
Collections and audiovisual techniques (including 4 sub-items)
The museum library (including 3 sub-items)
Information on the collections for use of the public.

In the past, information about museum collections was mainly utilized by the museum staff and a handful of researchers. But gradually museums have been recognized as institutions for knowledge of man and his environment. Many people look upon museums as centres for non-formal education and data bank regarding man, his culture and his environment. It will not be easy for museums to cope with such fast increasing demands for information through obsolete ways of documentation. Therefore, both new generation of museum workers and the new generation of museum workers are searching for more efficient means of museum documentation, even if all are not uniformly successful in their search.

Moreover, advanced technology and scientific methods of data processing have changed museum documentation systems. In the age of manual documentation, information was kept in registers, cards, lists and files, photos or slides, films or audio-visual recording tapes, printed documents and books. Automated documentation system depends on computer facilities, automatic electronic media, advanced audio-visual data processing and industrialized photographic techniques etc. In many developed countries nowadays various kinds of memory devices are utilized such as films, floppy disks, magnetic tapes, disks and drums, etc. for audio-visual documenting or computerized data processing. They are widely utilized to supply the users with details of the museum object, which mere written words are incapable of communicating effectively. Indeed, it goes without saying that single picture alone can do better than what thousands of words can manage.

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1. American Association of Museums (AAM), *Museum Studies : A Curriculum Guide for Universities and Museums*, Washington, D.C., The American Association of Museums, 1973, p. 26.

IV. 2. Aims and Problems of Museum Documentation

The primary aims of museum documentation are aiding collections management and ensuring the preservation of information about man and his environment. In this connection, S.M. Stone (1986) mentioned that "The aims of museum documentation system are to preserve all known information about an object and help satisfy the needs of the users", who are either museum workers or the public.[1] But regrettably the above mentioned by S. M. Stone merely concerns with information about fact or phenomenon itself. In my opinion the museum documentation system must deal with information about not only museum materials but also the relevant museum activities and functions. It may also deal with data processing for the efficient museum management. Satya Prakash (1973) stated, "Documentation in a museum determines its good management."[2]

However, Y. Oddon (1968) pointed out that the objectives of museum documentation is to ascertain and preserve the identity of the collection in order first to facilitate the museum administration, then to facilitate its presentation, interpretation and study.[3]

On the contrary, All India Museums Conference 1973 recognized that the aim of documentation is to ensure safe custody of exhibit, quick location, easy accessibility, periodical verification, furtherance of educational activities Comparing to modern museum documentation system, the recommendation of the Museums Association of India must supplement data processing for the purpose of analyzing collections and projecting long-term plan of museum management, and further providing interpretive information for the users.

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1. Stone, S. M., " Documenting Collections", in Thompson, J.M.A., et al. (eds.), *Manual of Curatorship : A guide to Museum Practice* (2nd), London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 127.

2. Prakash, Satya, "Aims of Documentation", in Agrawal, O.P. (ed.), *Documentation in Museums* (Proceedings of All India Museums Conference, Mysore, September, 19-23, 1973), New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1973, p. 15.

3. Oddon, Y., *Elements of Museum Documentation*, Jos (Nigeria), Jos Museum, 1968, p. 2.

In any case, the modern museum documentation system should incorporate facilities to help access, catalogue and locate museum materials, manage internal movements and external loans, apply insurance procedures, verificate ownership, "undertake audit and stockchecks, aid the preparation of publications and lectures, provide source for research, assist the development of display and exhibitions, and include provision for long-term storage" and data standardization. [1]

The central concept of understanding museum documentation is concerned with information relating to museum activities and functions which mainly affect the museum materials held or managed by a museum. The information should be scientifically controlled and efficiently facilitated by the museum for both museum workers and the users. On the similar logical line, Grace Morley (1973) considered museum documentation as precise information classified in a manner to make it readily available, as a control and index of museum resources. [2]

On the other hand, D. Hecken and Tanner-Kaplash (1985) asserted that "the recording and documenting of relevant information about the collections must, therefore, receive as high a priority as collecting itself, since such information will determine the position of a museum material within the entire cultural or scientific framework of which it is a part". [3] It is very important that a museum must be concerned about museum collections as well as the relevant information about the collections in view of cultural and scientific aspect. Thus a museum has the responsibility to document and record in an orderly and retrievable form, all available pertinent information about museum collections and the relevant matters such as acquisition, identification, classification, periodical verification, presentation, communication, conservation, movement within and outside a museum, long-term loan, disposal, etc.

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1. op cit., Light, R.B., et al. (eds.), 1986, p. 1.

2. Morley, Grace, "Documentation: The Total Museum Obligation -- Aims and Nature of Museum Records", in Agrawal, O.P. (ed.), *Documentation in Museums* (Proceedings of All India Museums Conference, Mysore, September, 19-23, 1973), New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1973, p. 5.

3. Hecken, D., and Tanner-Kaplash, S., *Collections Management: Principle and Practice* (Museum Operations Manual), 1985, p. 25.

In the context of Indian museums, documentation has become a legal obligation owing to the Provision of Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972. In any way, only limited antiquities and arts objects already entered into museums have been registered adequately. Most of others yet are not registered. But ironically the situation was that many institutions did not practise the requirement of the Act while private collectors could furnish 'all required information'[1].

Documentation of museum collections has become not only a legal necessity but its importance in the field of communication between one museum and the other, as also from each museum to all those individuals and institutions interested in the museum collections for the purposes of study, education and enjoyment, has been proved beyond doubt. Authentic documentation of museum materials are necessary for the purpose of accurate interpretation, efficient presentation and scientific research work.

It goes without saying that comprehensive documentation by the museum professionals establishes the pivot of museum management and it provides the museum workers and users with fundamental resource of various museum activities and functions. So far as practical documentation system is concerned, the curator of a small museum, the head of each department of a large museum or a specialized department of the whole institution is responsible for the museum documentation like accessioning and deaccessioning its collections which enter into the museum must be identified immediately and even its movement from one section

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1. Under "Section 14 (1) of the Provision of Antiquities and Art Treasure Act of 1972 provided for the registration of antiquities as specified from time to time by Government (except the ones kept (i) in a museum: or (ii) in an office: or (iii) in an archive: or (iv) in an educational or cultural institution owned, controlled or managed by the Government) before the registering officer for the grant of certificate of registration." The application form for registration of antiquities required the furnishing, among others, such particulars as: (1) Name of the applicant: (2) Address of applicant: (3) Identification and description of objects with four copies of photographs in post-card size: (4) Material: (5) Size: (6) Approximate date: (7) Source of acquisition: (8) Explanation of acquisition: (9) Date of acquisition: (10) Mode of acquisition: (11) Price paid, if any: (12) a) Present location: and b) Condition of preservation and security: (13) Registration, if any: cited in Form VII, The Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1973.

to another section in the museum must be recorded on the spot at once, and further its entry must be accurately and permanently documented.

At the time of acquiring the museum collections, the collectors should try to collect as much information about the collections and the relevant museum activities and functions as possible. Indeed a museum collection without authentic documentation is worthless and it will be a subject of deaccessioning in the future. Under the context of Indian museums, K.T. John (1980) stated that "authentic documentation of objects by a systematic collection of evidence is the present day need in Indian museums".[1] Nevertheless, scientific documentation is not an easy task due to lack of expertise regarding various museum collections and problems of using different documentation forms in a museum or among the related museums and of using different terminology for describing the same collection in different way.

In this connection, V.H. Bedekar (1983) pointed out "lack of uniformity in the vital matter such as, firstly, the headings under which the information is recorded in the basic accession registers and, secondly, in the absence of uniform cataloguing practices" among the Indian museums.[2] In the General Accession register (GAR) and Sectional or Classified registers, we found about 150 variations in the exact terms used as headings[3], those apparently small variations would certainly cause difficulties in data processing, in particular, merging data into data-bases. Similar difficulties are encountered in using the cataloguing system which found in Indian museums.[4] Therefore, under circumstance of Indian museums it requires to establish suitable standards and terminology for scientific registration and cataloguing.

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1. John, J.K., "Registration and Documentation in Indian Museums", in Dwivedi, V.P. and Pant, G.N. (eds.), *Museums and Museology : New Horizons*, Delhi, Agam Kala Prakashan, 1980, p. 77.

2. Bedekar, V.H., "Museum Documentation in India", *International Seminar on Museum Documentation* (Sydney, 15-18th August 1982), Sydney, The Australian National Committee of ICOM, 1983, p. 11.

3. ibid.

4. ibid.

IV. 3. Principles and Scope of Museum Documentation

A. Principles of Museum Documentation

The basic principle of museum documentation for ethnographic museums should be the same but might accommodate some differences in detail. According to the museum situations and its users, the requirement of documentation is quite different. It may be evaluated by the curator of a small museum or the heads of different sections of a large museum. Anyhow, one may be interested in information about material, the other in techniques, another in utility, etc. Obviously, this kind of need and possibility of inter-disciplinary use of the data/information poses a fundamental problem of museum documentation. The data should be ideally accessible to all as much as the original museum materials should be so. In fact, more conscious care should be taken about information because its existence is not as apparent as the physical evidence in museum-holding. For the scientific and systematic museum documentation, adequate data standards and standard terminology are required to be used both by the museum workers and its other users.

(1) Data Standard

Since 1965 the standardized system for the museum documentation referred to by G.D. Lewis[1] has been continually developed by the Information Retrieval Group of the Museums Association (IRGMA) and the Museum Documentation Association (MDA). The standard form for the recording of museum data is known as data standard. "Basically, the standard supplies a format, which is a hierarchical organization of museum data concepts, and a set of recommendations for slotting pieces of museum data into various concept headings in the format.[2]

Regarding data standard, the IRGMA decided to design a comprehensive range of record cards, based on a set of common principles. Thus, the Group initiated a project to examine the

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1. Lewis, G.D., "Obtaining Information from Museum Collections and Thoughts on a National Museum Index", *Journal of Museum*, No. 1 , 1965, p.p. 12-22.

2. Porter, M.F., "Establishing a Museum Documentation System in the Unitied Kingdom", *Museum*, Vol, XXX, 3/4, 1978, p.p. 169-178., cited in Stone, S.M., 1985, p. 128.

Table 4-1 Outline of the MDS Data Standard

IDENTITY DIVISION
record managing institution
identity number

PART DIVISION

part name

identification group
- **simple name**
- **full/classified name**
  - **name**
  - **nomenclature system**
  - **type of name**
  - **currency of name**
  - **status of name**
- **title**

pre-production history group
- **cross-reference**
- **type of antecedent**
- **antecenent identity**
- **simple name**
- **full/classified name**

production process group
- **production statement**
  - **part name**
  - **production method**
  - **person/corporate body**
  - **date**
  - **place**
  - **coordinates**
  - **state**
  - **technical data**
  - **result**

field collection group
- **locality statement**
  - **cross-reference**
  - **locality identity**
  - **site**
  - **place**
  - **coordinates**
  - **relative position**
  - **vice-county**
  - **habitat**
  - **stratigraphy**
  - **context**
  - **locality type**
- **collection act statement**
  - **find identity**
  - **method of collection**
  - **person/corporate body**
  - **date**

association history group
- **association category/nature**
- **part name**
- **concept**
- **person/corporate body**
- **service**
- **date**
- **related item**
  - **cross-reference**
  - **object identity**
  - **simple name**
  - **full name**
- **document**
- **event**
  - **cross-reference**
  - **event identity**
  - **simple name**
  - **full name**
- **place**
- **coordinates**

ownership history group
- **type of ownership**
- **ownership identity**
- **method of transfer**
- **transfer-step**
  - **person**
  - **date**
  - **place**
  - **coordinates**
  - **price**
  - **grant-aid**
  - **conditions**

identity number history group
- **institution**
- **identity number**
- **date**

valuation history group
- **value**
- **date**

copyright history group
- **type of rights**
- **person/corporate body**
- **date**

storage history group
- **location**
- **date**

display history group
- **typeof display**
- **purpose of display**
- **corporate body**
- **title**
- **date**
- **catalogue identity**
- **conditions**

form description group
- **form statement**
  - **part name**
  - **aspect**
    - **type of aspect**
    - **description**
    - **date**
  - **conservation**
    - **treatment**
    - **material used**
    - **date**
  - **dimension**
    - **measurement**
    - **result**
  - **inscription or mark**
    - **type**
    - **method**
    - **position**
    - **description**
    - **transcription**
    - **transliteration**

interest description group
- **simple category**
- **full/classified category**
- **interest summary**
  - **part name**
  - **summary**
  - **interest identity**
- **interest analysis**
  - **part name**
  - **concept**
    - **type of concept**
    - **description**
  - **person/corporate body**
  - **date or period**
  - **object**
    - **cross-reference**
    - **object identity**
    - **simple name**
    - **full/classified name**
  - **document**
  - **activity**
  - **event**
    - **cross-reference**
    - **event identity**
    - **simple name**
    - **full name**
  - **locality identity**
  - **site**
  - **place**
  - **coordinates**
  - **locality type**

process group
- **type of process**
- **process identity**
- **process statement**
  - **part name**
  - **date received**
  - **reason**
    - **requested treatment**
    - **person/corporate body**
    - **date required**
  - **method**
  - **person/corporate body**
  - **date started**
  - **place**
  - **state**
  - **technical data**
  - **result**
    - **result identity**
    - **simple name**
    - **full name**
  - **date completed**
  - **recommendations**
    - **further treatment**
    - **recall date**
    - **priority**
    - **recommendations**

part division

authority
- person/corporate body
- date

documentation

RECORD MANAGEMENT DIVISION

record production statement
- type of record
- method of data collection

record copying statement
- person/corporate body
- date

supplementary file statement
- file identity

computer record statement
- computer record identity

NOTES DIVISION

notes

AUTHORITY DIVISION

authority statement
- cross-reference
- authority identity
- person/corporate body
- date

DOCUMENTATION DIVISION

documentation statement
- cross-reference
- document identity
- reference
  - historical reference
  - class
  - person/corporate body
  - date
  - title
  - journal or publisher
  - volume
  - reference

form and content of a museum record, identifying the different data categories. As a result, through the theoretical work on data standards it provided the background for subsequent developments of manual- and computer-based system. However, the Museums Association of India (MAI) did not contemplate any data standards comparable to what the Museum Documentation Association (MDA) has done later. But definite sets of headings were suggested for various types or registers and cards. These were not considered as mandatory because the MAI had no such powers to do so. Therefore, the headings of various forms were merely "suggested". Not only that but it was also recommended that those headings "may be suitably amended to suit individual museums ".[1]

Since 1977 the cooperative research work on the analysis of museum record and computerized documentation system had reached a critical stage.[2] Hence, the MDA could develop an integrated Documentation System (MDS) and a computer package (GOS). Initial emphasis of these systems was on the curatorial aspects of documentation, particularly the preparation of item records as a basis for manual or computer-based catalogue and index. The MDS facilities include a formal data standard, various recording forms, cards and register (with associated instructions), computer applications and procedural manuals.[3]

The data standard incorporates a definition of the data categories that make up a museum record[4](See, Table 4-1). The record can include various general divisions and groups of information, which make up individual categories such as person, place, date and event. The standard has been used as the basis of both record cards and computer storage format. It is certain that the recording forms, cards and registers in manual system should be compatible with automated facilities provided by the system. Regarding this matter, the data standard may help to be compatible with each other.

In my investigation about information retrieval, it came as a surprise to find out that when orders of transfer are issued to

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1. op cit., Agrawal, O.P. (ed.), 1973, p. 139.

2.Robert, D.A. and Light, R.B., "The Cooperative Development of Documentation in United Kingdom Museums", in Light, R.B., et al.(eds.), *Museum Documentation Systems: Developments and Applications* (MDA), London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 108.

3. ibid.

4. ibid., p.p. 118-119.

individual curators they have to take over the charge or the new posts as well as to hand over the charge of the earlier post. This involves physical checking of all accessions and other records. When museums are situated at great geographical distances as very often found in India, it may take months to complete all formalities. If any scholar wants to use museum resources he has only to remain satisfied with what he can see in the public galleries. Not only the access to reserve collections is out of reach but even records are not made available. The same is the case when curators go on leave or are out of town.

As a result, information about tribal ethnographic material of great significance to research workers is denied and precious opportunities to expand the horizon of knowledge are lost. Therefore, indexing of data entries should be given a high priority along with public access to museum documentation. Once a museum is opened the information should be available irrespective of the presence or absence of curators. In other words, availability of information should not depend on the convenience of museum staff as such except to the extent of ensuring protection of such indices.

Such index of entry points is an ordered sequence of entries like items in directories. In case of museum documentation such a directory will cover one or more aspects of a catalogue. In a library indexing, the name of the author and the subject matter of the books are the two basic aspects covered. But in museums different needs may be felt as seen earlier. In the case of Dangi cultural heritage it may be necessary to have entries according to function, community, geographical origin, material and medium processes, period and theme because they are the routes to travel to the cultural essence of the identity of heritage of the Dangs.

In my opinion, at least the following index cards are required by the ethnographic museum workers and its users for indexing Dangi ethnographic materials. Of course, main topic of index is different according to name, period, material, utility, community and locality. Therefore, there is an urgent need to plan five manual indexes which can be considered as the minimum required. An additional sixth index may be compiled to cover the location of Dangi cultural materials either in situ, gallery, storage or other places in connection with conservation, laboratory, travelling exhibition, long-term loan etc. If such index system is completed by the museum workers and/or some specialized scholars, the museum can provide not only better service but also scientific and systematic information regarding the museum collections for the museum workers and its users.

(2) Standard Terminology

One of the main obstacles in museum documentation is the absence of terminology control. Unless there is a shared awareness on this matter, any documentation will become meaningless or at least ineffective. This is so because same characteristics of museum material can be recorded by different museum workers in different ways. That will make a mess of museum documentation. Good usable documentation will depend upon consistency of standard terminology for museum materials. Especially, in automated documentation system, when the computer is to be used for data processing or data retrieval such loose choice of terms can create grave problems because commonly the electronic machines cannot understand on their own way the different words which have common meanings or applications.

Anyhow, so many such terms are used in describing museum materials in the matters of their utility, physical appearances, cultural significance, etc. Terminology should be uniform to refer to identical characteristics in museum records. So far as the ethnographic museum documentation is concerned, an important fact is that in naming ethnographical materials everyday usage in English and the native or vernacular names are simultaneously required. For example, among Dangi ethnographic materials, a *Kuradi* in Dangi means a small axe, while a *Kurada* means a big axe. Otherwise it may be either substituted for the native name or added to the usual name.

Naming a particular ethnographic material represents attitude of museum collectors or ethnographers i.e. a crucial difference between emic and etic data is identifiable from the researcher's purpose. When the intention is to identify the people's cognitive, ideal categories, the data from a structured interview depending on people's verbal responses rather than direct observation are emic. Commonly, the emicist prefers the native name to English or other substitute while the eticist prefers mainly his own language or English to the native language. When the structured interview is intended as an approximation of real behaviour and materials, the data are incorporated in a basically etic research strategy.[1] Generally, museum workers have to select or compose suitable glossary of terms required to describe ethnic material in their own regions. Until that is done curators will be subjective and individualistic in their choice of terms for making their museum record entries.

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1. Pelto, P.J. and Pelto, G.H., *Anthropological Research: The Structure of Inquiry* (2nd), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1978, p. 63.

This problem starts from recording field-notes and diaries and continues to accession records. It is but natural that further work of cataloguing also uses the same or similar terms or phrases with which curators are familiar without examining if the terms will also be familiar to the different classes of public users of the records today or tomorrow. There is at present no way by which a curator can make his choice of terms crystal clear to others in written records. He may have his own reasons to use specific terms but he will not take blame if they cause misunderstanding to others. Especially this will create problems in indexing because that is completely determined by the alphabetical sequence of letters of words actually used in preparing entries for museum records. It is, therefore, very urgent that professional control is accepted voluntarily for integrated system of controlled museum documentation. Outside professionals should be invited to make checks of terminology control. When museum workers will become aware of the fact that their records are also for others, the museum documentation will become a perfect and effective means of communication.

In practice, same or similar kinds of objects should be described in identical terms by all those who will prepare museum records. But the question is an organized effort towards recommending common nomenclature or vocabulary for all fields of human heritage to which museum collections belong. How to make so many subject specialists to come together to discuss and come to agreements about vocabulary. Can specific rules be made based on their recommendations ? Answers to such questions will solely depend on the extent to which all museums are ready to acknowledge the futility of continued use of inconsistent vocabulary and data standards. In other words it is a matter of deciding the standard terms and stick to them in building museum records. Specific but comprehensible instructions should be available to guide all users of records especially when variants of the relevant terms are known to exist.

However, it is strongly emphasized in respect of evolving strict standards for terminology control leading to a thesaurus in which the relationships amongst all standard terms are defined once for all. In this connection, E. Orna and C. Pettitt (1980) has pointed out "Vocabulary control is absolutely necessary to ensure consistency in the use of terms so that every bit of related information is retrieved by any user."[1] It also guides users to all the terms under which information is stored from

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1. Orna, E., and Pettitt, C., *Information Handling in Museums*, Clive Bingley, U.K., Clive Bingley Ltd., 1980, P. 63.

other possible "entry" terms in addition to "index" terms.[1] "Entry" terms are the alternatives to the standard terms while "index" terms are the standard terms which it has been decided to use. Indeed, entry terms provide entries to the record information which is indexed under the "index terms".

The most complete form of vocabulary control is a thesaurus. A thesaurus is a structural list of terminology which contains all known "index" terms. These terms may be nouns, proper names, verbal all "entry terms" which help in guiding or directing a user to "index" terms and it also contains clear instructions about the use of all related terms. It goes without saying that a thesaurus takes into consideration various sources for building a universal vocabulary.

All standard reference publications are analysed to find out the terminology currently in use by specialists of a given discipline. Special workshops and meeting of experts are necessary even extensive correspondence should be carried out to come to final agreements about the standard terms for indexes and specific instruction for their successful use. Comparatively only a few thesauri (plural of thesaurus) are compiled in India for museum use.

In my opinion, concerning Dangi ethnographic materials, the respective museums must establish standard terminology for museum documentation. Of course, museum workers must, first of all, be familiar with different taxonomy of ethnographic materials from different tribal communities and then they may add nomenclature in English to the native language. Thus Dangi ethnographic materials must be recorded using both native language and English, the State language Gujarati, the neighbour State language Marathi and the National Language Hindi. But in practice, the final selection of language medium is not easy because the Dangi has no script and any language among the above-mentioned languages but this should not result in neglecting to convey its original meaning.

However, there are two main concerns about selecting language medium so far as Dangi ethnographic museum is concerned: One is the native language must represent at any level at any time, the other is the substitute language, among the recocgnized national languages English or the State language Gujarati should be selected. Generally ethnographic museums, world-wide select two language medium: mainly the native language and secondly the English.

The above-discussion about terminology and data standards

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1. ibid.

should help in moving towards more scientific approach to museum documentation without which its use will be extremely problematic. The current practices are not encouraging to invite a very wide circle of students, interested persons and scholars to make maximum use of museum records. That has built an image of museums as inward looking or as "closed" institutions. The records kept in most of museums are seen as basically for the staff and not for outsiders who are interested in the common cultural heritage. Sooner this image is changed, the better it will be for the progress of museums.

B. Scope of Museum Documentation

The museum documentation is divisible into two groups: one is recording or documenting "physical collections (objects, bibliographic items, archival material and audio-visual material)", the other is recording "information assets such as details of conservation and record photographs, people, places, events and activities".[1] On the contrary, L.V. Coleman categorized the museum records into two groups; one is "basic, or irreplaceable, records", the other is "auxiliary, or derived, ones".[2] The basic records include accession register, and catalogue. The auxiliary records include index card, location register, incoming and outgoing loan register, etc. On the contrary, the Museum Association of India (MAI) also presented two types of museum records: One is basic records which include (i) Accession Register / Inventory, (ii) Classified catalogue -- a descriptive register, (iii) Index cards. The other is auxiliary records which encompass (i) Approval / Entry Register (ii) Donors Register, (iii) Movement Register, (iv) Loan Register, (v) Exhibition Register listing exhibits in different exhibitions. Between the above-mentioned Coleman's suggestion (1927) and the MAI's recommendation (1973), there is not much difference except the categorization of Index Cards. Except the MAI's categorization, most other scholars, they categorize the Index Cards as auxiliary records[3] or supplementary documentation[4].

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1. op cit., Light, R.B., et al.(eds.), 1986, p. 1.

2. Coleman, L.V., *Manual for Small Museums*, New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1927, p. 174.

3. Roy D.K., *Museum and Defence Studies in India*, Calcutta, Naya Prokash, 1982, p. 108.

4. Schommer, Pierre, "Adminstration of Museums" *The Organization of Museums: Practical Advice*, Paris, UNESCO, 1960, p. 42.

In any case, Coleman's categorization and MAI's recommendation of museum records do not give the today's museums satisfaction, and they are only partly applicable to the modern documentation system, except both audio-visual data processing and various projects like preparation of exhibitions, educational programmes, conservation report, etc. Besides, the modern museum documentation may contain library records and administrative records including various reports like museum activities, periodical audit, long-term museum management project, etc. In my opinion, the modern museum documentation system should deal with information about not only museum materials but also the relevant museum functions and activities.

Thus, museum records may be categorized into two groups; one is of the original or first hand materials, the other is of the second hand materials which can be obtained through data processing or assembling the relevant references. Field-notes about ethnographic collections is the first hand material, but a guide-book which contains some information about field data cannot be called the first hand material. Thus, the museum documentation should give priority to recording the first hand materials like identification cards, field notes, the entry register, the General Accession Register. Furthermore, the modern museum documentation system should also be concerned with the second hand materials like proposal of exhibitions, records of conservation, long-term management project, catalogue of library, etc. Most of second hand materials in a museum have been kept in the form of registers, files, list, and some of them are recorded on the magnetic tapes and disks, micro-films, floppy diskets, etc.

Of course, prior to using electronic devices in the museums, the main formats of museum records could be divisible into three types[1]; bound ledgers, loose-leaf ledgers, and file cards. Even though nowadays many museums use the computer facilities for the museum documentation, they also need the same or similar formats of museum records. But such a computerized documentation system needs and facilitates the loose-leaf ledgers or file cards for the efficient data processing. In practice, in case of such a computerized documentation system, the museums control and manage all museum records in the unit of each file. If the museums need to present certain information to the public or the authorities, they should print out the requisite information through various files. In any case, every museum faces some difficulties to control and manage audio-visual data adequate unit of file, and further, to present them to the authority

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1. op cit., Schomer, Pierre, 1960, p. 38.

which has no audio-visual facility. Indeed main problem of audio-visual data management is to classify and to control the required data in scientific way and in appropriate size of unit. Therefore, in case of electronic documentation system, the efficient management of files has become very important.

In terms of physical systems, the museum documentation system can be categorized into three groups ; one is a manual system, the other is a manual cum computerized sytem, and the third is an automated system. At present, as far as specialized ethnographic museums are concerned, only the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangarahalaya (IGRMS) has a set of multi-purpose computer facilities including computerized documentation system. But, the computerized documentation system of the IGRMS is in formative state as there are no expert computer programmers and no supplying of the relevant automatic data processing programmes like computer software packages, namely, ADP (USA), GOS (MDA), etc. Except the IGRMS, most of ethnographic museums in India use a manual documentation system. So far as ethnographic museums documentation system is concerned, ethnographic museums may utilize, at least, a manual cum computerized documentation system for the efficient collections management and the requisite data processing because the ethnographic museums need much more elaborate information about interdisciplinary ethnographic collections and they should control and manage various kinds of and a great number of collections.

In practice, the scope of museum documentaion system should cover the following as: (i) the registration or inventory service, (ii) the catalogue, (iii) the photographic and eventually the film and sound recording services, and (iv) the library.[1] In my opinion, except the above-mentioned services, the museum documentation should provide information about museum's functions and activities for both museum workers and its users. This information is mainly based on the second hand material through data processing.

On the contrary, S.M. Stone (1986) has pointed out that "three types of documentation" comprise comprehensive museum records :

(i) Initial documentation is a record on the entry of the object into the museum for loan, identification, acquisition or other purposes.
(ii) Item documentation is a full record of all information about the object incorporated in the record, or cross-referred to other files.

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1. op cit., Oddon, Y., 1968, p. 2.

(iii) Control documentation is an on-going record of the movement of all museum objects. This is absolutely indispensable for collection management.[1]

In terms of the modern museum documentation system, the control documentation is very important. The system into which this comprehensive record fits should be capable of including a great number of accessions, and not impose a limit on the size of the total record. It is very important that the system should be easy to use and maintain, and that documentation procedures are set down in a manual. The system should be able to accept information about a wide range of items and to allow adequate cross-referencing between the different types of record incorporated in it.[2] It also should be "user friendly" or easy to use by the museum workers and its users. There should be safeguards to protect confidential information. Looking to the limitations of infrastructure available in Indian museums, it is really a challenging task to create such a museum documentation system which is practical at the same time in harmony with the highest professional standards.

IV. 4. Practical Documentation for Ethnographic Museums

A. Basic Procedures of the Museum Documentation

(1) Documentation for Incoming and Outgoing Material

Apart from administrative and technical materials, any material entering into a museum usually falls within one of the following categories; materials submitted to the museum from outside for the purpose of technical examination or treatment; loan for temporary exhibition or deposit; materials offered or acquired through various ways like gifts, bequest, fieldwork, purchases, exchange, etc. So far as ethnographic museum materials are concerned, the registrar or curator is responsible for checking and recording the movement of ethnographic materials into and out of the museum.

It is essential that the registrar or curator should be advised in writing in advance as far as possible of anticipated arrivals and departures. Moreover, ethnographic

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1. op cit., Stone, S.M., 1986, p. 128.

2. ibid.

materials should be routed through the curatorial room or recording room. If the receiving and shipping room is not directly under his control, a close collaboration between the curatorial section (registrar) and the security section (building superintendent) should be maintained to ensure the immediate reporting of all incoming and outgoing materials.

In some museums, forms are used by the director or curators to inform the registrar instructing him to receive or release museum material, and to explain the purpose for which it is being received or released (See, Table 4-2). Other forms are also used by the shipping custodian or building superintendent to report incoming and outgoing materials.

For the Notice of Incoming / Outgoing Material the following form is given below:

Table 4-2 The Suggested Form for Incoming/Outgoing Material

Notice of Incoming / Outgoing Material

Cl. Code _____ Sr. No. _____

To the Registrar or Curator Date & Time __.__.__. ___:___

Receiving from _____

Releasing to _____

The following material ; Name _____, Quantity _____

Size H.___ B./ T.___ L.___, Weight _____, Value Rs._____

For __Gift, __Loan, __Purchase, __Travelling exhibition or

Other purpose ; _____

Y/N Attached the receipt and the detail of the material behind.

From the Department of _____, Signed _____ __

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 14 x 20 cm.

Most of the incoming materials are permanent collections except a few temporary loan or deposit for the purpose of scientific research, technical examination, special exhibition, or conservation. Depending on the museum situation, the packing and unpacking of shipments is supervised by the director, curator, registrar, or building superintendent. If a receipt is requested by the person delivering a material, before the presence or condition of material in the package has been verified, then it should be given on a conditional basis only.[1]

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1. op cit., Schomer, Pierre, 1960, p. 34.

The unpacking should be entrusted to qualified staff of proven reliability, and it should be performed in the curatorial section or recording section. If necessary, the notice documents announcing the arrival of the materials should be consulted prior to unpacking. All material identifying each package -- labels, numbers, directions, invoices, etc., whether inside or outside the packing -- should be kept in its original place or, if that is not possible, in a working file.[1] As soon as the contents of the package are verified a final receipt should be sent to the consignor, with a letter notifying, what material are damaged or missing, if any.

If damage takes place in transit it must be reported as soon as possible to the transportation agency and to the insurance company covering the shipment. Indeed, arrangements for adequate insurance coverage of incoming and outgoing materials in transit and during their existence in the museum lie with the registrar or treasurer of the borrowing institution. Valuations of those materials are established by the curatorial section or in case of a loan, by the owner. Additional nominal insurance for the owner may be provided by the transportation agency. In such case, the identification card and photographic record will the be evidence for inspection by the representatives of these agencies. The damaged museum material and packing materials like crates, buffers etc. should be preserved for the same purpose.

Complete records of all outgoing shipments of museum material must be kept by the curatorial section or registrar's office. Before such shipments are permitted to leave the museum, they should be covered by an order of "release" signed by the registrar or curator. Then the registrar or curator must inform to the building superintendent or security section before packing the museum materials, in their presence, the packing work would be carried out. After packing them, the cases or crates should be carefully inspected by the registrar or curator whether they are properly marked and labeled with address of shipper and consignee.[2] Then appropriate instructions should be given to the carrier selected through the transportation agency. The responsibility of handling museum material, as mentioned earlier, lies with the registrar or curator.

As a first step in the recording process, an identification tag or label should be attached to each museum material. In this connection, D.H. Dudley (1958) pointed out that "The first records for all incoming material must contain the following as:

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1. ibid.

2. ibid., p. 16.

Table 4-3 Identification for Incoming/ Outgoing Material

Identifying number if assigned on entry
Source (name and address of owner or his representative)
Date of entry
Description
Record of condition
Purpose for which received (i.e., for study or examination, as gift, as purchase, as loan)
Value or price, if known
Location in the museum
Disposition"[1]

However, in practical aspect, the above Dudley's identification tag is quite complicate and inadequate. It requires that identification tag or label should contain the accession number, date of acquisition, name of material, location, community, measurement, mode of acquisition, and collector (See, Table 4-4). These records are frequently made in the form of a temporary receipt issuing when the material is received or released by a museum. In some museums, a copy of this receipt is attached to the material or, if the receipt is numbered, its number is written on the identification tag or label.[2] In this connection, R.T. Parikh (1973) asserted that "Suitable receipt should be given to the party concerned" and "a bound Entry Register is recommended".[3] So far as the Indian museums situation is concerned, his recommendation is highly desirable.

Table 4-4 Identification Tag

TRIBAL MUSEUM, TRTI, Gujarat Vidyapith.

*S. No.*_____ *ACC. No.*_____

*Name*_____

*Location*_____

*Tribe*_____

*Measurement*_____

*Collected by*_____

*Date of purchase*_____

Size 6 x 9 cm.

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1. op cit., Dudley, D.H., et al., 1958, p.p. 10-11.

2. ibid., p. 11.

3. Parikh, R.T., "Internal Structure of Documentation for Archaeological Collections", in Agrawal, O.P. (ed.), *Documentation in Museums*, (Proceedings of All India Museums Conference, Mysore, September, 19-23, 1973), New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1973, p. 37.

In connection with the above-mentioned matter, Markham and Hargreaves (1936) reported as: "occasionally one receives a shock such as at the museum where acquisition registers consist of a series of unbound loose-leaf slips, any one of which could have been easily destroyed or lost without being any possibility of noticing its omission".[1] Unfortunately, such an indifferent attitude to the control and management of museum records, has been continued till today in many Indian museums.

Although many collections are brought in on approval and for identification and some of them may not be accepted by the museum due to inappropriate content of the material. Nevertheless, the complete documentation or formal registration of incoming materials dose not take place until they have been officially accepted as part of the museum property or as long-term loan. In this connection, Pierre Schommer (1960) recommends that the temporary loan and deposits should be recorded in each separated inventory[2]

(2) Identification

Identification is the first slip in the museum documentation for accessioning materials which may be situated in the field or in the museum. It is a critical act for the purpose of accessioning a newly-acquired material or existing museum material. In this connection, Soroi Eoe (1983) has mentioned that documentation is a "Sacred duty" for a museum curator.[3] In practical terms, the process of identification is a part of registration work. Without identifying the material, the registration work cannot progress because identification card provides details of the collection. The identification card is the master key to all other records regarding information about museum materials. If it has mistaken, all subsequent documentation will be adversely affected.

Therefore, for the accurate recording of the relevant information and fast collecting the requisite ethnographic materials on the spot at once, field-collectors should bring

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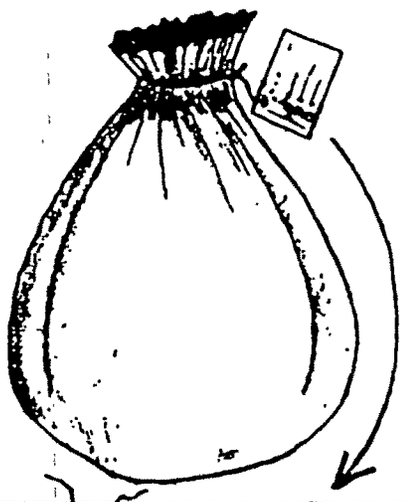
1. Markham and Hargreaves, "Survey of Museums and Art Galleries of India", *The Museums of India*, London, 1936., cited in Parikh, R.T., 1973, p. 35. and Bedekar, V.H., 1984, p. 10.

2. op cit., Schommer, Pierre, 1960, p. 37.

3. Eoe, Soroi, "State of Documentation in the National Museum and Art Gallery of Papua New Guinea", *International Seminar on Museum Documentation* (Sydney, 15-18th August 1982), Sydney, The Austrialian National Committee of ICOM, 1983, p. 14.

identification cards and field note-book whenever they go to field. While identifying the material for the state or condition of preservation, a full-size photograph should be taken. If it is in first-class condition, these identification or entry photographs may then be used as catalogue photophgraphs. The photographs should contain the date and identifying or entry number, which should be appeared on the negative film. Thus the names of museum workers and their authority should be very carefully documented in making the identification entries. Y. Oddon (1968) suggested that "information should be recorded both in the field note-book and on the identification card, which should be attached to the object immediately upon its completion".[1]



So far as ethnographic museum documentation is concerned, the first identification cards or the field note-book should be firmly or securely attached to the material, so that they will not be mixed up with the other materials. The following identification card with a detachable label is very useful (See, Table 4-5)[2] ; after

Table 4-5 Identification Card with a Detachable Label

Object N°

Museum N° Field inventory N° Ta 3 015

Designation Pot sherds

Object found ☒ received ☐ bought ☐ From

Place TARUGA site, near Abuja (Niger Prov.) Trench 015 b1 Layer 2

Date when found or bought 21.1.1968 Collector's Name John Fagg

Field trip or Expedition Nok Research Expedition, Jan. 1968 Price paid

Origin Nok culture

Maker

Ethnic group, or Species

Material & Technique Sherds & burned clay Not analysed

Function or use Domestic pottery

Museum photo N° Negative N° Field photo N°

Area ABUJA

TARUGA site

Tribe Nok culture

Category Pot sherds

1. op cit., Oddon, Y., 1968, p. 4.

2. ibid., p. 10.

registration of a material at the museum, the label remains attached to the material while the card may be used in one of the museum files.[1]

Identification may not always need to be recorded in a register. It also can be done on an identification card. In any case the process of identification of a material takes place in same way either in a register or on a card.

(3) Expertise for Identification

Identification of a material is not a routine work because it deals with the uniqueness of that specific thing from all other materials of the world. Identification will be as perfect as the capacity of the person concerned to understand the uniqueness or special character of that material. Knowledge of the subject is necessary for identification of materials. Identification involves good judgment about the class of which a particular material is an example. But each object does not have same representative class characteristics. Therefore, materials even if they belong to a single class may differ in some respect or the other. In order to identify an ethnographic material, a field-collector or museum professional must systematically record the requisite information about the concerned material. The following field questionnaire is very useful for identifying an ethnographic material.

Table 4-6 Field Questionnaire for Ethnographic Materials

Cl. Code_____ Sr. No. _____
What is the material ? in Local language_____ in English _____
What is its utility ? Primary _____ Secondary _____
By whom was it made ? M./ F. Age-grade _____ Caste _____
By whom is it used ? M./ F. Age-group _____ Daily / Specially
From where did it come ? Locality _____ Topography _____
How was it acquired ? Self-made, Barter, Purchase, Gift, Others ____
How old is it ? _____
How can it be manipulated ? _____
To which ethnic group does it belong ?_____
What technique was used in making it ? _____
What procedures are required in making it ? _____
What resources were used in making it ? _____
What are the dimensions ? H._____ B._____ L._____ W._____
What is its physical condition ? _____
Date & Time __.__.__. __ : __ Recorded by _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 14 x 20 cm.

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1. ibid., p. 4.

(4) Registration

The registration is the procedure of assigning a permanent number to a material for the purpose of providing an immediate, brief, and permanent means of identifying each acquisition in the museum materials. In practical terms, it contains recording the registration number in the registration book and also marking the number with the abbreviation of the museum on the body of the museum object. Each museum must maintain a precise inventory of its collections. Inventory is the technical term given to the record of registration, which is the process of entering every addition to the museum materials. Indeed, an inventory register is an official written record in which all museum acquisitions are chronologically listed. Usually such an inventory register is called a General Accession Register in many Indian museums. In case of the governmental museums, the registration work is an administrative and legal obligation. Without precise registration register it will be impossible to claim the ownership of the material legally if it is stolen or lost. Hence, whenever any collection enters into a museum, the registration work should be immediately operated.

The registration or registered number should be one that can be assigned permanently and attached to a museum material by the registrar or curator as soon as it officially accepted as a permanent accession or long-term loan. Of several variations, the simplest and popular numbering system for registration in a museum is composed of the year of acquisition, the consecutive accession number within the year, and the serial number of individual item in a particular accession. It is known as "tripartite numbering system" which has been suggested by C.E. Guthe (1957) and later evolved by D.H. Dudley and Monawee Allen (1958).[1] The tripartite numbering system consists of three units: (i) the first unit reveals the year, which is normally denoted by the last two digits of the year. (ii) the second unit marks the consecutive accession number, within the year. (iii) the third unit represents the successive acquisition number of the particular accession.[2]

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1. Guthe, C.E., *So You Want a Good Museum: A Guide to the Management of Small Museums*, Washington, D.C., The American Association of Museums, 1957., and op cit. Dudley, D.H., et al. (eds.), 1958.

2. op cit., Dudley, D.H., et al., 1958, p.p. 10-11., and Allen, Monawee, "The Registration of Objects", in Dudley, D.H., et al., *Museum Registration Methods*, Washington, D.C., The American Museums Association, 1958, p.p. 17-20.

For example, Acc. No. 93.2.4 is to indicate the fourth material in the second accession of which transaction took place in the year of 1993. In case of the museum material consisted of three separate pieces, each piece should be given the same tripartite number with a different additional alphabet, for instance, 93.2.4a., 93.2.4b. and 93.2.4c. On the contrary, Pierre Schommer (1960) differently uses the tripartite numbering system, in particular, the fourth element, for instance, "the number 46.26.12.2. would be applied to a component part of a cradle-stick, twelfth object of the twenty-sixth collection entered during the year 1946".[1]

Strictly speaking, if a museum uses "tripartite numbering system" for a registration of a museum material, the museum workers should not confuse the terms accession or acquisition numbers with the registration number. These three terms are entirely different from each other. In fact, "an accession is the acquisition of one or more objects at one source at one time", and furthermore, "it is a transaction between a source and a museum, or the objects acquired in the transaction."[2] Similarly L.V. Coleman (1927) pointed out earlier as follows:

"An accession, by definition, is a batch of material received at time from one source. It represents a single transaction and may include one object or many. The material need not be an acquisition. ... The accession number is affixed temporarily to objects and may be marked only on the box or container of an accession which is stored before being unpacked. In due course it is replaced by the catalogue number which is put permanently on every object that is acquired." [3]

The registration or registered number should be differentiated from the accession and the acquisition numbers as mentioned above. Usually the numbering system of the General Accession Register (GAR) is equivalent with that of the Registration Book or the Inventory Register because three registers are all same. But, if a museum gives a museum material in the consecutive numbering system, the numbering system of Classified Accession Registers (CAR), does not correspond with that of the Registration Book or Inventory Register. In practice, many museums control and manage the CAR for the specific purpose based on the custody of the museum

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1. op cit., Schommer, Pierre, 1960, p. 39.

2. Burcaw, G.E., *Introduction to Museum Work*, Nashville, The American Association for State and Local History, 1975, p. 84.

3. op cit., Coleman, L.V., 1927, p.p. 174-175.

materials or the nature of that. Mostly a CAR has its own closed numbering system which may not directly correspond with other CAR or the GAR.

Thus, in my opinion, the heading, accession number in the Registration Book or on Catalogue Cards should be replaced to the registered number (for registration) or catalogue number (for cataloguing) because the accession number, in particular, the consecutive numbering system, is not equivalent with the registration or catalogue number. Mostly even in the tripartite numbering system, the heading accession number does not equally correspond with catalogue number. Therefore, it is necessary that every register should uniformly contain the column registered number or the GAR accession number for the purpose of a cross-reference.

Although the procedure of registration for permanent accession or loans are basically same, numbering system for loans are different from museum to museum. It is desirable to put the initial letter "L" to the tripartite numbering for loans. Otherwise, to distinguish extended loan from temporary loan, the initial letters "EL" (for extended loan) or "TL" (for temporary loan) may precede the tripartite numbering system. Hence, some ethnographic museums keep different accession registers for the permanent accessions and the temporary accessions including deposits for identification or conservation, temporary loan, etc.[1]

(5) Marking

All museum collections should be marked with a permanent accession number or a provisional number as soon as possible after they have been officially accepted. The marking on the bodies of the museum materials is an indispensable work of museum documentation. It is required for giving a permanent identity to the museum material, otherwise it would be futile to have all the details of the museum material recorded in the inventory.[2] In case of temporary marks for incoming material, identification marks on the material show the source, date received, purpose for which they entered into the museum or a number corresponding to that on temporary receipt or identification numbers. For example, the numbering and marking D.E.M. 93.8.15. or 93.8.15. D.E.M. is to indicate that the

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1. See, Sachdevas, Anju, "Museum Documentation System for Ethnographical Objects", *Journal of Indian Museums*, Vol. XLVI, New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1990, p. 77.

2. Das, A.K., *Museography for Ethno-Cultural Material*, Delhi, Agam Kala Prakasan, 1989, p. 66.

material has been registered to the Dangi Ethnographic Museum, as the fifteenth material in the eighth accession in the year of 1993. Through this mark, everybody can identify accurately the ownership of the material.

In case of temporary loan, numbers are usually typed on the paper stickers or tags and placed on the material as soon as the materials are received. For example, the numbering and marking TL 93.6.3. S.M. is to denote that the material has been registered to the Saputara Museum, as the temporary loan, the third material in the sixth accession in the year 1993. In many museums, the lender's name appears with the loan number. When the materials are returned to the lenders, borrower's marks on the body of temporary loan must be removed.

It goes without saying that marks on the body of the museum material should be permanent, clear and readily accessible, and further they should not detract from the appearance of the material itself. In this connection, Pierre Schommer (1960) has pointed out that final marking should uniformly be placed on the body of the museum material.[1] The marking materials (matter) vary somewhat according to the nature of museum materials; artist's oil colours for glass, ceramics, metal, stone, wood; linen tape for textiles ; and medium lead pencil (not indelible) for paper materials.

In practice, the oil colours which have been used are vermilion or cadmium red, slightly thinned with turpentine, white and black paint being applied where red would not be discernible.[2] In this connection, the Louvre Museum, Paris, recommends the use of a mixture of powered vermilion, turpentine and superfine varnish for the glass, ceramic, stone, metal, leather, wood materials.[3] But in my experience, after cleaning the surface of material, the number may be written on the body of the material with the above-mentioned oil colour. Finally a coating of copal varnish or lacquer should be applied over the marks as protection against natural withering. The numbers are painted on with a water-colour brush (a camel's hair or sable brush) flattened for heavy numbers and made into a point for a small ones. According to the size of the material, sometimes a very small round type brush also can be used.

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1. op cit., Schommer, Pierre, 1960, p. 41.

2. Swayze, P.H., "Measuring and Marking Object", in Dudley, D.H., et al., *Museum Registration Methods*, Washington, D.C., The American Association of Museums, 1958, p. 42.

3. op cit., Schommer, Pierre, 1960, p. 41.

So far as ethnographic materials are concerned, marking methods vary according to the nature of the materials. In this connection, D.H. Dudley and P.H. Swayze (1958) presented various marking methods and matter for the ethnographic materials as: 1) Basketry; Indian ink, or cadmium or vermilion oil colour on the body or on tag, 2) Clothes, textile; written in Indian ink or typed on narrow linen tape or small jeweller's tag, where possible, sewn on inside of hem, or on neckband at middle of back, waistband at one end, button holes or lapels, lower left corner edge, depending on types of clothes or textile, 3) Leather, fur, feather; Indian ink, except that if surface is rough a linen tape is sewn on. 4) Jewellery; Indian ink on jeweller's tag or artist oil colour, on the base, back, underside or in an inconspicuous place. 5) Furniture, musical instrument, farming and hunting tools and kitchen utensils; artist's oil colour, on the bottom, back, underside or in an inconspicuous place. It is certain that heavy or fragile pieces should be so marked so that numbers are visible without moving material.[1]

(6) Measuring

Measuring is very important both for identification and for calculating storage or exhibition space requirements.[2] For accurate measurement, the following equipments like a scale, a tapeline, a folding ruler, a pair of calipers, a clinometer, a protractor, a dial scale, a weighing machine, if possible, a measuring stand are very useful. For the technical examination of specific material, a thermometer, a hydrograph, an illuminimeter, a colourmeter, a Mohs scale, etc. are also necessary. Basically, the identification card requires the measurements like height, width, length, weight ; or any other combination of these. Besides, according to the material, it requires depth, thickness, diameter, gradient, hardness, colour, etc. Practically, recording the measurements of ethnographic materials on the identification card is very useful for the purpose of research, preparation for exhibition script, and efficient management of storage.

According to the aim or target of ethnographic material study, the requirement of measurements are different. For example, if a researcher hopes to get the academic result in view of ecological aspect, in particular, the interrelation between rainfall and gradient of the roof of tribal hut, he must measure the angle of inclination of the roof by clinometer. If he wants to study the interrelation between temperature and the thickness of the wall and the roof of the tribal hut, he must measure the thickness of the wall and the roof of that by scale or calipers.

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1. op cit., Dudley, D.H., et al., 1958, p.p. 45-55.

2. ibid., p. 39.

To study certain ethnographic materials comparatively, it is necessary to take both the maximum and the minimum measurements of the relevant material. By this way, the researcher can get certain data like how a big "bullock-plough" is comparatively more useful for the ploughing in plain agricultural field than a small "man-driven-plough" in sloped agricultural land.

However, to measure a certain ethnographic material accurately, the researcher measures carefully and uniformly all requisite parts of the material by appropriate equipments, if possible, in metric system. In some American museums, both metric and British systems are together recorded. As far as possible, a field-collector or museum professional may measure the maximum and the minimum measurements of the ethnographic materials. For example, in case of measurement of a pounder, the maximum diameter of the handle of the pounder and the minimum diameter of that should be measured. And the length of the pounder also should be measured. It is certain that an identification card should contain the requisite measurement of the particular material.

(7) Describing Ethnographical Materials

Scientific identification of the materials, and accurate, precise statements of the measurements, decoration and physical condition of the material are essential for its description. In fact, if one cannot properly identify particular materials in terms of physical properties, he may describe them as; "hard, dark brown wooden cup", "porous, grayish black stone bowl", "very soft, close-grained wooden plate". But everything should not be done this way. The registrar or curator has to be familiar with the relevant vocabularies. It is urgent to establish standard terminology for describing ethnographic materials.

So far as ethnographical materials are concerned, although some of them fit into one of the common categories, many other materials are peculiar to a certain areas and have a particular name. The thesauri are extended indefinitely. Some terminology, if known, are very helpful. To use a simple description will generally suffice for identification. There are different categories of ethnographical materials.[1] The following categories of ethnographic materials like vessels, implements, tools, weapons, sculpture, ceremonial objects, and miscellaneous are very important in terms of ethnographic object-oriented description.

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1. Bruckner, Geraldine, "A Standard Terminology for Describing Objects in a Museum of Anthropology", in Dudley, D.H., et al., *Museum Registration Methods*, Washington, D.C., The American Association of Museums, 1958, p. 94.

In particular, sub-categories of vessels as Geraldine Bruckner (1958) suggested, provide us with a lot of interest and knowledge about nomenclature in vessels. As vessels occupy a large and important part of ethnographical materials, and as there is no consistency in common usage, it is important to establish a standard terminology in which "the names of the basic shapes are determined by the relation of the mouth diameter to the over-all size of the vessel".[1]

The following names are applied to specific vessel shapes. (i) Plate (*Thali*; See, Fg. 40-6, Vol. II); an extremely shallow vessel, the diameter at least eight times the height. Plates encompass a saucer and a plater (*Pharat*). (ii) Bowl (*Wathka*; Fg. 18-12, 19-6 & 37-3, Vol. II); a vessel with open mouth, the height never greater than the diameter and usually much less. If the height is less than one-third the diameter, it is a shallow bowl; if as great as the diameter, a deep bowl. It may have any number of handles, but it should be noted that a bowl with a very long handle is a ladle (*Chamcha*; See, Fg. 26-12, Vol. II) or a scoop (*Ulthi*). (iii) Pot (*Mozda*; See, Fg. 20-4, Vol. II); a vessel with a slightly constricted mouth. The height and the maximum diameter are about the same and the mouth diameter is at least half the maximum diameter. It may have number of handles. (iv) Jar (*Gagar*; Fg. 18-4 & 18-11, Vol. II); a vessel of which apparent height is usually but not always greater than its diameter; the mouth is much more constricted than that of a pot; usually with a neck, which may be quite high, but may have only a spout opening directly from the body of the vessel; does not necessarily have handles but may have two or more; Jars include a storage jar (See, Fg. 26-4, Vol. II), a seed jar, a hole-mouth jar, and a jar with double spout. (v) High, wide-mouthed vessels (See, Pl. 2-31, Fg. 19-2, 26-10 & 26-20, Vol. II) encompass a tumbler, a cylinder jar, etc.

While the names of a vessel give a general idea of its shape, further description is necessary. Sometimes the vessel can be described in a very simple way such as "hemispherical", "truncated" or "conical". This description should follow a definite order, beginning at either the bottom or the top of the vessel and mentioning such added parts as lid, handles, spout, at the end. The base is described as flat, flattened, rounded, ring, or it may have a foot or feet, which are described as hollow or solid, rattling, ball, slab-like, effigy, or a high ring.

The body is described as spherical, hemispherical, squat. Particularly, the sides are described as rounded or straight, as expanding to the shoulder (especially, high, wide, flat, convex)

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1. ibid., p. 99.

or below the middle of the vessel, and then contracting to the mouth or neck. The term carnation is used for the more or less sharp angle formed when the sides, which have expanded from the base, contract to the mouth. The neck is described as wide, narrow, high, or low.

The mouth is vessel's opening; the rim is the edge of the mouth. The rim may be wide or narrow, in-turned, out-turned, flaring, rolled, vertical, overhanging, or with pouring lip, and may have a crenelated or a serrated edge. Spout is sometimes used instead of pouring lip, but is preferably used only for one added to the vessel proper.

Handles may be looped (attached at both ends), and may be set on the shoulder, or vertically as from neck to shoulder or side of body, or horizontally ; strap (a flat loop); bail (a loop handle over the top of a vessel, a bucket handle); or ledge (flat and projecting, usually horizontally). A lug is a small projection, sometimes, pierced for the insertion of a carrying cord, or for the attachment of a lid. However, so far as Dangi ethnographic materials are concerned, only a few vessels with handles are found in the Dangs.

(8) Reaccessioning

Reaccessioning is not simple physical verification as described above. In reacessioning each and every object in the possession of museum is treated freshly as if a new accession procedure is made for it. In case of Bharat Kala Bhavan, a leading University museum of art and archaeology at Banaras, India, in 1980 the museum initiated reaccessioning "in order to bring uniformity in the documentation system as old records needed to be reprocessed again in conformity with the modern system".[1] Some definite procedures are required, in for reacessioning work, in particular, physical verification. The main feature of reacessioning consists of replacement of a new number in place of old accession number. It is recommended that if the earlier accession register has measurements not in the metric system then the reacessioning should convert the same. It is also suggested that a uniform system should be evolved and thereafter followed scrupulously.

The matter of reaccessioning appears to be a delicate issue of the museums. There is strong opposition to the idea of reaccession when new or improved methods are accepted. "It is not advisable to reaccession collections previously registered or

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1. Kumar, Lalit, "From Traditional to Modern Method of Documentation -- Devising a Methodology for Reaccessioning", *Journal of Indian Museums*, Vol. XLIV, New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1988, p. 119.

to discard old registers"[1] unless the museum attempts to replace the manual recording system by an automatic data processing system. It is a fact that most of ethnographic museums in India have very inadequate and imperfect accession records. Therefore, separate retrospective registers may be required where all past records are to be changed qualitatively instead of making alterations in the old accession registers.

One reason for the above-mentioned situation is the fact that very few museums have sizable Dangi ethnographic collections. Hopefully, this indifference or neglect will change when it will be understood that Dangi ethnographic materials deserve much better treatment. In that event, it should prove more convenient to have retrospective registers in which more scientific methods of accession records are accepted by a museum. This will be of great benefit to those who are interested in tribal ethnography of the Dangs.

If a museum intends to replace outdated documentation system with computerized documentation system, it is desirable to take a decision after considering adequate and proper data standards and standard terminology for the efficient reaccessioning and scientific control and management of museum information in future. It will involve great changes in the entire General Accession records and all auxiliary records.

(9) Retrospective Inventory

In many ethnographic museums, they have a serious problem regarding unidentified collections. If museum materials which were not registered because of lack of proper identification and their storage in odd places, they should be immediately registered retrospectively. For the retrospective inventory, generally it takes longer time for identifying such collections. The procedure of the retrospective registration is almost the same as a new registration. Before practising registration, a curator has to report the fact to the Director and the authority or governing body of the museum. Then he may carry out retrospective inventory work ; The current numbering is given to the prospective material, preceded by letter R (retrospective) with red colour ink and "a question mark or an ascertained date is written in a column Date of Acquisition".[2] In almost all ethnographic museums, they have such an experience to register materials, in retrospective way, which were not registered at that time.

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1. op cit., Oddon Y., 1968, p. 16.

2. ibid., p. 15.

B. Practical Formats for Ethnographic Museum Documentation

(1) Problems

Reported by many Indian museums have already their own institutional prestige, procedures and practices in connection with collections management and the relevant documentation system. Such a museum has already acquired valuable experience relating to the control and management of museum collections. Therefore, making sharp changes in the existing documentation systems is not easy and it can create some trouble. In fact, it will not be an exaggeration to state that many Indian museums are reluctant to introduce a new documentation system or even to begin reaccessioning programme. But who can compel them even if changes are justified. There are no professionally powerful agencies which can inspect and evaluate the current documentation systems for ethnographic museums in India. In the absence of such controls there is no urgency on the part of museums to take a hard look at their own systems of documentation.

When more resources will be made available to the museums there will be, presumably, less hesitation to depart from the age-old conventions. A factor which may lead to more positive attitude is the appointment of special staff for documentation. The curators who themselves are overburdened with administrative and organizational duties cannot spare sufficient time to make fundamental changes in the documentation system. When they get qualified assistants and in adequate strength, sincere efforts can be made to improve the existing system. Yet Museums Association of India (MAI) has not contemplated any data standards comparable to what the Museum Documentation Association (MDA) has done recently.

However, MAI (1973) suggested definite sets of headings for various types of registers and cards. Such as the Entry Register, the Accession Register and index cards were considered as indispensable museum records for each museum. Strangely, MAI considers only Index Cards on par in importance with the basic museum records. Other types of museum records known as the Approval Register, Donors Register, Movement Register, Loan Register, and Exhibition Register were also considered as auxiliary museum records by MAI. These were not considered as compulsory because MAI had no such powers to do so. Its role has been advisory. Therefore the headings were merely "suggested". Not only that but it was also recommended that those headings "may be suitably amended to suit individual museums ".[1]

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1. op cit., Agrawal, O.P. (ed.), 1973, p. 139.

Hence, the practical formats for ethnographic museum documentation are necessary and should be established in scientific way considering both the present Indian museums situation and the future development of the automated documentation system.

(2) Good Museum Records

Museum documentation must be oriented to the central important aim of preserving all known information which has been recorded with a view to be useful to any one who wants any of the information. This may sound easy but in practice it involves a systematic approach not individually but institutionally. Men may come and men may go but museums which appoint them should offer continuous services. Therefore, museum documentation should be de-personalized by evolving objective permanent procedures.

Needless to say, that the museum records should be reliable. If a museum record is not complete, further attempts should be made till the problematic record is complete. Furthermore, in the museum records, personal statements and subjective opinions should be strictly avoided. Without keeping scientific records on museum collections, the museum cannot properly control and manage its collections and accurately interpret them.

For the efficient communication of information about museum collections between the museum professionals and its users, the museum must select one main communication medium. Information about museum collections should be recorded in a language which is simple and sober so as to convey accurately the original meaning as it is, without any interference. Of course, publications may be printed in multi-languages, but the first hand museum materials should be recorded in a language. Moreover, the materials used for museum documents and recordings such as ink, papers, boards, films, tapes, etc. should be durable. All supporting materials for museum records should suit to local conditions and climate, especially, temperature and relative humidity.

The recording system for museum collections should be compatible with computerized system in terms of data processing and data retrieval for the newly-acquiring collections and the existing collections. It is very important that a particular format of manual museum documentation system can be directly compatible with the relevant automated documentation system. Thus it requires that each column of the form should be filled with one item. Hence, any form of museum records should keep a rule that one column accepts only one item.

(3) Entry Register

Under the circumstances in ethnographic museums in India, the Entry Register corresponds with identification cards or

Approval Register. Usually the first record about a collection is recorded in the Entry Register or identification card. Of course, in terms of internal structure and nature of the documentation, there are some difference between the former and the latter. All over the world, for the purpose of identifying materials, many ethnographic museums use identification cards rather than an entry register. Of course, ethnographic museums can together manage and facilitate the former and the latter. But, the Entry Register or Approval Register should fulfill the administrative and legal obligations and also it is mainly used inside the museum. On the other hand, the identification card should fulfill the interpretive purpose and it may facilitate either inside and/or outside of the museum. Hence, the Entry Register should be differentiated from the identification card or file. For the Entry Register, the following form is given below:

Table 4-7 The Suggested Entry Register

Entry Register

Sr. page No. _____

1) Cl. Code ; data categories_____
2) Entry No. _____
3) Source of receipt _____
4) Date of receipt _____
5) Title / Description ; if unknown _____
6) Period / Date ; if audio-visual data _____
7) Material _____
8) Condition _____
9) Dimension _____
10) Price / Value ; if unpaid _____
11) Custody of _____
12) Decision _____
13) Ref. collection file No._____
14) Ref. audio-visual data file No._____
15) Signature of recorder _____
16) Remarks _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 25 x 37 cm.

Obviously such headings are not very suitable in situation where museums acquire their materials in bulk or in a series. It is unnecessary to make a separate entry for every single specimen. In case of ethnographic collection, it is common knowledge that curators or fieldworkers make initial reports about the advisability and feasibility of what can and what should be collected in the field. That may be described as the collection-oriented preparatory activity. Each record thereafter ought to contribute to the scientific museum documentation.

(4) Identification Cards or File

It is a fact that ethnographic museums especially need to record various information about ethnographic materials whether the material is acquired or not. Even if any specific material is not acquired on account of certain reason, the preliminary information should add to the knowledge of that class of ethnographic materials. There are reports that field workers have sighted interesting cultural materials like ornaments, dress or icons in their contexts. They also could talk to the owners and get valuable authentic information but the persons were not ready to part with such material as is common in tribal situations. But this should not prevent the fieldworker from entering the known information into museum records by using drawings, sketches or photographs. Therefore, it is said that ethnographic museums require to facilitate identification cards to control and manage scientifically even non-three dimensional materials.

In case of ethnography of the Dangs, pre-acccessioning record of information should be as exhaustive as possible because of the limited efforts by museums in that subject area. The various headings under which such information may be recorded are (i) the name of object by which the tribal call it, where it was manufactured, prepared or produced and if it is not made locally from (ii) where it was brought or bought. (iii) The name of the shop may be useless in Dangs situation but the name of the shop keeper or salesman if wandering salesman will be quite useful for future planning of complementary collection. (iv) The village from which the given object was brought should also be recorded if name of the vendor is not known. The place of origin is thus known where more fieldwork can be directed. If an object obtained from the same place are not similar than ground for more detailed investigation is available.

Particularly, dating of Dangi cultural materials is not easy. Similarly, same thing can be said about the artist or maker as in case of marks or musical instruments if the person is not the same who has sold the object. But it is the description part which should be given proper attention. The purpose for which the object is used in the house or field is one of the interested matters of any ethnographic museum documentation. To say that it is a musical instrument is not enough. Or to record it as a stringed musical instrument is not sufficient. The nature of the operation or handling is as much important if not more than even the measurements which must also be recorded along with the raw material and processes of manufacture.

So far as the formats of the identification card and file are concerned, the suggested headings for the identification card and file are given in the Tables 4-4, 4-5 and 4-6 (See, p. 339, 341 & 342).

(5) Field Register

It is now a common knowledge that only a few ethnographic museums in India keep a field register which is equivalent to the identification card or file. In terms of internal structure of the field register[1] as D.H. Koppar suggested (1973), it is similar to that of an entry register. But basically the nature of field register is closer to the identification card or file. Such a field register should be comprehensive and must incorporate detailed information about cultural materials. In this connection, D.H. Koppar (1973) suggested the eight headings for the field register, namely, 1) The number, 2) Date of entry, 3) Title and description, 4) Dimension, 5) Period, 6) Cultural group or tribe, 7) Price and 8) Remarks. But his suggestion regarding headings for the field register can hardly fulfuill what identification cards or file are required to be filled with. A comprehensive information about an object has to be fulfilled in the field register, which is very useful in processing of the other museum records.

In connection with the above-mentioned matter, D.H. Koppar (1973) asserted that "Where a field register for anthropological collection is maintained, the entry register may be eliminated".[2] But in my personal view, D.H. Koppar's opinion is not acceptable because basically the function of a field register differs from that of an entry register. Of course, to reduce the number of registers in a museum is very desirable and important but at least the museum has to maintain the requisite registers like an entry register, field register, etc. Indeed, an entry register is more useful for administrative purpose and a field register is multi-purpose for processing various second hand materials relating to the museum collections, research, publication, etc. Both are valuable in their own ways but they are not interchangeable. Therefore mission of each one is unique. Hence the following headings suggested are necessary for the field register of an ethnographic museum:

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1. Koppar, D.H., "Documentation of Anthropology / Ethnology Collection" in Agrawal, O.P., (ed.), *Documentation in Museums* (Proceedings of All India Museums Conference, Mysore, September, 19-23, 1973), New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1973, p. 88.

2. ibid.

Table 4-8 The Suggested Field Register

Field Register

Sr. page No. _____

1) Cl. Code ; data categories _____
2) Collection No. _____
3) Name of item ; Local / English ; if equivalent _____
4) Period / Date if audio-visual data _____
5) Locality / Location ; if known _____
6) Owner / Performer _____
7) Maker / Manufacturer _____
8) User _____
9) Utility / Function _____
10) Technique of production _____
11) Source of material _____
12) Dimension _____
13) Condition _____
14) Cultural significance _____
15) Mode of acquisition _____
16) Price / Value ; if unpaid _____
17) Date of collection _____
18) Collector _____
19) Ref. audio-visual data file No. _____
20) Remarks _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 25 x 37 cm.

(6) General Accession Register

Prior to 1920s, a very crude and simple method of recording system for only the museum collections was used all over the world. Such primitive method was maintained by an inventory or lists of collections which were given simple successive numbers. Perhaps this method could meet the requirements of museums where only a few museum objects were added every year. Each of them was given a serial number of which found in the simple inventory. Essentially an accession register is the same thing as an inventory. Even though there is no standardized form for fulfilling information concerned, the identification of the museum material should be entered into the appropriate column. The futility of such primitive method became apparent when museum collections grew rapidly and the necessity of systematic register was felt. Out of this awareness came the idea of the General Accession Register.

The General Accession Register has become a basic and permanent official museum record for the administrative and legal purpose. In this connection, V.H. Bedekar (1973) has pointed out that accession record should not pretend to help scholarly

research or to be the fountain-head of information, beyond providing the basic data about the physical identification of the object.[1] Such a register has several columns assigned to record specific aspects of each accessioned museum material. Some columns of that are to denote the physical characteristics which can be easily verified objectively. Some other columns of that are to record the associated information. These columns are almost the same in terms of internal structure of that.

However, various forms of the General Accession Register and the Inventory Register were presented by D.H. Dudley and Monawee Allen (1958), the Central Advisory Board of Museums (CABM), India (1962), M. Zaheer (1963), Y. Oddon (1968), the Museums Association of India (MAI) (1973), etc. D.H. Dudley (1958) suggested the twelve headings for the Accession Register: 1) Accession Number, 2) Date received, 3) Date accepted, 4) Source of acquisition, 5) Artist, maker, cultural group, species (if known), 6) Title and/or description, 7) Date or period, (if known), 8) Exact measurements, 9) Condition, 10) Price paid, if purchased by the museum, 11) Insurance value, 12) date Recorded and initials of recorder.[2]

Somewhat later, in 1962, the CABM suggested eight headings for the General Accession Register. Indeed, the CABM's recommendation provided a general proforma, thus some columns are ambiguous and complicated as V.H. Bedekar interpreted (1973), in particular, (iii) Description which should contain various and excessive information like name of object, characteristics of object in terms of both physical and cultural aspects, utility, etc. In short, the CABM's recommendation (1962) and the form of GAR are not practical and systematic. One year later, M. Zaheer (1963) also presented the seventeen headings for the General Accession Register[3]. In fact, there is not much difference between Dudley's and Zaheer's forms except the columns for official business like signature and references of the relevant collection file and voucher numbers. Anyhow, Zaheer's suggestion (1963) is more detailed and pragmatic than Dudley and

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1. Bedekar, V.H., "Internal Structure of Documentation for Art Museums", Agrawal. O.P. (ed.), *Documentation in Museums*, (Proceedings of All India Museum Conference, Mysore, September, 19-23, 1973), New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1973, p. 57.

2. op cit., Dudley, D.H., et al., 1958, p. 20.

3. Zaheer, M, *Museum Mangement: Accession, Indexing, Custody, Labelling and Verification of Objects*, Lucknow, Cultural Affairs and Scientific Research, U.P., India, 1963, p. 20.

Allen's (1958) in terms of museum practice.

After one decade, at the All India Museums Conference 1973, on the title of "Documentation in Museums", Museums Association of India suggested the form of the Accession Register, which is almost the same as Zaheer's form (1963) except putting a column for the negative film number.

In 1968, Y. Oddon, later the Director of UNESCO-ICOM Documentation Centre also suggested the nine headings for the Inventory Register as: 1) Date of registration, 2) Inventory number of the object, 3) Denomination of object, 4) Place of origin ; Period or date ; Tribe or cultural group, 5) Description (brief statement), 6) Date, mode, condition and place of acquisition, and the name of the collector, 7) Price, 8) Physical condition of object, 9) Remarks (about change in entries, prices, photographic record, field work record losses or alienation). But these suggested headings for the Inventory Register are similar those recommended by the CABM's recommendation (1962) in terms of the internal structure of documentation. In viewpoint of systematic documentation system, Y. Oddon's suggestion (1968) is now out of date because some of the suggested columns are complicated and should contain various information in a column, for example, "4) Place of origin, period or date etc.", "6) Date, mode, condition, etc." and "9) photographic record, etc."

In case of the Saputara Museum in the Dangs, the General Accession Register contains only the seven headings such as 1) Serial No., 2) Name of the object, 3) Description, 4) Place, 5) Price, 6) Date of Purchase and 7) Remarks. This General Accession Register represents an example of outdated form of manual documentation. In practice, under the heading of description, the most of identification records including brief statement of the object, measurements, period/date, utility, material, condition etc. should be contained in a column. It is necessary that the format of the General Accession Register should be altered in a better way.

On the contrary, the Sardar Patel University Museum (SPUM)[1], in Vallabh Vidyanagar, has a peculiar accession register, namely "The Register of Antiquities" in the form of card[2], which has the seventeen headings such as 1) Sr. No., 2) Identification of Objects and Description, 3) Material, 4) Size, 5) Approximate

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1. Regarding information about the form of "The Register of Antiquities", the author expresses his sincere thanks to the Sardar Patel University Museum (SPUM) and the Assistant Curator, Miss Afroz Sultana Sayed.

2. Size 21. 5 x 34 cm.

age, 6) Date of Acquisition, 7) Source of Acquisition including the Name of the Person / Firm from whom acquired with Address, 8) Mode of Acquisition, 9) Price, 10) Registration Number, 11) Date of Registration, 12) Date of Sale if any, 13) Name and Address of Person of Firm to whom sold, 14) Place where object is kept, 15) Reference to Photo-Album Number, 16) Photo No. and Page, and 17) Photograph in 6 x 6 cm. size. The content and the form of the SPUM register are quite similar to that of catalogue card. In my opinion, this kind of format or worksheet for the General Accession Register can be compatible with the Catalogue card in a small multi-purpose museum. Each card of the SPUM register would provide a valid information about its collections to the researchers. But accessioning for museum materials should not be confused with another documentation work cataloguing, of which the function is to classify objects methodically and usually with descriptive detail. Practically, a catalogue card or file is chiefly used for the research purpose.

Therefore, for the General Accession Register the following form is suggested:

Table 4-9 The Suggested General Accession Register

General Accession Register

Sr. page No._____

1) Cl. Code ; data categories _____
2) Sr. No. _____
3) Genl. Acc. No.; if different from Sr. No. _____
4) Date of acquisition _____
5) Mode of acquisition _____
6) Title / Description ;if unknown _____
_____
_____
7) Period / Date ; audio-visual data _____
8) Provenance _____
9) Community _____
10) Material _____
11) Utility _____
12) Dimension _____
13) Condition _____
14) Price / Value ; if paid _____
15) Location ; either display or reserve _____
16) Ref. entry or identifying file No._____
17) Ref. audio-visual data file No._____
18) Signature of recorder _____
19) Signature of the Director _____
20) Remarks _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 25 x 37 cm.

(7) Classified Accession Register

Whereas a General Accession Register is maintained in a museum, there are supplementary records in the form of the Classified Accession Register[1] or the Classified Sectional Register[2] for different categories of museum collections with suitable columns for the relevant information. Understandably, these columns will differ from category to category as, for example, ethnographic collection and fine arts collection because the nature of the subject differs from each other. In this connection, V.P. Dwivedi (1973) stated that "the Classified Accession Register can be prepared by museums which can afford it in the interest of research and publication."[3] But his statement is not perfectly correct because the utility of the Classified Accession Register is mainly for the purpose of administrative work. It is certain that the primary role of the Classified Accession Register or the Sectional Accession Register is to provide the museum workers with a particular classified or sectional information about museum collections according to material-wise, location-wise, locality-wise or community-wise in an ethnographic museum. In practice, the Classified Accession Register or the Sectional Accessional Register can serve only the museum workers with the relevant information for the purpose of not so much research and publication but administration. On the contrary the Classified Descriptive Register or Descriptive Catalogue Card can serve not only the museum workers but also the public concerned with the required information for the purpose of a particular research project or publication.

Moreover, Dwivedi (1973) mentioned that "Small museums, with one Curator, may not go in for such registers" (the classified accession registers).[4] But in my opinion, even a small museum should manage the classified accession register or the sectional accession register for the purpose of efficient museum work like quick location, accessibility, verification and quick preparation for exhibition. In this connection, D.H. Koppar (1973) also

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1. See, op cit., Bedekar, V.H., 1983, p. 10., and 1973, p. 56., and furthermore, Dwivedi, V.P., "Documentation in a Multipurpose Museum", in Agrawal, O.P. (ed.), *Documentation in Museums* (Proceedings of All India Museums Conference, Mysore, September, 19-23, 1973), New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1973a, p. 108.

2. See, Sud, P.D., "Documentation for Agricultural Museums", in Agrawal, O.P.(ed.), *Documentation in Museums* (Proceedings of All India Museums Conference, Mysore, September, 19-23, 1973), New Delhi, Museums Association of India, 1973, p.p. 95-96.

3. op cit., Dwivedi, V.P., 1973a, p. 103.

4. ibid.

asserted that "It is necessary that even a small museum should have three registers"[1] like the general accession register, the classified section-wise register and catalogue card for the purpose of fulfilling minimum requirements of the museum documentation. For the ethnographic museum documentation, Koppar (1973) suggested that a field register, a gallery or location register should be added to the above-mentioned principal museum records.[2]

Alternatively, in the place of classified registers, a museum may introduce card indexes for each category of objects. Card indexing provides the museum with immediate information of the collection and is a device to locate museum objects from various sources. In practice, the General Accession Register of a museum may contain most of museum collections except temporary loans and deposits if a museum separately manages the temporary loans / deposit register. However, either a classified register or a set of index cards for specific category will serve the needs of the specialists or staff and those who wish to find out about each category.

It is understandable that a few classified registers may be prepared on priority basis for these categories of material with which museums are preoccupied. Though in theory all kinds of classified registers should be made to cover all accessions. The concept of classified registers in addition to a General Accession Register may offer some practical advantages. One of them is that a classified register can be easily retrieved whenever the material is either lost or shifted. The classified registers also provide some benefits for the museum workers when they carry out audit or physical verification of the existing collections. Such a physical verification is a routine duty and responsibility of museum workers in every museum.

In a small or medium sized museum, physical verification through a classified accession register, in particular, the so-called gallery register can be undertaken more easily to ensure that all accessioned objects continue to exist in the museum custody. This is done in some museums as a kind of audit or "object audit" on the line of auditing accounts. This is to prove the absence of loss both intentional and unintentional. If a thing is missing, the causes of the loss are searched, explanations called for and suitable actions are taken, including punishment to the guilty. This physical verification also helps in checking the state of preservation and to assess the conservation needs. In short, physical verification is an indispensable work in proving the accountability of a museum, therefore, a classified accession register is required for the purpose of easy and quick accessibility. Generally, Classified

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1. op cit., Koppar, D.H., 1973, p. 88.

2. ibid.

Sectional Registers are based on the General Accession Register and they tend to adopt the same internal structure and thus make it easy to identify and locate the requisite objects in a museum.

For the Classified Accession Register the following form is suggested:

Table 4-10 The Suggested Classified Accession Register

Classified Accession Register

Sr. page No._____

1) Cl. Code ; data categories _____
2) Sr. No._____
3) Cl. Acc. No ; if different from Sr. No. _____
4) Genl. Acc. No. _____
5) Date of acquisition _____
6) Mode of acquisition _____
7) Title / Description ;if unknown _____
_____
_____
8) Period / Date ; audio-visual data _____
9) Provenance _____
10) Community _____
11) Material _____
12) Utility _____
13) Dimension _____
14) Condition _____
15) Price / Value ; if paid _____
16) Location ; either display or reserve _____
17) Ref. entry or identifying file No._____
18) Ref. audio-visual data file No._____
19) Signature of recorder _____
20) Signature of the Director _____
21) Remarks _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 25 x 37 cm.

(8) Deposits / Loans Register

Deposits Register (DR) or Loans Register (LR) is slightly different from a common classified accession register because the primary nature and status of the Deposits Register or the Loans Register equally corresponds with the General Accession Register. Emphasis is placed on the fact that deposits or loans except extended loans are temporarily registered in specific registers like the Deposits Register or the Loans Register while the rests should be registered in the General Accession Register (GAR). In practice many museums have controlled and managed the so-called Temporary Accession Register (TAR) which combined both the Deposits Register in one part and the Loans Register in the other part in a book.

In practice, it may be wiser to enter them in a special Temporary Accession Register in case of their withdrawal from the museum. In some museums, they have separately controlled and managed the Deposits Register and the Loans Register. Indeed, primary function of the Deposits Register is slightly different from that of the Loans Register. So far as manual documentation system is concerned, museums have to reduce, as much as possible, the number of registers. Therefore, in my opinion, the Deposits Register and the Loans Register should be a combined one. However, in automated documentation system, the museums should separately control and manage the Deposits Register and the Loans Register in different files because the automated documentation system cannot properly and systematically accept such a complicated and combined data in a file.

For the Deposits / Loans Register the suggested form is given below:

Table 4-11 The Deposits / Loans Register

Sr. page No. _____

1) Cl. Code ; data categories _____
2) Sr. No. _____
3) Deposit / Loans No. _____
4) Date of deposit / loan _____
5) Date of withdrawal _____
6) Depositor / Loaner _____
7) Address of depositor / loaner _____
8) Title / Description ;if unknown _____
_____
_____
9) Period / Date ; audio-visual data _____
10) Provenance _____
11) Community _____
12) Material _____
13) Utility _____
14) Dimension _____
15) Condition _____
16) Price / Value ; if paid _____
17) Location ; either display or reserve _____
18) Ref. entry or identifying file No._____
19) Ref. audio-visual data file No._____
20) Signature of recorder _____
21) Signature of the Director _____
22) Remarks _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 25 x 37 cm.

In general, for the inventory of a particular deposit, the tripartite numbering system of the Temporary Accession

Register precedes the initial letter D (for deposit) to the numbering of the material while for the inventory of a particular temporary loan, put the initial letter TL (for temporary loan) to the numbering of the material. For example, in case of a deposit, the numbering and marking D 93.15.7. S.M. is to denote that the material was registered in the Saputara Museum, as a deposit, the seventh material in the fifteenth accession in 1993.

(9) Cataloguing

The catalogue means a card, a folder file or a book which contains a systematic subject-wise, item-wise, material-wise, utility-wise, period-wise, provenance-wise, community-wise, etc. information about a particular collection or sometimes a batch of collections. It goes without saying that cataloguing is different from accessioning. Therefore, the internal structure of the catalogue card differs from that of the accession register. In this connection, P.G. Gupte (1972) correctly pointed out that "Catalogue cards, in addition to the basic data available in the accession register provide for all additional relevant information regarding museum objects such as detailed physical description, historical data, bibliographical references, condition of the object, record of laboratory treatment etc.[1]"

The primary function of cataloguing is to classify and list the detailed information about particular facts or things with their references systematically. In practice, cataloguing, in the museum context, means systematic classification and analysis of museum materials in terms of museographical and museological point of views which require specialized expertise and much comparative study. Therefore, it is natural that cataloguing a particular museum material consumes much more time than accessioning.

Cataloguing, as earlier discussed, is generally done by the Cataloguer in a large museum after consulting the matter with the curators in-charge, or by the Curator himself in a small museum after satisfactory investigation. In short, the responsibility of cataloguing is placed on the curatorial section, of which a curator should provide the detailed information about a particular museum material. In any case, cataloguing must be done as soon as possible immediately after accessioning a new material. The flexibility of the catalogue is counterbalanced by the general accession number or inventory number in other words, registered number which should be never changed unless

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1. Gupte, P.G., "A Case-History Study of the Registration Methods Followed in the Baroda Museum", *Studies in Museology*, Vol. VI-VIII, Department of Museology, Faculty of Fine Arts, The M.S. University of Baroda, Baroda, 1972, p. 65.

reaccessioning. Prior to cataloguing, the general accession number should be assigned to a particular museum material.

The classification system of the catalogue cards may be determined by the nature of the collection and the way it is to be used.[1] Ethnographical materials will naturally fall into geo-community categories divided by sub-ethnic group, area, period, etc. The utility of collection might make it preferable to have the primary classification by shape so that all baskets or all tools grouped together, subdivided by technique or decoration, or by colour.

The information about geographical origin, period, and maker might then be subordinated to the position ordinarily given to the description.[2] It is possible that a highly specialized collection would have its basic classification by uitility. For example, a group of utensils can be grouped by the utitlity in different spaces like (i) front, (ii) living room, (iii) kitchen, (iv) bed room, (v) attic, (vi) storage, (vii) cowshed, (viii) courtyard, (ix) field, (x) Others. Within these categories, the classification is by material (matter), such as (i) Organic materials; a) Vegetable origin; grass, cotton, flower, leaf, reed, cane, fibre, bamboo, wood, b) Animal origin; cowdung, hide, leather, fur, feather, wool, bone, antler, ivory, shell, (ii) Inorganic materials; a) Non-metal; clay, pottery, terra-cotta, ceramics, glass, stone, b) Metal; iron, lead, brass, bronze, copper, silver, gold, alloy, (iii) Combined materials.

The classification of the ethnographical collections by material may be expanded and the ethnographic collections including archaeological objects may be classified by periods. The above ethnographical collections including archaeological objects can be classified as: (i) Paleolithic; Lower Paleolithic, Middle Paleolithic, Upper Paleolithic, (ii) Mesolithic (ambiguous matter in the Dangs), (iii) Neolithic, (iv) Chalcolithic (unknown in the Dangs), (v) Early historic material (unknown in the Dangs), (vi) Medieval historic material, and (vii) Modern ethnographical material; before the British, under the British, Post-Independence.

Besides, the Dangi ethnographic materials can be classified community-wise as: (i) Bhils, (ii) Kunbis or Konkanas, (iii)

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1. Harty, M.C., "Cataloguing in the Metropolitan Museum of Art", Dudley, D.H. et al., *Museum Registration Methods*, Washington D.C., The American Association of Museums, 1958, p. 136.

2. ibid.

Warlis, (iv) Gamits, (v) Dhodias, (vi) Kotwalias, (vii) Kathodis, (viii) Naikdas, (ix) Dublas, (x) Choudharis, (xi) Dhorkoli, and (xii) Others. Of course, a few minor tribal communities and scheduled castes can be grouped into this column, (xii) Others.

Ideally, the systematic study of Dangi ethnographic materials should be represented by the preparation of catalogue cards. Such a catalogue card should contain the following headings for ethnographic materials:

1) Cl. Code, 2) Cl. Catalogue No., 3) Genl. Acc. No., 4) Name of the object, 5) Classification, 6) Mode of Acquisition, 7) Date of Acquisition, 8) Location in the Museum, 9) Geographic Origin of the Collection, 10) Ethnic / Cultural Group of People, 11) Period / Date of the Collection, 12) Component of the Material, 13) Condition of the Collection, 14) Dimension of the Collection, 15) Technique / Style of the Collection, 16) Utility / Function of the Collection, 17) Manipulation of the Collection, 18) Price / Value, 19) Ref. Collection File No., 20) Ref. Audio-visual Data File No., 21) Description, 22) Date of Recording, 23) Name of the Recorder, 24) Illustration / Photo, 25) Name of the Department, and 26) Name of the Institution.

Cataloguing in a form of card is favoured because of flexibility which is denied in the case of bound registers in India. But in many countries even accession records are on cards for the efficient management of museum records. Especially, in case of cataloguing cards in manual system, duplicate catalogue cards are essential for the purpose of safe management of museum documentation. In this connection, R.T. Parikh (1973) recommended that "One copy of the card should be kept with the Director of the museum" or commonly in the Registrar Office, "while the other copy should be kept with the curator".[1]

As electronic technology is becoming a part of contemporary life, museums also may consider shifting their traditional documentation system to the computerized documentation system to preserve properly their priceless records. Such a temptation is posing dilemmas because of the possible threat to computer data banks. Indeed, accessioning is done for the administrative and legal purposes while cataloguing is done for the research and interpretive purposes. Therefore, depending exclusively on the computer for accession records may not become as popular as the use of the computer for cataloguing where it is perhaps much more effective than manual, paper-based cataloguing.

However, cataloguing provides the museum workers with various data for preparation for exhibition, programming

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1. op cit., Parikh, R.T., 1973, p. 42.

educational activities, planning storage, care and conservation, publications, and further research. Cataloguing is a never ending process because knowledge and understanding of any thing is never complete at any point of time.

The following headings for the descriptive catalogue card are suggested by the UNESCO-ICOM Documentation Centre.[1]

Table 4-12 Descriptive Catalogue Card

Descriptive Catalogue Card

1) No. of the object _____ 4) Classification _____
2) Institution _____ 5) Location in Museum _____
3) Ownership _____
6) Place of origin _____
7) Name of the object or species _____
8) Name of artist, or class, _____
order, family, genus _____
9) Materials of which the item is made _____
10) Description, techniques, _____
possible title, _____
signature, measurements _____
_____
_____
11) Date, mode, source, _____
place of acquisition _____
12) Price paid, estimated value _____
13) Collector, expedition _____
14) Cultural or ethnic group _____
15) Function, use, utilization _____
16) Chronology, doubtful attribution _____
17) Style, school, influences _____
18) History (Record of ownership of the item) _____
19) Conservation, _____
restoration, _____
museographical notes _____
20) Reference _____ Code of Museum _____
Collection file, ____ Negative number, _____ Photo _____

Size 12.5 x 20 cm.

It is desirable that the data standards for cataloguing can be based on UNESCO-ICOM Documentation Centre recommendations.[2]

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1. ibid., p. 35.

2. Oddon, Y., *Guide for the Cataloguing and Analysis of Collections in General Museums*, Paris, ICOM Training Unit, 1973, p. 1, and p. 35.

A "polyvalent" type of record is recommended for preparing a descriptive catalogue card system. Where ethnography section is one of many departments of a museum, a specialized descriptive catalogue card for ethnography may be prepared on the basis of a general polyvalent catalogue card.

But in my view, the above-shown descriptive catalogue card is not adequate for the ethnographic museum documentation because some columns such as column numbers, 17) Style and 18) History are not relevant to the recording of ethnographic materials. In particular, in case of the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), the Catalogue Card consists of fifteen main headings with seventy sub-headings, which extend to four pages in A 4 size[1]. Indeed, the content of the IGRMS Catalogue Card is similar to the Descriptive Catalogue Card suggested by Y. Oddon (1973). In any case, the Catalogue Card of the IGRMS has good internal structure but quite complicated. Therefore, a practical format of the Catalogue Card of the Tribal Museum, Gujarat Vidyapith is given below[2]:

Table 4-13 Catalogue Card, Tribal Museum, TRTI, Gujarat Vidyapith

Obverse

TRIBAL MUSEUM

serial no _____
acc no. _____
local name _____
location :
village _____
town _____
state _____
used by _____
_____
material _____
measurement length _____ breadth _____
used for ☐ daily ☐ special occasions
method of use _____
_____
price _____
date _____
purchased / donated by _____
collected by _____
description _____
_____
_____

Size 13 x 23.5 cm.

Reverse

description _____

Tribal Research & Training Institute
Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad-380014

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1. The author expresses his sincere thanks to the IGRMS and the Acting Director, Mr. Vikas Bhatt for providing this information with him.

2. For reproducing the Tribal Museum Catalogue Card, the author expresses his sincere thanks to the Gujarat TRTI and the Curator, Mr. Arvind Ghosalkar, and furthermore, the Curator, Miss Rafiqa Sultana Sayed who is working at the Bharatiya Samskruti Sangarahalaya of Gujarat Vidyapith.

The above-shown Catalogue Card of Tribal Museum which has fifteen headings included a column on the reverse for describing detailed information about the concerned object. The characteristic of this catalogue card represents a dual function i.e. cataloguing and accessioning, which is nowadays the most popular type of accessioning cum cataloguing card for the smaller ethnographic museums.

The Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda, also has a simple catalogue card which has seventeen headings included on both sides of the card.[1] The content of the Catalogue Card is quite similar to an index card. But the actual size of the Catalogue Card is not a standard one (14 x 20 cm.) but a peculiar size, 15 x 19 cm. The characteristic of the Catalogue Card has dual functions; the main function is cataloguing and the supplementary function is indexing. The format of this seems to be an item index card. For example, the Catalogue Card has a column for "Description", but the limited space of that cannot accept detailed information about physical verification, conservational treatment, bibliographical references, etc. It, therefore, has a column on reverse for "Special Information". The Catalogue Card of the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda is given below:

Table 4-14 Catalogue Card of the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda

(G. P. B.)—(J) Na/28—50,000—7-62

MUSEUM AND PICTURE GALLERY, BARODA

CATALOGUE CARD

Accession No.	Artist :—
Classification No.	Title or object :—
Date of Acquisition :—	Place of origin :—
Source of Acquisition :—	Period :—
Cost :—	Material & Medium :—
	Dimensions :—
Location :—	Height
Condition :—	Width
Alterations & Repairs :—	Depth
	Weight
Photograph	Description

Size 15 x 19 cm.

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1. For reproducing the Catalogue Card, the author expresses his thanks to the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda.

After considering various kinds of catalogue card systems, the suggested descriptive catalogue card for the ethnographic museums is given below:

Table 4-15 The Suggested Descriptive Catalogue Card

Descriptive Catalogue Card

1) Cl. Code _____
2) Cl. Catalogue No. _____ 3) Genl. Acc. No. _____
4) Name of the Item _____ 5) Classification _____
6) Mode of Acquisition _____ 7) Date of Acquisition _____
8) Location in the Museum _____
9) Geographic Origin _____
10) Ethnic / Cultural Group _____
11) Period / Date of the Collection _____
12) Component of the Material _____
13) Condition of the Collection _____
14) Dimension of the Collection _____
15) Technique / Style _____
16) Utility / Function _____
17) Manipulation of the Collection _____
18) Price / Value _____
19) Ref. Collection File No. _____
20) Ref. Audio-visual Data File No. _____
21) Description _____ 22) Photos ; more than one piece

	F.	S.	B./ P.
	3 x 3.5	3 x 3.5	3 x 3.5

22) Remarks _____ 23) Date of Recording _____
23) Recorded by _____ 24) Department of _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 21 x 29.5 cm.

In case of cataloguing of Dangi cultural heritage, a folder type catalogue card may prove more functional. Some museums have already adopted this folder type card cataloguing scheme because it is better than the simple card system. From the viewpoint from the of safe control and management of museum documentation, a folder type of catalogue card gives some benefit to the museum professional. The Prince of Wales Museum of

Western India, Bombay has a Catalogue Folder Card[1] consisting of the total four pages of which the cover page and the reverse will contain information about a particular object and the rest is blank. The Catalogue Folder Card has the size of 18.5 x 27.5cm. On the cover page of the Catalogue Folder Card there are seven headings for information such as 1) Classification, 2) Acc. No., 3) School, 4) Provenance, 5) Period, 6) Title, and 7) Collection. On the reverse of the cover, there are twelve headings for information such as 1) a special block (i) ACC. No., (ii) NEG. No., (iii) Slide No., and (iv) Block No. 2) Classification, 3) Medium, 4) School, 5) Provenance, 6) Period, 7) Title, 8) Dimension, 9) condition, 10) Name of Collection, 11) Description, and 12) Publication.

According to my working experience at the Korean Folk Village Museum, ethnographic materials are best understood when graphic, especially colour prints or at least black and white photographs accompany the information given under specific headings. It encourages and also facilitates quick grasp of image with information. Catalogue folder card index should be useful for Dangi collections. Utmost care is necessary in this work. Specially, a print affixed on such a folder catalogue card should not give distorted idea of the original object. The scale should be specified because size of the original may not be apparent in a print in which the original specimen might be either reduced, same sized or enlarged. For the designing of the Catalogue Folder Card system the above-suggested Table 4-13 Descriptive Catalogue Card is very useful. If the above-suggested form of the descriptive catalogue card can substitute one part of the Folder Card, the other part of the Folder Card should contain a detailed description and /or the photos such as different views: front-view, side-view, back-view or particular view. If combining these two parts of catalogue cards, i.e., text and illustration, they will make a good designed folder card.

One part of the Catalogue Folder Card, i.e., the photography part is suggested in the Table 4-16 (next page) and the other text part of that may be referred to the Table 4-15 Descriptive Catalogue Card:

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1. Regarding information about the Catalogue Folder Card, the author expresses his sincere thanks to the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, especially, the Keeper, Shri M.N. Gandhi and the Assistant Keeper, Mr. Sabyasachi Mukerjee.

Table 4-16 The Suggested Catalogue Folder Card

Catalogue Folder Card

1) Cl. Code _____
2) Cl. Catalogue No. _____ 3) Genl. Acc. No. _____
4) Name of the item _____ 5) Classification _____
6) Front-view Photo Dt._____ 7) Side-view Photo Dt._____
Negative Film No. _____ Negative Film No. _____
Slide Film No. _____ Slide Film No. _____
8)Back-view Photo Dt._____ 9) Particular-view Photo Dt._____
Negative Film No. _____ Negative Film No._____
Slide Film No. _____ Slide Film No. _____

10) Ref. Collection File No. _____
11) Ref. Audio-visual Data File No. _____
12) Description _____
_____
_____
_____
23) Remarks _____ 24) Date of Recording _____
25) Recorded by _____ 26) Department of _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 21 x 29.5 cm.

(10) Index Card

So far as the museum documentation system is concerned, "At least one set of index cards is necessary for every museum".[1] It is important that index cards serve the users concerned with the requisite information about a particular collection. Ideally, "the index cards should bear a photograph of the object"[2], but in practice, it is difficult to attach a photograph on each index card because of financial difficulty in the Indian museums. These cards should be easily controlled and managed by the museum workers and also they should be easily accessible to the public concerned more than classified or sectional accession registers. In this connection, the museum professionals, in particular, Curators concerned can easily arrange or rearrange

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1. op cit., Dwivedi, V.P., 1973a, p. 108.

2. op cit., Morley, Grace, 1973, p. 8.

index cards according to the data category or the classification system like subject, utility, locality, community, period, material location, etc.

In practice, most of the museums in the world do not like to show their classified accession registers or sectional accession registers because these are basically used for administrative purpose. It is necessary that the boxes or drawers of index cards should be located at the front of the introductory gallery or in the corner of the information desk. Otherwise, the users may not pay their attention to the boxes or drawers of index cards and they may have a question whether the museum has such a facility or not for the public. To the museum professionals and the public concerned index cards are very useful for pursuit of information about a particular museum material or the relevant bibliographical references. Indeed, index cards can offer the users with the required information regarding various museum works including collections management, presentation, preservation, interpretation, publication etc.

How many card indexes can be made manually to have access to documentation of Dangi ethnographic materials is a debatable issue. Looking to the limitations of staff, not many museums will be ready to prepare seven indexes to serve as entry devices, namely, utility, locality, community, material, period, location, and subject matter. Specialized ethnographical museums in India have also not done so according to my investigation. But why do ethnographic museums which are concerned with Dangi ethnographic materials require to establish the seven different index cards ? The reason is that the users generally may need to refer the seven different categories of the Dangi ethnographic materials from the actual field to museum show-case. For example, when a Dangi ethnographic material is required to be identified according to the locality and location, it is definitely required to inform from where the item came whether the South Dangs or the North Dangs. It is also necessary to inform whether the item displayed in the show-case or preserved in the storage.

However, what is known as classified index facility to facilitate full use of museum documentation is only a theoretical idea in the absence of more than one such indexes even in bigger museums not to talk of seven classified indexes as described above. In this connection, Museums Association of India (MAI) suggested eight headings for Index Card as ; 1) Accession, 2) Title of object, 3) Period or date, 4) dimensions, 5) Material, 6) Location, 7) Photograph with negative No., and 8) Remarks.[1]

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1. op cit., Agrawal, O.P.(ed.), 1973, p. 140.

But in my opinion, at present it is very difficult to establish six different index card system because of the lack of concerned museum staff, absence of standardized format of index card, inadequate of financial support and the poverty of the public concerned.

In any case, index card should not be confused with the classified catalogue card or descriptive catalogue card. The nature of the index card is quite similar to the catalogue card. But the prime function of the index card is not for "cataloguing" but for "indexing", of which the utility is entirely different from "cataloguing". Particularly, the Index Card of the Indian Museum, Calcutta[1] has unnecessary columns like "Description" and "Collector". It is, therefore, said that the Index Card of the Indian Museum is quite complicated (See, Table 4-17).

Table 4-17 Index Card of the Indian Museum, Calcutta

Index Card	**INDIAN MUSEUM** **Anthropology Section**	
Accession No.:	Name & Classification	Tribe/Cast/ Place of Community collection
Genl. Serial No.:		
Classified listwise Serial No.:	Description	Negative No.:
Name:		
(a) Collection:		Photograph or Sketch
(b) Collector:		
Location:		
Gallery: Reserve:		
Case No..		
Drawer No : Shelf		

Courtesy: op cit., Das, A.K., 1989, p. 114.

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1. The Index Card of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, cited in Das, A.K., 1989, p. 114.

Similarly, a distorted internal structure of the index card is also found in Grace Morley's writing (1973: 8) and V.P. Dwivedi's writing (1973c: 23-25). Unexpectedly, Grace Morley (1973) stated that "For these large cards a great deal of information can be recorded on the same card -- for example references to publication, history derived from noting collections through which it has passed, or any other supplementary information pertinent and available."[1] But in my opinion, this kind of the described internal structure is not for the index card but for the catalogue card.

Moreover, V.P. Dwivedi (1973c) also suggested a distorted index card as: "All such divergent opinions should be recorded on this index card."[2] Furthermore, he suggested a complicated form of index card which contains less important or unnecessary columns like "7) Mode of Acquisition, 8) Description, 9) Published (References), 10) Location, and 11) Exhibition."[3] In any case, these are all distorted or misinterpreted ideas of the index card and should be rectified.

On the contrary, A.K. Das (1989) suggested that "Index cards may be arranged either tribe-wise or function-wise", in other words, "geo-ethnic arrangement is considered as suitable method for identification of their appropriate cultural setting".[4] His analytical and scientific suggestion should be reflected in the form of the index card for ethnographic materials. Ideally, for the efficient management and utilization of the index cards, a group of index cards with a distinctive colour is better than others. In fact, the internal structure of the index card should be flexible and with interchangeable columns according to the specific necessity of index card.

Here, the different categories of index cards for the ethnographic museums are suggested in the Table 4-18 and 4-19:

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1. op cit., Morely, Grace, 1973, p. 8.

2. Dwivedi, V.P., "Acquisition and Registration", in Baxi, S.J., and Dwivedi, V.P., *Modern Museum: Organisation and Practice In India*, New Delhi, Abhinav Publications, 1973c, p.p. 23-25.

3.ibid.

4. op cit., Das, A.K., 1989, p. 68.

Table 4-18 The Suggested Item Index Card

Item Index Card

Cl. Code _____
1) Item / Subject _____
2) Function / Utility _____ Photo
3) Locality _____
4) Community _____ 3 x 3.5 cm.
5) Period / Date _____
6) Material _____ _____
7) Location ;
i) Gallery No. _____ ii) Storage No. _____
iii) Lab. _____ iv) Others _____
a) Bag / Package No. _____ b) Drawer / Shelf No._____
c) Cabinet / Show-Case _____ d) Others _____
8) Reference ;
i) Genl. Acc. No. _____ ii) Cl. Catl. No. _____
iii) Photo No. _____ Iv) AV. Data No. _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 7.5 x 12.5 cm.

Table 4-19 The Suggested Utility Index Card

Utility Index Card

Cl. Code _____
1) Function / Utility _____
2) Item / Subject _____ Photo
3) Locality _____
4) Community _____ 3 x 3.5 cm.
5) Period / Date _____
6) Material _____ _____
7) Location ;
i) Gallery No. _____ ii) Storage No. _____
iii) Lab. _____ iv) Others _____
a) Bag / Package No. _____ b) Drawer / Shelf No. _____
c) Cabinet / Show-Case _____ d) Others _____
8) Reference ;
i) Genl. Acc. No. _____ ii) Cl. Catl. No. _____
iii) Photo No. _____ Iv) AV. Data No. _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 7.5 x 12.5 cm.

IV. 5. Computer Documentation for Ethnographic Museums

A. Use of Computer for Documentation

The idea of using the computer for information storage and retrieval is not new but its application to museum documentation is recent. In the past, documentation was only based on the collections. Most of the records were created to help the curatorial work. Only occasionally the outsiders were allowed or encouraged to have access to the museum records. This would have continued in future also. But the museums were obliged to modernize its working to justify their existence at the cost of public funds.

Another contributory factor was the threat to identity of the communities because of the advance and development in communication and transport. It was a good news that people of the world were coming together and news about one part was getting flashed to other with minimum delay. But a cumulative effect of this was the overcrowding of peoples' minds by so much information which could not be assimilated easily and awareness of the expanding horizons was not easy to reconcile with the identity of groups. Even a nation became merely a part or fragment of once known universe. Slowly and gradually people felt a need to rehabilitate themselves in their own territory and group identity. That required means to reinforce cultural identity.

In practice, the best of such territory or group identity can be found easily from the natural and cultural heritage. Most significant of such materials are part of museum collections. When people started appreciating the potentiality of museums as agencies to protect cultural identity, more and more people began to turn to museums to discover for themselves, their own roots and their own identities. But this cannot be fulfilled by looking at objects alone. What is needed is to see the objects along with the relevant information and in the adequate cultural context.

Therefore, the generations of scholarly curators have spent their lives in collecting information. But that is not available easily because it is mostly hidden in accession registers which are too precious to be made available to the outsiders. The card indexes based on the classified or sectional registers can help but preparing them manually to cover all objects is a difficult and time-consuming task. Also it is nearly impossible to update

the contents of such cards in the light of new researches. In the past, the manual documentation systems in museums were condemned as "Curator-oriented" and not "Public-oriented". The infrastructure of the museums is so limited that the museum workers would not be able to cope up with information retrieval at free will by a large number of people with varied interests.

The computer technology was, therefore, seen as a boon to museums. It is easy to allow access to as many people as possible to any related information. Or, from the information, the computer can identify which museum objects share the common or specific traits, features of characteristics. This kind of perusal of the entire museum records to come to specific conclusion would take much time if carried out manually by a few person on museum staff. But within a few minutes the requirements can be complied by the advanced data processing like the computerized documentation system.

In the past, only the information recorded in words was processed by the computer. But today, with the successive generations of the computers, the images can be stored and retrieved with as much facility as the words. Of course, black and white images have had their own value. But nowadays new colour graphic input, output, facilities have made it possible to record lifelike situations. This has great impact as far as ethnographic documentation is concerned because ethnographic museums deal with ethnography focussing on the man in relation to his environments.

B. Exploitation of the Computer Network for Documentation

Fortunately, the museums all over the world have come together in their search for better computerized information storage and retrieval. The rivalry amongst several large companies which are in the computer business also contributed to the rapid progress in this area. For some years museums were overwhelmed by what these multi-national, mega-companies wanted to offer. But gradually, the museums regained their balance and began search for what is the best for museum profession. Such pioneering work started with the activities of the Information Retrieval Group of the Museums Association of Great Britain (IRGMA) since 1970s.[1] Another specialized agency which has

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1. Roberts, D.A., and Light, R.B., "The Cooperative Development of Documentation in United Kingdom Museums", in Light, R.B., et al. (eds.), *Museum Documentation Systems: Developments and Applications* (MDA), London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 116.

contributed much to the computerized museum documentation is the Museums Documentation Association (MDA). It is true that individually museums would not be able to cope up with the work of exploiting the computer technology for museum documentation. The strength of collections in a single museum is too small to justify huge expenditure required to develop and experiment for efficient software and hardware. But that was possible if they joined hands. This is exactly what provided the initial motivation for accepting new technological solutions to the task of museum documentation.

Prior to the activities of the IRGMA and the MDA, the ICOM's International Committee for Documentation (CIDOC) was established in 1950 and it also played a very vital role in this field.[1] The CIDOC created a Working Party on the Documentation of Museum Collections in 1967. It encouraged discussion all over the world to explore the possibilities of the exchange of data by means of the computer amongst museums which are situated in different countries. As a result, the CIDOC recommended that the use of standardized labels for the identification of objects and standardized catalogue cards and inventories. During the 1960s the model cards and registration forms were designed by Y. Oddon (1968) and incorporated into *Elements of Museum Documentation*.[2]

The value of international effort was so great that the UNESCO organized a meeting of experts on "New Methods of Inventorying Movable Culture Property" in Barcelona in 1976. The recommendations of that meeting urged member states to evolve national policies for the documentation of the cultural heritage. Member states were encouraged to organize national committees to co-ordinate this work. The meeting suggested the categories of information which should be recorded about each cultural heritage.

The CIDOC also has been active in examining the minimum information categories for every subject and evolve data standards for the use of the member states in different countries. An example of this international effort can be seen

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1. Olcina, Paulette, "The Development and coordination of Museum Documentation by International Agency", in Light, R.B., et al. (eds.), *Museum Documentation Systems: Developments and Applications*, London, Butterworths, 1986, p. 310.

2. Oddon, Y., *Elements of Museum Documentation*, Jos, (Nigeria), The Jos Museum, 1968.

in the amalgamation of the computerized records on the part of U.K. Canada, Sweden museums to form unified catalogues and indexes. Thus, it is now possible to plan exchange of data between any museums wherever and whatever they want. Such amalgamation follow the scientific data standards.

In practice, problems of compatibility were discussed at length during two annual meetings, held in Julita, Sweden, 1978 and in Barcelona, Spain, 1979. One of the main reasons why the manual systems of museum documentation are not satisfactory is incompatibility of them in the long run. They prove most useful only to those who make them. In fact, it can be stated with some emphasis that there are as many manual systems of museum documentation as there are curators.

Therefore, even if what is known about collections is recorded it is not all easy to retrieve the information by others without taking active help of the person who has put it in the first place. If any one has serious doubts about this generalization he may try to get information from the manual system in absence of the curator concerned. That is one reason why even after long correspondence with curators, it is difficult to get data from documentation systems to the extent which it would have been possible if more advance techniques of data retrieval were in use.

The coming of the computer into museum also emphasized the need for compatibility of the data standards. The manual arrangement appears to be planned without reference to other museum systems. Those who work in museums but wish to keep the use of the data to themselves will not be ready to use the computer for museum documentation. They will find unlimited excuses for not converting manual catalogue system into the computer system. It is only when they will appreciate how many opportunities they are losing by sticking to the old systems, that they will agree to make use of the computers. But it should also be remembered that the computer will not help unless data precision and standardization are accepted as absolute norms.

If the computer is to accept the data, store it till recalled, and bring it out, then each museum object has to be uniquely identified as different from all others about which data are also recorded in the system. In the manual system an accession number is permanently assigned to each object which remain with it forever. In computerized data, there are specific manner in which a unique tag is attached to each object so that commands can be given to recall the data about that object as and when required. This is about the object identification and can be called as the address of the object in a computer record.

C. Data Standards and Preparation for the Computer System

The next matter is the decision about the data categories. One data category is used to record information under one heading in the manual documentation system. Data categories for ethnographic material can be dealt with as follows: If information is not known, in the manual system, a card may not include any and the space can remain blank. But this cannot take place in the computer in-put. The computer cannot accept blank entries. At least the absolutely essential data categories, so determined in the system, cannot be omitted from any catalogue record. This is one reason why computerization will make a lot of qualitative difference in ethnographic documentation.

At present, there is no due stress on completing even essential inquiries to fill catalogue card entries. As it is done for other disciplines, an elaborate cataloguing manual should be prepared for each subject area. Such manual can explain the purpose of each data category so also the kind of information, the kinds of variations which may occur in each and the exact form to be used for computer can recognize. With the packages of programmes, the computerized data can be retrieved in a suitable manner through a printer or for display on screen. It is found that if such services are readily available, then production of file cards for indexes become redundant. For the users such as museum workers and the public concerned, information can be retrieved on a screen and if required for special needs it can be brought out as "Catalogue lists". These can always be amended as and when new information about old objects is put into change and update almost within a few minutes. In other words, the updated information is waiting to be recalled by a touch of the fingers. One need not to wait for hours, days if not weeks or months to know about any and every object in museum collections. Even if lists and screen retrieval are very popular forms, many computer using museums also create various catalogue cards, the master catalogue card, i.e., descriptive catalogue card has photographs for identification. Copies of it may then become units in cross-reference indexes.

Discussion on computerized museum documentation cannot be completed without reference to David Vance, President of the Museum Computer Network in Stony Brook, New York. In 1975, he

published a book entitled *Manual for Data Preparation.*[1] It is a manual for museum computer network as well as data preparation which outlines step by step the conventions for the work. It deals with the various files which consist museum records. Each record is the description of one entry which may be an object, a person, a cultural group, a document, a place, or a concept. The Museum Computer Network defined a separate series of tags for each of these types of records. Blocks of these records can be sorted out in terms of identification, indexing and free text, controlled text, etc. Conventions for controlling inputs and output appearance were also defined in the manual. The manual of data preparation is a very good example for the museums which wish to come together for computerized documentation.

Another landmark was made by R.G. Chenhall (1975) who wrote on *The Museum Cataloguing in the Computer Age.* In case of American museums, the first serious attempt was made to use the computer system for museum profession in 1966.[2] The largest computer centre of that time, namely, Ling-Temco-Vought was approached by Helmuth Naumer, Executive Director of the Fourth World Museum of Science and History, U.S.A. He would have succeeded if other museum directors would have joined hands with him. However, he was ahead of the time for such an innovative step. In fact, the computer system and facility were not cheap and widely unknown at that time. But things have changed dramatically. With the possibility of the computers reading typed records directly and converting them into computer networks, museum documentation work can easily be computerized.

D. Necessity and Effectiveness of Computer Documentation

It is now widely and agreed that registration, accessioning and cataloguing are three separate functions. Also that the registration and accessioning can only be carried out manually. So methods useful for registration and accessioning in the small or big museums will not differ and can continue in the conventional manual ways. But cataloguing work has been always a problem when undertaken manually. Cataloguing is essentially to retrieve information. Hence, manual cataloguing may be efficient

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1. Vance, David, *Manual for Data Preparation,* Stony Brook, Spectra, Center for Contemporary Arts and Letters, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1975.

2. Chenhall, R.G., *The Museum Cataloguing in the Computer Age,* Nashville, The American Association for State and Local History, 1975, p. 3.

only when collections are small not more than a few thousands. Manual methods cannot manage if collection run into thousands.

In practice, most of the Indian museums do not have any cataloguing system at all. My experience in searching for data on Dangi cultural objects in different Indian museums led me to agree with this generalization. But it is true of many other nations as well. Individually curators have succeeded in developing systems that help them to locate objects related to their own specializations, but nowhere a universal museum-wide method of retrieving information about all kinds of objects is in evidence.

One reason seems to be that such over-all system covering each item, in each specialized area of a museum is not absolutely necessary as an indispensable part of the museum documentation. They can manage well without such perfect holistic cataloguing system. But this is short sighted view which prevailed when demands for information made on museums were very small in number and very simple by people who had patience to wait for it for days, weeks or even months.

But the things have changed. I wished things were different so that in three years of my research period much more could have been achieved. I could have collected information expeditiously. Hundreds of ethnographers would like to come to India to know the great cultural heritage as well as diversity of its complex tradition and different ways of life. If the data retrieval systems of Indian museums are improved, they will attempt to get the data from the relevant museums for the scientific analyses. Needless to say, they will thank Indian museums for making their visits worthwhile. The basic point is that the computer retrieval system will give emphasis on uniformity and data standards which will pave way to build inter-institutional amalgamation of data or merger of data on specialized collections wherever they may exist in a country like India which has great distances. The research worker is frustrated when he finds that data in the possession of remote museums are not accessible to the extent to which it is necessary to examine his hypotheses. No sincere research worker would come to conclusions in the absence of full data especially when he knows that the museums do possess collections related to his field of specialization. It is, therefore, very urgent that museums and museum workers take bold steps to turn to the computer for museum documentation.

All India Museums Conferences organised by Museums Association of India (MAI) have dealt with the problems of using latest technology for museum work. One held at Varanasi had that as its special theme. Another held at Allahabad, 1991 had the theme on "Museum Infrastructure" which I attended. It appears that many museum workers who were members of MAI are inclined to

use new technology. The Indian National Committee of ICOM had a special workshop in New Delhi to explore the use of computer for museum documentation and many demonstrations were arranged to show various kinds of software and hardware available to the museum profession. The "Professional Enrichment Programme" organized by ICOM Asia Pacific Organisation was held in Calcutta for the middle level professionals of the museums from south East Asia in 1991. I participated in this programme which arranged various kinds of modern museum practice such as: (i) computer documentation; data entry, data retrieval and data printing, (ii) advanced audio-visual data process; B/W photographic work included film development and print, silk-print, video shooting and dubbing video tapes, and (iii) modelling museum objects. Particularly, the computer data process and video shooting were popular programmes to the participants. The programmes showed how computer technology could be available to museum works. Recently, various kinds of computer documentation systems have been developed by the different museums in the European, North America and Far East countries. Advanced computer technology and professional museum workers in computer sections have generated enough experience and expertise to launch a big movement of computerized museum documentation in the museum world.

Yet it remains true that the work of registration and accessioning will continue to be done manually. However, the cataloguing can be and ought to be computerized. The difficulties in this respect include development of data standards and sharing of the data standards pose a special problem because of the multiplicity of controlling authorities and old institutional conventions, control systems and procedures of identification, classification, numbering, marking etc. It appears that almost two parallel catalogue-oriented systems will operate in museums, one according to the old familiar conventions and another following strict data standards, controlled terminology and uniform instructions in preparing computer cards manually with a view to using them to build regional, zonal or national computerized cataloguing systems. Only special grants and special projects will facilitate such parallel systems. But once the effectiveness of the computerized system will become clear then the manual systems will remain only for some parts of museum documentation like identifying, marking, measuring, etc. in all museums, big or small.

In future, the National Documentation Centre under the Government of India and leading museums such as the National Museum and museums of national importance may lead to computerize all cultural heritage of India. Especially the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal and Tribal Research institutions at the state level should lead to a computerized data bank of all ethnographical information in India

based on their field work projects for tribals and their collections. There are indications that already some steps are contemplated to move in that direction. But still there are difficulties mostly because the concerned museums are overburdened with work far beyond what they can manage with their limited infrastructure. What is attempted in this thesis may suggest some concrete ways in which ethnographic documentation can be achieved if museums pool their resources for the work.

IV. 6. Procedure of Computer Documentation

A. Data Categories

As C.E. Guthe[1] (1959) has pointed out and R.G. Chenhall (1975) has confirmed, registration accession and cataloguing are three separate duties of a museum. Registration is not the same as accessioning. To register an object is to assign to it an individual place in a file or register of the museum record, and it cannot be confused with any other object listed.

An accessioning is a chronological notion of transaction by which one or more objects, from one source, at one time, were received by a museum. Each "accession" refers to a single transaction, and an accession is not necessarily a single object. It is an acquisition which refers to a single object. In other words, to register is to deal with single object. To accession is to deal with a batch of objects of which each object is added to.In many museums there are two forms of documentation or more than two.

Registration and accessioning can be done manually in bound registers or on cards as has been done recently in some museums. The cataloguing was always done in the past in the form of cards. Even for computerization making such cards become the first step procedure. Each card contains a registration number which is placed on that object for positive identification. That is followed by other items of information. So one of catalogue information deals with the identity of each object including ownership. The second part consists of a set of recorded observation about the physical features like colour, length, breath, height, weight, even identifying marks, surface

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1. Guthe, C.E., *The Management of Small History Museums*, Nashville, The Ameriacn Association for State and Local History, 1959.

qualities, etc. Then follows those observations which help in classification of that object. This is done in standardized frames which are called data standards or data categories.

The museum objects are of such nature that many objects share common recorded observations. For example in ethnographical collections, many things may be from the same place, same community, same season, related to same custom, ritual, etc. If all such common information is to be repeated to record all objects to which they are applicable, computerization will be very efficient: Though it makes much more expenses it is possible to link common records automatically so that a basic object record can call forth the so called "person-record", "place-record", "subject-record", etc. which has equal reference mentioned in the "object record". Hence, lots of common information can be retrieved as if they are part of an object-record without duplication to save waste of time and expenditure. This is what happens when suitable data categories are created. In any case, the following data categories are relevant:

1) Object identification; location in specific museum or other public or private collection for identification, 2) History of the object, 3) Cultural origin, 4) Temporal origin, 5) Spatial origin, 6) Description of the physical characteristics, 7) Description of the contents and decoration, and 8) Typological and functional classification.

Each data category is assigned a number for identifying the record of "data field" within the computer records. This is done by annotation class number. Data categories suggested for ethnography are as follows: 1) Record number 2) Recording institution 3) Photograph negative number 4) Recorder 5) Date of recording 6) Method of acquisition 7) Date of acquisition / Expedition 8) Donor 9) Owner 10) Possessor 11) Reference 12) Manufacturer 13) Artist 14) Artisan 15) Earliest possible date 16) Latest possible date 17) Cultural period 18) Developmental stage and/or style 19) Cultural classification 20) Place of discovery 21) Condition 22) Material 23) Technique 24) Colour 25) Form or shape 26) Dimensions 27) Features, attached parts 28) Number of parts 29) General description 30) Specific subject 31) General subject 32) Marketing 33) Decorative motif document 34) Year of publication 35) Identifier 36) Date identified, and 37) Object class.

An important step of catalogue system is in the designing of adequate forms. It is these forms which will form the basis for key punching as they are without retyping several such forms can be studied as examples.

B. Computer Input

The next procedure is to create computer inputs based on manually filled cards. Card punches, magnetic tapes, etc. are alternative methods for creating such inputs. Remote on-line terminals are devices which are connected to central computers somewhere else. By this way, a computer operator can enter his data directly into the computer after finding out if the system is ready. This is found useful when the hardware is engaged on time-sharing basis. Perhaps under circumstances of Indian museums, this method will be effective.

At present time, various kinds of computer software for efficient museum work are available. They are known as computer programmes, of which a programme is a chain of commands used by computer operator. In general, a ready-made computer programme should be modified according to the specific requirements of each museum. For the purpose of cataloguing museum professionals may select the SELGEM system. It is acronym for SELF-Generating Master for general information processing, especially, for research oriented projects.[1] Another is GRIPHOS which is an acronym for General Retrieval and Information Processing for Humanities-Oriented Studies.[2] The GRIPHOS computer programmes and technical support are made available through membership in the Museum Computer Network. Ethnographical documentation will be facilitated by making use of the GRIPHOS system.

Many output alternatives are available for computerized cataloguing updated lists can be made for scholars. Or computerized catalogues can be produced by using printers to make hard copies. Also indexes can be made by preparing cards for cross-references whenever ethnographical collections acquire. The system can be helpful to curators, exhibition experts, researchers, and other potential users. But the foundation for such spectacular development will depend on the museum computer network when several and ideally all museums having ethnographic collections are linked together so that any institution will have access to what is recorded anywhere in the future will be an exciting work. The computer operations of sorting, merging, indexing and storing data in every institution will contribute to such cataloguing. On selective basis the required data will be brought together to suit the needs of specialized catalogues on festivals, on icons, on ornaments, on rituals, on tools, etc.

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1. op cit., Chenhall, R.G., 1975, p. 8.

2. ibid.

Incidentally, it may be necessary to remember that computerized information retrieval will succeed not so much because of the hardware or software put to use as the human ingenuity and capacity to follow the predetermined data standards. The jargon of computer technology and competition amongst computer agencies may overwhelm innocent museum curators into believing that the most sophisticated and therefore the most expensive equipments and programmes will solve all their problems of cataloguing. But sooner they realize that the human factor is the cornerstone of data-banking success, the better it would be for the profession. The success in that area will depend entirely on a good man-machine relationship.

Also it may be remembered that the computer will not check the correctness of information which is fed into the system. If the ethnographer or museologist has bungled and failed to scrutinize his data, the errors will only distort the data. Such a failure is worse than allowing similar errors on manually prepared index cards because they will easily be noticed. Data fed into the electronic system is most likely to remain invisible till it is seen on screen or printout. Therefore, checking and rechecking of the data and the correspondence between what is computerized with what was to be computerized is an important procedure.

The experts have also warned that it is wrong to place all the available information about each object into the relevant computer file. This is not the right use or most economical use. Cataloguing is essentially a "finding device". Computerized catalogue should contain only selected and carefully controlled types and quantities of data such as the key word indexes which will direct the user to those categories of data which ethnographers will think as significant finding devices. The contents of the computerized catalogue files will not duplicate the documentation available on every ethnographic issue. The heart of cataloguing is its ability to very quickly direct the attention to the relevant information and not to pour out full texts on all topics.

The computer is not a giant machine in which all ethnographic information is to be contained. That will be very wasteful. The computer is a system which very quickly analysis thousands of entries properly stored under data categories about thousands of individual objects in the possession of hundreds of institutions and individuals. It offers in a systematic sequence lists of all objects which have the specific feature or strings of features or vice versa. Also when changes are to be introduced in the data, the computer can update in few minutes the entire data so that any time the cataloguing is perfect manual method cannot match the computer efficiency because the time lag between what the curators know and what is recorded on cards is almost nothing in case of computerization.

C. Data Correction

The above referred problem of verification of input data was more acute when the data was manually typed. Many difficulties were experienced in correcting every word or sign or letter which was a part of the command in the programming. The recent progress in the use of "word processors" has improved the chances of data correction. Basically, a word processor is a simple data processor. It also has a keyboard like a normal typewriter. But it stores the data on floppy diskettes or magnetic discs and it can show the data entered on the screen. This electronically stored data can be edited, corrected, amended, even excluded if so designed by this procedure. Every input can be checked and perfected by supplementary programmes such as "Spelling checker" and "Thesaurus" before it becomes the final data.

As far as hardware is concerned, it refers to all electronic and electro-mechanical equipments which perform the computing operations. All parts of a hardware consist of units for inputs memory logical operations and outputs. A museum may plan to install its own computer facility provided it has resources and enough scope for computerization. Such a facility can serve museums not only in documentation but also to visualize exhibit planning and preparing for museum publications.

At the present time, it is possible to see a visualization of the computer design and display in the Axis Institute in Baroda[1]. Mr. Ilesh Vyas as a graduate of the Department of Museology, the M.S. University of Baroda manages and demonstrates the computer design and display for museum works. To install various kinds of the requisite computer facilities, he invested the total amount about five thousands U.S. dollars. So the Axis Institute has good computer facilities such as micro-computers, key boards with manipulators, monitors, printers, scanners and various kinds of software, namely, Auto Cad and Window (for design and display), Banner and Font (for graphic and signage), Page Maker, D-base, Lotus, Word Star (for graphic and general data process, etc.

Very complex functions were demonstrated on screen by the systems which were given a series of sequential commands and appropriate data inputs. Based on the measurements, an exhibit was conceived by the system and projected on screen. Moreover,

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1. The author expresses his thanks to Mr. Ilesh Vyas and Mr. Jignesh Vyas for their kind cooperation and demonstration.

the three dimensional museum work such as a gallery design and objects display was simulated on the screen when appropriate commands were given. The simulation showed how an exhibit might look if a person was physically present in the gallery and walked around it. The wonder of wonders was the manipulation in terms of materials of which the structural components were conceived in terms of different kinds of wood, fixtures, fabrics, colours and textiles. Not only that but the incandescent tubes and intensities of individual lighting unit could be manipulated electronically by suitable commands. Lighting fixtures can be manipulated in free to the lower, straight, upper, close-focus, etc. Its corresponding with illumination and shadows can be seen on the screens, even while visually going round the exhibit. Such a computer programme can do quickly what it takes thousands of man-hours to reproduce on paper or graph in scaled models or life-size models. Therefore, the uses of computer for museum work have increased and will increase in various ways. Here we are concerned only with their uses for museum documentation.

The Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) also has good computer facilities, namely, Mackintosh II C type computer drives, key boards with manipulators, dot and laser printers, graphic and drawing boards, scanners and various kinds of software like Auto-Cad, Ventura, Window, D-Base, Lotus, Page Maker, Word Star, etc. for multi-purpose use. It facilitates various kinds of data process for the museum administration, museum documentation, museum education and museum presentations included graphic designs, displays and printed matters. It is believed that the IGRMS facilitates and manages the best computer facilities for museum work among the Indian museums at present.

The small museums have many options in the matter of hardware and software. The low price micro and mini-computers have brought the use of computer within the reach. For the efficient museum work, medium-size museums and smaller museums in a community can collaborate with each other to facilitate the co-shared computer facilities. In respect of data storage, floppy diskettes have a limited capacity. At the present time, they are the most popular media since they are cheaper and smaller than others. To the contrary, magnetic discs have a sturdy structure and they are more reliable than floppy diskettes. But it essentially requires that the head of magnetic disc should be very clean because of high sensitivity.

Recently not only a computer drive unit, its keyboard and monitor but also a computer printer are available on lease basis. In my experience in the standard year of 1993, monthly rent fee for a set of computer facilities including a drive unit (40 MB), a keyboard and a 16" B/W monitor demands for seventeen hundred Rupees (approximately, fifty five U.S. Dollars). In this case, the lease agency provides the client with free primary software,

namely, D-base, Lotus, Word Star and MS-Dos. From case to case the lease agency gives the clients a guarantee for free service for checking computer hardware and occasionally scanning and cleaning programmes corrupted by virus infection.

In any case, the demands of the users in case of Indian museums may not be very urgent because people who come to museums are accustomed to show enough patience. Therefore, even floppy-based documentation may succeed initially since it is comparatively cheap. At least it will give valuable experience of working with the computer. In practice, the basic operations which computers perform on museum data are sorting of the records, merging the new records with the old, correcting records, updating of records, selecting specific records, printing out some records. Many such programmes are available for appropriate use.

D. Data Processing and Application

Several procedures for the use of computer are well known. They form a sequence of tasks like data processing in the first-stage and second-stage test, listing and editing cycles, correspondence checking data, scrutiny back-up, searching words, output, quality control and preview of the printed matter.

So far as computerization of museum documentation is concerned, it is possible to agree with the broad conclusions by Paulette Olchina (1986), Head, UNESCO-ICOM Documentation Centre. She made a significant statement that "Obviously it (museum documentation) would have been impossible to hit upon one universal and ideal system, with standardized procedures accepted by all, but at least a few major systems would have been compatible with each other, and would have provided international research with the possibility of making rapid and logical use of the collections of almost any museum." [1]

Cataloguing and inventories of collections were left to the individual curators. Consequently, in a big museum, different sections of that may follow separate documentation systems. This also led to a large number of systems particularly in the nations where there were no centralized museum authority. The international projects by the international agencies like ICOM and UNESCO through the national committees promise great strides in the field. But their work is hampered by the lack of coordination and standardization of procedures which are

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1. op cit. Olchina, Paulette, 1986, p. 307.

essential for computerization. The UNESCO-ICOM Documentation Centre in Paris organized several conferences under the auspices of the ICOM and the UNESCO like the one on modern methods of inventory for movable cultural property held in Barcelona in 1977. Emphasis was laid in them on the computers for their speedy storing, organizing and communicating museum data. The CIDOC has been coordinating information and existing systems at the national level. It adopted certain minimum data categories for museum documentation. Gradually, there is a growing awareness in museums and professional museum workers in relation to the significance of better coordination in the field of museum documentation and computer technology for museum work.

IV. 7. Audio Visual Data

A. Audio Data

It is undeniable fact that the tribal culture can be hardly appreciated unless understanding its socio-cultural factors with the interrelationship between the tribal and his environment. Some simple things may pass as insignificant till their association with tribal culture is known to others. A typical example is of *nagli* flower. It is a small pretty flower. But how much does it figure in the special songs of Dangi girls ? The songs which were translated for me speak of great sentiments expressed by girls towards their loved ones. So the *nagli* flower which is seen in a particular season is not a simple specimen of botany or a sample of agricultural product. It signifies something deep down a young heart. When generations of youth express their emotions through *nagli* flowers, a definite cultural reality is created and the flower becomes a theme in tribal songs. It sometimes becomes a part of mythology. *Nagli* flower has a special place in a popular myth in the Dangs when an angel comes to live in a Dangi family and becomes a daughter in-law. The story ends on pathetic note but the conclusion that the angel promises to live in the form of *nagli* flower for the sake of her love for the hero makes the flower culturally significant. *Nagli* is an important Dangi crop and used as staple food by all. Quite likely, peoples' gratitude to *nagli* must have been the main reason for such myths. But the poetry and songs have elevated the flower so high in peoples consciousness that no presentation of the Dangi culture will be complete without reference to its association with the youthful activities. The song in which the *nagli* flower figures is on an outdoor landscape background. It describes the special movements of the young girl wearing the *nagli flower* in her hair.

The museums will not be able to bring out such cultural highlights if they have no audio recordings of Dangi songs.

Several songs have several references to *nagli flowers* in hair of Dangi girls. They all must be a part of museum documentation. Ethnographic museum documentation can be completely achieved if museums pool their resources for the work.

To record audio data the following form of field-card is suggested for the ethnographic museum documentation:

Table 4-20 The Suggested Field-Card for Audio Data

Field-Card for Audio Data

1) Cl. Code _____
2) Cassette No._____
3) Name of Title / Item _____
4) Recording Place _____
5) Address _____
6) Name of Performer _____
7) Ethnic / Cultural Group _____
8) Ref. Collection File No. _____
9) Ref. Visual Data File No. _____
10) Recording Date & Time_____
11) Remarks _____
12) Recorded by _____
13) Department of _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 6 x 9 cm.

B. Visual Data

In the Dangs there are two names for *Bhagat* who is a traditional priest. Some are called *Supcholya Bhagat* who have preliminary knowledge of medicines for the men and the domestic animals such as cow and poultry. The name *Kagdya Bhagat* is given to a priest who is really expert in medicine. Both such priests have to follow certain ways of life very scrupulously and without exception. Their diet, ways of taking food, behaviour, speech are highly codified. For example, while they are in the process of taking meals, no one should utter certain words referring to bitterness, tiger excretes, poison, snake. In case these words are heard, the priests stop eating. They undertake fast till the following day evening. A number of such unusual ways of life and taboos are not material culture but definitely of great cultural interest.

Needless to say, photo documentation, movies, audio and video documentation must be a part of museum documentation. This is specially important because, reportedly, many Dangis have on average close understanding of at least 30 to 40 medicinal herbs.

A medicinal specialist may know about 500- 600 medicinal plants. How important it is to have audio visual documentation of their special uses.

It is interesting that tribal medication is not a simple affair which consists of over dozen ways like eating, drinking, massage, inhaling through nose, eye drops, administration of medicine in ears, branding different parts of body numbering thirty two, applying leach on navel to suck blood, smoking with herbs, using steam of medicinal plants, tying *talsmans*, applying heat, sprinkling medicinal fluid, hitting wooden pegs in doors of tribal huts placing scythe in doorways, smoking medicine through *bidi*, and a number of mysterious acts with the chanting of *mantra* or secret words, drinking special mediated water, heated in red-hot iron ladle, etc.

A large number of tribal physical problem are treated by a *Bhagat* who has to be a herbal pharmacist cum curer. Audio visual documentation of their practices should be attempted by museum professionals. All over the world indigenous medicine is receiving attention under the heading "Alternative" medical systems. Museums dealing with Dangi ethnography should also possess audio visual documentation by undertaking extensive field work. It will be successful if the Dangis are involved in making such records.

It is usually not easy to get exact information on tribal medicines. There is a published account in vernacular about medicine to counter snake bite. In a tribal area a *Bhagat* went to forest area alone and was bitten by a deadly snake. Since he knew the antidote to snake bites he managed to go to the tree to get the antidote. But by that time the poison of snake had affected the *Bhagat*. He fainted near the tree. People began searching for the *Bhagat* after waiting for long for him to return home. They found him lying unconscious, nearly dead. The son of the priest was amongst the group who found the fainted priest. He guessed that his father must have been bitten by snake and he must have walked towards the tree for antidote. This logical thinking helped him in using the bark of some tree by applying it on the wound and by putting a few drops of the liquid made out of the bark in his mouth. It worked well. The *Bhagat* was revived he saw the group of people. When he came to know that his son has given him the antidote, the father did not thank his son. The *Bhagat* was angry to know that the secret medicine is known to others because of his son. In the wild rage, the *Bhagat* killed his son. This episode demonstrates the great limits to which traditional *Bhagats* keep their knowledge in their own way.

But things are changing gradually. Ethnographic museum documentation should include traditional knowledge of medicines. It is urgent that audio-visual records of such events should be made because mere herbaria will not be enough.

A large number of Dangi rituals are basically in the form of chanting and music. Their range may be from the happy occasions of child birth to the ceremonies connected with death. The words which are spoken and sung make sense only to the insiders. They may refer to a very complicated mythology and the notions about life after death. Similarly, the rituals are directly connected with the worship of deities. In case of illness they are also accompanied with beating of drums and singing songs. If there is good documentation of the sounds, the instruments can be appreciated and understood fully. Otherwise, their playing musical instruments and singing songs appear only queer to outsiders.

Such methods will be also useful in explaining process of art and crafts, and various kinds of performing arts. So the suggested field-card for recording visual data is given below:

Table 4-21 The Suggested Field-Card for Visual Data

Field-Card for Visual Data

1) Cl. Code _____
2) Colour / B/W Negative No._____
3) Name of Title / Item _____
4) Exposure Place _____
5) Address _____
6) Name of Person _____
7) Ethnic / Cultural Group _____
8) Ref. Collection File No. _____
9) Ref. Audio Data File No. _____
10) Exposure Date & Time _____
11) Remarks _____
12) Photo by _____
13) Department of _____

The Dangi Ethnographic Museum

Size 6 x 9 cm.

C. Application of Audio-Visual Data

The literature on tribal ethnography is full of references to the above forms of documentation. Story telling, ethno-music and oral traditions should be recorded in the Dangs. The National Policy on Culture has made special reference to the urgency of such documentation of intangible cultural material which will make cultural objects meaningful. The main issue is the standardization of data formats. The crucial point is about good indexing because it is not easy to identify what is where in searching the tapes or cassettes. Better documentation methods are now available owing to high technology and facilities.

In the context of ethnography of the Dangs, the audio documentation of literary stories, dialects and personal reminiscence of individual Dangi about their experiences should prove invaluable. These reminiscences can be considered as primary sources for the ethnographers. Tape recordings in the field can be made more easily than video shooting because the instruments are not much conspicuous and can be easily concealed. But here the ethics of documentation should not be forgotten. These tapes should be preserved with a complete documentation after indexing according to communities, themes and places. They should be given the names of the persons whose sounds were taped. They also should be transcribed as soon as possible which is not easy task. For the safe preservation they should be duplicated and kept in the museum audio-visual section. If the museum has no specialized audio-visual section, they should be kept in the museum library or reference room.

Recently good references to the Dangi dialects are available. Ethnographic museums which are concerned with the Dangi Culture should have dialect dictionaries or at least glossaries for museum professionals or the potential users who are interested in Dangi dialects. They also should arrange a special audio-visual booth for giving visitors an opportunity to watch or listen Dangi audio-visual data. The modern museum practice is to provide such audio-visual data to the visitors. The museum visitors also can enjoy watching or listening the Dangi intangible cultural materials in the museum gallery or the audio-visual booth. Alternatively, headphones may be installed to listen to the audio tapes even in the public galleries (See, Pl. 5-6-2 & 5-7-1).

Quite a lot of thinking about museum documentation in India appears to be unaffected by "Knowledge Explosion" in contemporary world situation. Strangely there is still a strong tendency to look at the work of recording information as an institutional duty. What is understood is in the limits of an individual museum. This is highly retrograde or backward attitude. What a single museum can achieve is very little. At least in case of tribal ethnography, no museum is isolate. Each museum must know what other museums are doing. So each ethnographic museums has to collaborate with each other for better museum work, especially, museum documentation, museum education and museum presentation. As much as possible, recording audio-visual data on Dangi cultural materials should be made. In any case what ethnographic museums can interpret as the Dangi culture is greater than what they can collect in piecemeal manner. For this reason museum interpretation related documentation should be continuous and comprehensive. It is said that each community has its own traditions and ways of life which must represent its own identity. Therefore, each community has to be identified in relation or contrast to other communities.

Appendix 4-1 Data and Documents Related to Collection Items

Accessioning objects and specimens
- Temporary receipts
- The numbering system
- Permanent accessions
- Extended loans
- Loans for special exhibits
- Inspection
- Measuring and marking
- Appraisals for donors and insurance
- Reception: shipments and storage
  - Reception of collections
  - Handling and shipment
  - Safekeeping and storage

Identification at time of acquisition
- Survey questionnaires
- Field notes
- Techniques for identification, dating, etc.; use of audiovisual means

Cataloging and classification
- Descriptive and scientific catalogs
- Guides and forms used by catalogers
- Types of cards
- Visual and mechanical types of appliances
- Location file

Automatic retrieval: the use of the computer

Reference Files
- All information on the object
- Confidential information
- Restrictions derived from copyright

Check on displaced collections (files or tabs)
- Collections being processed
- Outside shipments; loans and deposits
- Exchanges
- Articles disposed of

Collections and audiovisual techniques
- Photography and photographic file
- Color slides
- Movies and film file
- Sound recordings and recording file

The museum library
- Selection and acquisition
- Reference works
- Classification and catalog

Information on the collections for the use of the public

Source: op cit., AAM, *Museum Studies: A Curriculum Guide for Universities and Museums*, 1973, p. 26.