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DOCUMENTATION OF TRADITIONAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PRACTICES IN BOKA KOTORSKA: BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CONTEMPORARY ACCESSIBILITY

Abstract

Purpose: *The paper examines archival documentation related to traditional social and cultural practices in Boka Kotorska, with a focus on their role in preserving elements of intangible cultural heritage and their relevance in contemporary accessibility.*

Methodology: *The research is based on the analysis of archival records preserved in the Historical Archives of Kotor, including documents related to traditional games, social events, tombola, lotteries, and bocce playing. The study applies a qualitative approach, focusing on the interpretation of historical sources and their contextual significance.*

Results: *The analysis shows that archival documentation provides valuable insights into the continuity of social and cultural practices, even during periods of social and historical challenges. These practices played an important role in maintaining community cohesion, solidarity, and local identity.*

Conclusions: *Archival records represent a key source for the preservation and interpretation of intangible cultural heritage. The application of modern information technologies, particularly digitization, enables improved accessibility and broader use of archival materials, contributing to their long-term preservation and relevance.*

Keywords: *archival documentation, Boka Kotorska, intangible heritage, digitization, accessibility.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Boka Kotorska is a region in which the past is reflected not only in architecture, stone-built heritage and written monuments, but also in customs, traditional games, festivities and various forms of social gathering. Such practices provide valuable insight into the everyday life of the local community, its habits, interpersonal relations and patterns of cultural identity that have been shaped and transmitted across generations.

Archival sources are of particular importance for the study of such phenomena. Documents created in the course of the activities of administrative, social and other institutions often contain much more than the administrative information for which they were originally produced. They may also preserve evidence of public events, traditional games, tombola, lotteries, bocce, festivities and other forms of communal life, thereby constituting a valuable source for understanding the social and cultural history of Boka Kotorska.

On the basis of such archival material, the past can be examined through the everyday life of the population, rather than solely through major historical events. Individual records make it possible to trace forms of entertainment, social interaction, public gatherings and the commemoration of various events, while also revealing the continuity of certain traditions that, although transformed, have survived to the present day. An archival document therefore represents not only a material record, but also an important trace of intangible cultural heritage.

This paper is based on an analysis of preserved archival material from the Municipality of Kotor fonds, held by the Historical Archives of Kotor. Through the examination of different types of records-correspondence, requests, permits, minutes, programmes and notifications, documents relating to social and cultural practices in Boka Kotorska were identified and selected. The archival sources examined cover the period from the first half of the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, allowing particular phenomena to be considered over a longer chronological span. Special attention is devoted to lotteries and tombola, traditional games and bocce, sporting and cultural events, dancing, cinema, and the Dance of St. Tryphon. The aim of the paper is to demonstrate, through direct analysis of these sources, how an administrative record originally created for a practical purpose can today serve as evidence of everyday life and intangible

cultural heritage, as well as how modern technologies can contribute to its accessibility and new forms of interpretation.

2. THE MUNICIPALITY OF KOTOR FONDS AS A SOURCE FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

The archival basis of this research is the Municipality of Kotor fonds (OK), held by the Historical Archives of Kotor. According to the *Guide to the Archival Holdings* of the Historical Archives of Kotor, the fonds covers the period from 1787 to 1943 and consists of 276 fascicles and 211 auxiliary volumes, amounting to a total of 41.30 linear metres. At the time the Guide was published, the fonds was described as partially archivally arranged (Milošević, 1977, 54). This chronological span makes it possible to trace different aspects of urban life across several political and administrative periods.

The history of the fonds reflects the complex political and administrative changes through which Kotor passed. Although the directly preserved records of the Municipality of Kotor fonds begin in 1787, part of the municipal documentation is also preserved in other fonds created by different administrative authorities. During subsequent archival work, the fonds was supplemented with newly acquired material, among which records transferred from old court deposits in 1974 are of particular importance. These records cover the period from 1787 to 1823 and are predominantly of a non-contentious legal nature (Milošević, 1977, 57–58).

The responsibilities of the Municipality covered a wide range of matters directly related to the everyday life of the population, including the management of municipal property, roads and public spaces, trade and markets, public order, health and sanitary matters, public charity, construction activities and the issuing of permits. Although its name, organization and internal structure changed over different administrative periods, the local administration retained an important role in regulating the public life of Kotor (Milošević, 1977, 59–60).

Of particular relevance to this study is the fact that the *Guide to the Archival Holdings*, in its overview of the fonds, lists documentation relating to municipal music, the development of tourism, municipal taxes, support for singing societies and the Boka Navy, hospitality establishments, and other aspects of public and social life. The fonds also preserves information on the activities of local insti-

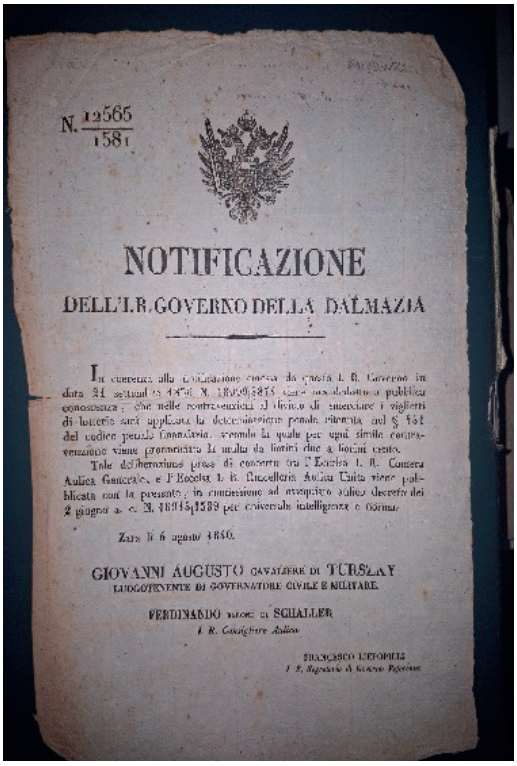
tutions and associations, public order, education, trade and cultural activities, making the Municipality of Kotor fonds an important source for reconstructing the social and cultural life of the town (Milošević, 1977, 56).

The archivist plays a particularly important role in such an approach, as the profession is not limited solely to the physical preservation of documents. Professional identification, description, contextual linking and interpretation of archival material make it possible to understand an individual record within the context of the fonds, the period in which it was created and the circumstances of its creation. Such an approach also highlights the importance of professional archival work and of facilitating researchers' access to archival records (Klasinc, 2015, 45). Only through this kind of professional engagement does administrative documentation acquire broader research value and become a source for reconstructing social and cultural phenomena that were not necessarily the primary reason for its creation.

3. ENTERTAINMENT, SOCIAL GATHERINGS AND CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

3.1. LOTTERIES AS A FORM OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT AND FUNDRAISING

Among the forms of entertainment and public activity that can be traced through the records of the Municipality of Kotor fonds are lotteries. The preserved documents provide insight into their legal regulation, organization and social function across different historical periods.



N. 12565
1581

NOTIFICAZIONE

DELL'I.R. GOVERNO DELLA DALMAZIA

In esecuzione alla determinazione emessa da questa I. R. Governo in data 24 settembre 1838 N. 18259|3815 viene colla presente pubblica conoscenza, che nelle contravvenzioni al divieto di smerciare i viglietti di lotterie sarà applicata la determinazione penale ritenuta nel § 451 del codice penale Austriaco, avvenuto la quale per ogni simile contravvenzione viene pronunciata la multa da fiorini due a fiorini cento.

Tale determinazione presa di concerto tra l'Eccelsa I. R. Camera Aulica Generale, e l'Eccelsa I. R. Cancelleria Aulica Unita viene pubblicata con la presente, in conniessione al rescritto aulico decreto dei 2 giugno a. c. N. 18845|1589 per universale intelligenza e norma.

Zara li 6 agosto 1840.

GIOVANNI AUGUSTO CAVALIERE DI TURSZAY
LUOGOTENENTE DI GOVERNATORE CIVILE E MILITARE.

FERDINANDO nobile di SCHALLER
I. R. Consigliere Aulico.

FRANCESCO LUPORINI
I. R. Segretario di Governo Reggente

Figure 1. Notification of the Imperial-Royal Government of Dalmatia concerning unauthorized trade in lottery tickets, Zadar, 5 August 1840. Source: DACG, IAK, OK, VIII–173. (Photograph by the author.)

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Austrian authorities had already regulated lottery activities in detail, particularly the circulation of lottery tickets and related tax obligations. A notification issued by the Imperial-Royal Government of Dalmatia in 1840 warned against the unauthorized trade in lottery tickets and prescribed financial penalties for offenders (DACG, IAK, OK, VIII–173). The following year, a decision was issued exempting lottery tickets and certain games from stamp duty (DACG, IAK, OK, IX–80).

These documents do not confirm that a specific lottery was held in Kotor during this period, but they provide evidence of the legal and administrative framework within which lottery activities were regulated.

An interesting example from the period of the First World War is a notice preserved among the records of the Kotor municipal administration concerning a charitable lottery organized in Vienna for the benefit of the "Schwarz-gelbes

Kreuz", an organization intended to provide assistance and public food relief to those in need. A distinctive feature of this lottery was that numbered pocket calendars, priced at one krone each, were issued instead of conventional lottery tickets. One of the principal prizes advertised was a 15-horsepower "Wanderer" automobile valued at 6,000 kroner, while the public drawing was scheduled to take place in Vienna on 12 April 1915 (DACG, IAK, OK, CLXXII–253/1). The preservation of this notice among the records of the Kotor administration does not allow the conclusion that the inhabitants of Kotor directly participated in the lottery; it does, however, show that information concerning such charitable initiatives reached the local administrative authorities.

Within the archival material examined from the interwar period, the humanitarian and social function of lotteries is particularly evident. Documentation of the District Administration in Kotor from 1927 provides evidence of lotteries organized to assist war invalids. A letter dated 2 December 1927 states that the Invalids' Cooperative in Belgrade had been authorized to organize the Second Great Invalids' Lottery, with the drawing scheduled for 17 April 1928. The same document notes that the proceeds from the previous lottery had enabled the establishment of invalids' cooperatives in other parts of the country, as well as the provision of loans and assistance to war invalids and their families (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIX–575).

The character of these events is further illustrated by preserved promotional material relating to the First Great Lottery of the Central Committee of the Association of War Invalids of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The principal prizes included 25 luxury five-seat "Praga" automobiles, while the price of a single lottery ticket was 100 dinars. The announcement emphasized that the net proceeds were intended to assist war invalids, the mothers and children of fallen soldiers, and to support the construction of memorials dedicated to those who had died in the war (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIX–460/1). The preserved material also reveals how the lottery was presented to the public: attractive prizes were used to encourage ticket sales, while the humanitarian purpose of the initiative was simultaneously emphasized.

A similar model can be observed during the 1930s. On 31 January 1936, the Belgrade Regional Committee of Jadranska straža (Adriatic Guard) informed inter-

ested institutions that the main drawing of the Adriatic Guard Lottery would take place on 9 February of the same year. The proceeds were intended for the Adriatic Guard Home on the Adriatic, where schoolchildren from across the country were to be provided with opportunities for rest and recuperation. The letter requested assistance with the sale of lottery tickets, and the preserved copy indicates that 25 tickets had been sent for sale (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXXIII–201).

These examples demonstrate that lotteries represented more than games of chance. They simultaneously served as a form of public entertainment, a means of encouraging public participation, and a method of raising funds for humanitarian, social and other community needs. Archival records therefore make it possible to use the seemingly ordinary practice of selling lottery tickets to examine the broader social context in which such activities were organized, as well as the involvement of local authorities and the population in initiatives that extended beyond the local community.

3.2. TOMBOLA AS A FORM OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT AND CHARITABLE ACTIVITY

Tombola occupied a particularly important place among forms of public entertainment in Kotor, while at the same time serving a pronounced charitable function. The preserved archival material shows that it was not merely a game of chance, but a publicly organized event held within the urban space, with the presence and supervision of the competent authorities.

On 4 February 1936, the Commission for Public Charity in Kotor informed the Municipal Administration that a public tombola would be held in St. Tryphon Square on Sunday, 9 February 1936, at three o'clock in the afternoon. The letter requested that, in accordance with established practice, the Municipal Administration appoint a representative to attend the event (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXXII–203). The location itself indicates that tombola formed part of the public life of the town and took place in one of its most important public spaces.

A more detailed picture is provided by the record of a public tombola held in Kotor on 9 February 1941. The event was organized by the Commission for Public Charity on the basis of authorization issued by the Ministry of Agriculture on 27 November 1940, and its primary purpose was to raise funds for the poor (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLI–150).

The record shows that 3,600 lottery tickets were stamped, of which 3,234 were sold. Each ticket was accounted for at a value of two dinars, amounting to a total of 6,468 dinars, while the tickets were actually sold for three dinars each. One dinar from every ticket sold was allocated to the Winter Relief Fund (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLI–150).

Three types of prizes were available to participants: a ***terno*** worth 300 dinars, a cinquina worth 500 dinars, and the main tombola prize worth 1,000 dinars. The record also preserves the names of the winners, thereby giving the document additional value for the study of everyday urban life. The ***terno*** was won by Josip Grgurević, an apprentice from Škaljari, and Tripo Niković, a postal clerk, while the cinquina was won by Milema Martinović from Kotor. The main prize – the tombola – was jointly won by Vice Mijan from Tivat and Jovan Ivanović from Kotor (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLI–150).

These details show that the tombola attracted participants from Kotor and its immediate surroundings, while the recording of the occupations of individual winners provides a more direct insight into the social composition of those taking part. Of particular importance is the fact that the record contains not only the results of the drawing, but also information on the financial distribution of the proceeds. A total of 450 dinars was allocated for the state tax, while part of the net proceeds was designated for the construction of an Invalids' Home (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLI–150).

The documents from 1936 and 1941 therefore show how public entertainment, urban space and charitable activity were interconnected in the social life of Kotor.

4. TRADITIONAL GAMES AND EVERYDAY LIFE

The social life of Boka Kotorska did not unfold solely through formal ceremonies and organized events, but also through numerous forms of communal gathering in which games, song and entertainment played an important role. Traditional games were performed on the occasion of weddings and religious celebrations, as well as during every day and seasonal work, while in certain periods dance gatherings were organized on a regular basis (Šušić, 2021, 35–36).

The study of traditional games provides valuable insight into everyday life and social relations in Boka Kotorska. Their significance lies not only in the manner in which they were performed, but also in their ability to provide information about

ways of life, social development and the cultural patterns of the local community. Research into these practices, which can be traced back to the nineteenth century, has contributed to their documentation and preservation, although the surviving material relating to traditional games is more limited than that concerning songs. For this reason, their study is particularly important for reconstructing social customs and forms of gathering that characterized the everyday life of the population of Boka Kotorska (Šušić, 2021, 17–18).

4.1. BOCCE AS PART OF THE SOCIAL LIFE OF BOKA KOTORSKA

Bocce occupies a particular place in the social life of Tivat and the wider area of Boka Kotorska. According to Slavko Krstović in *Sport u Tivtu: Mladost jedne istorije*, its presence in Tivat can be traced back to the beginning of the twentieth century, with one of the earliest recorded examples being the construction of a bocce court in 1903 on the site where the Hotel "Mimoza" is located today. During the first decades of the twentieth century, bocce was played at several locations along the Bay of Tivat, while the surviving records and photographs indicate that the game formed part of the everyday life of the local population long before it developed into an organized competitive sport (Krstović, 2011, 44).

Particularly valuable are the records of bocce courts in Radoševići, Kalimanj, Đurđevo Brdo, Donja Lastva and other locations, which show that bocce was not confined to a single playing field or club, but represented a widely practised local activity. In this sense, the bocce court was not merely a place of sporting competition, but also a space for gathering, social interaction and everyday communication within the local community (Krstović, 2011, 44).

The presence of bocce in the everyday life of Kotor is also documented in a record from 1943 concerning the "Miramare" tavern. Its owner, Stana Raccetta Luković, in a request submitted to the competent authorities for an allocation of sugar to be used in serving coffee, also refers to "giuoco di bocce" (DACG, IAK, OK, CCLXI–199). Although this reference appears within an administrative case concerning supplies, it represents a valuable trace of the presence of bocce in the social life of Kotor during the wartime period.

After the Second World War, bocce gradually developed into a more organized competitive sport. Krstović identifies 1952 as the beginning of a more pronounced

competitive phase, while during the 1960s numerous bocce clubs were established in Tivat and more formal forms of competition were introduced (Krstović, 2011).

4.2. SPORTING COMPETITIONS AND ORGANIZED SPORT

The development of organized sport in Kotor is reflected in the activities of the "Primorac" Sports Club. In a letter addressed to the Municipal Administration on 21 November 1927, the club stated that it had been promoting football in Kotor for several years and was also seeking to establish additional sports sections. The document also refers to financial difficulties and requests regular financial support from the Municipality, demonstrating that the development of organized sporting life also depended on the support of the local administration (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIX–506).

A particularly interesting example of an organized sporting event is the bicycle race organized by the "Primorac" Sports Club on 13 August 1927 along the Kotor–Prčanj–Kotor route. The start of the competition was scheduled for 4 p.m., while, in order to ensure that the event could proceed without interruption, traffic involving both vehicles and pedestrians was temporarily prohibited along the relevant section of the road (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIX–88/2). This document shows that sporting competitions were not merely a form of entertainment, but organized public events that required cooperation between sports clubs and the local authorities.

5. PUBLIC EVENTS AND CULTURAL LIFE

The cultural and social life of Kotor was shaped not only by major public celebrations, but also by the activities of numerous singing societies, Sokol organizations and other associations, visits by cultural and artistic groups, concerts, public performances, academies and dance events. The preserved archival records show that the municipal administration was actively involved in the organization of such events through the issuing of permits, financial support for individual societies, and cooperation in the preparation and reception of visiting organizations. In this way, archival documents make it possible to examine not only individual cultural events, but also the broader role of the local administration in shaping the public and cultural life of the town.

5.1. CULTURAL SOCIETIES AND VISITING GROUPS

A particularly valuable source is the municipal response to a questionnaire concerning the "activities of the town in the artistic and cultural field." The document states that the Municipal Administration provided financial contributions to the numerous cultural societies active in Kotor and also subsidized the local civic band. Together with local cultural associations, the Municipality participated in organizing larger events and in receiving cultural and artistic groups visiting Kotor. The document also records the existence of the museum of the Noble Body of the Boka Navy, which contained a collection of old paintings, distinctive traditional costumes, weapons, flags and other objects. At the same time, it notes that the town did not have its own theatre, library or reading room, although private libraries and libraries belonging to various societies, rich in older literature, did exist, as did the local weekly newspaper "Glas Boke" (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXXIV–136).

This picture of cultural life is further confirmed by individual archival records from 1927. The Serbian Singing Society "Sloga" from Sarajevo, founded in 1889, addressed the Mayor of Kotor concerning a planned tour and concert performances. The Society intended to visit several towns, including Kotor, and in its letter requested information regarding transport, accommodation and the conditions for holding a concert. The planned group consisted of approximately 50 members – 20 women and 30 men (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIII–432/1–2). The document shows that cultural visits involved not only an artistic programme, but also substantial organizational cooperation with the local administration.

A similar example is provided by the announced visit of the Nikšić Singing Society "Zahumlje". On 21 April 1927, the Kotor Municipal Administration informed the public that the Society would visit the town on 26 April "for the purpose of mutual acquaintance and the manifestation of cultural and national unity", while a concert evening was also announced for the same day at the "Dojmi" café (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIII–433).

5.2. PUBLIC EVENTS AND SOKOL ACTIVITIES

Public spaces in Kotor were also used for events of a different character. On 9 September 1927, the Sokol Society in Kotor requested permission to hold a public

exercise in front of the municipal building, beginning at 3:30 p.m. For the purposes of the event, a temporary intervention in the area in front of the building was also requested in order to install a horizontal bar, with the obligation to restore the site to its previous condition after the event (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIX–330). This document shows that Sokol activities were also present in the central urban space as organized public events that required the approval and cooperation of the local administration.

In the same year, the Sokol Society in Kotor informed the Municipal Administration that the Belgrade I Sokol Society, which was spending the summer in Đenovići, intended to organize an academy in the park in front of the "Dojmi" café, for which permission from the local authorities was requested (DACG, IAK, OK, CXCIX–56). These examples show that squares, parks and areas in front of municipal and hospitality establishments played an important role in the public and social life of the town, serving as venues for organized cultural and sporting gatherings.

5.3. CINEMA AS PART OF THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE OF KOTOR

Preserved archival documentation shows that the cinema in Kotor continued to operate during the wartime period, although its activities were accompanied by economic and administrative difficulties. A particularly valuable document from November 1941 concerns the company "Vuković – Cinematografo, Cattaro". Under the municipal regulations then in force, the cinema was required to pay a municipal entertainment tax of 19 centesimi for each ticket sold. The document states that, for several months, the prescribed obligations had not been settled and the required declarations had not been submitted. Nevertheless, taking into account the exceptional circumstances of the preceding months and the difficulties faced by the cinema, the competent authorities were prepared not to initiate proceedings, provided that the outstanding liabilities were settled and that ticket sales were properly recorded in the future (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLV–255).

Additional information about the cinema premises is provided by a document dated 1 August 1943, in which Trifone Vuković of Kotor requested authorization to obtain four cubic metres of fir timber for urgent repairs to the building containing a space identified as "CINEMA" (DACG, IAK, OK, CCLX–166). Although administrative in nature, this document provides valuable evidence concerning

the physical premises of the cinema and efforts to maintain the building despite wartime shortages.

Considered together, these two documents demonstrate how administrative records created in connection with taxation and building maintenance can provide information about the cultural life of the town that was not the primary purpose of their creation. Records of ticket sales and municipal taxation point to institutional supervision of cinema activities, while the 1943 request for building materials indicates efforts to keep the cinema premises in functional condition during wartime. In this way, seemingly routine administrative records become valuable sources for the study of the cultural and social life of Kotor.

5.4. DANCE AND SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT

The presence of organized dance events in Kotor can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century. A record of the Kotor Municipality from December 1851 refers to the holding of a "Ballo nazionale", together with information indicating musical accompaniment and the organization of the event (DACG, IAK, OK, XIII–135/1A–2). This document represents a valuable early trace of dance as an organized form of public and social life in Kotor.

Preserved documents from January 1941 provide particularly interesting insight into everyday forms of social entertainment. The "Hrvatski sastanak" Society from Škaljari informed the Municipal Administration that it would hold a dance in its premises on 5 January, scheduled to take place from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLI–8).

Only a few days later, the Croatian Singing Society "Tomislav" in Škaljari announced a dance to be held on 12 January 1941 in its society premises (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLI–43). The same society also reported another dance for 26 January, beginning in the afternoon (DACG, IAK, OK, CCXLI–128).

The fact that notices for several dance events have been preserved from a single month indicates that such forms of entertainment were not exceptional, but rather a regular part of social life and the activities of local associations.

These documents illustrate the regular presence of dance events in Kotor's social life and the role of local associations in their organization.

6. THE KOLO OF ST. TRYPHON: TRADITION, CEREMONY AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The study of the traditional games and dances of Boka Kotorska contributes to a broader understanding of the way of life, social relations and cultural development of the local community. Interest in recording these practices can be traced back to the nineteenth century, while the documentation of traditional games has played a particularly important role in preserving and transmitting knowledge of earlier forms of social and cultural life (Šušić, 2021, 17–18).

Traditional games in Boka Kotorska developed within a distinctive cultural environment and preserved a number of local characteristics in their performance. In the scholarly literature, they are classified within the Adriatic dance zone, with particular emphasis on the characteristic Boka style of performance and a division into circle dances, couple dances and imitative dances. Among the circle dances, the kolo of the Boka Navy occupies a particular place, situating it within the broader corpus of traditional dance practices of Boka Kotorska (Šušić, 2021, 29–30). Such a classification makes it possible to understand the kolo not merely as a dance form, but also as part of the local ceremonial and cultural tradition.

Traditional games were closely connected with the social and ritual life of the community. They were performed during weddings, religious celebrations and other gatherings, as well as on occasions associated with the everyday and seasonal life of the population, such as grape harvesting and olive processing. In certain periods, dance gatherings were organized very frequently, demonstrating that dance was not only a form of entertainment, but also an important setting for social interaction and communal participation (Šušić, 2021, 35).

The kolo of the Boka Navy is distinguished by both its composition and its manner of performance. It is a male dance performed by an even number of participants. A particular feature is the way in which the dancers are connected to one another, holding handkerchiefs during the performance. These characteristics reflect the clearly defined structure of the dance and its strong connection with the ceremonial tradition and cultural identity of Boka Kotorska.

A particularly significant archival trace of this tradition dates from 1838. In documentation created in preparation for the journey of the King of Saxony through Dalmatia, the programme planned for Kotor includes the phrase “Ballo così detto

di S. Trifone", together with a regatta in the bay and the presentation of persons wearing various traditional costumes (DACG, IAK, OK, VII–130/2). The very fact that the Dance of St. Tryphon was included in a planned programme intended to present the town to a distinguished guest indicates that, as early as the first half of the nineteenth century, it was recognized as a characteristic element of the local ceremonial and cultural tradition. The document is therefore particularly valuable because it records not only the existence of this practice, but also the way in which it was incorporated into the public representation of Kotor's cultural distinctiveness.

During the twentieth century, forms of entertainment and social gathering gradually changed. Traditional games were performed less frequently at dances and celebrations, while modern forms of dance increasingly took their place. Šušić points out that some formerly widespread games gradually almost disappeared from living practice, making their recording and documentation particularly important for the preservation of cultural memory (Šušić, 2021, 43). In this context, archival documents constitute an important source for tracing the continuity, transformation and former social significance of these practices.

7. FROM ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS TO CONTEMPORARY ACCESSIBILITY

The contemporary development of archival practice is increasingly connected with the application of information technologies in professional archival procedures. Novak points out that, in modern archival institutions, a substantial proportion of professional processes is already supported by technological solutions, whose implementation depends on technological development, the standardization of professional procedures and an understanding of the importance of new technologies in archival practice (Novak, 2025, 107). The digital environment therefore creates new possibilities for accessing, searching, linking and using archival material.

Contemporary technologies also make archival material accessible beyond the traditional framework of the reading room. Modern archives increasingly address different categories of users and the wider public, while digitization and online access contribute to the greater visibility and use of archival sources. Previous

research on the role of archives as intermediaries has emphasized the importance of broader access to archival material, communication with users and the adaptation of archival activities to contemporary social needs (Nenezić, 2025, 218–219).

Documents concerning traditional social and cultural practices can be linked into thematic units and presented through digital collections, virtual exhibitions and educational content. In this way, records relating to games, festivities and public gatherings acquire new possibilities for interpretation, contextualization and presentation to contemporary audiences.

Digitization, however, should not be understood merely as the technical creation of a digital copy. To retain its archival and research value, a digital record must be linked to an appropriate archival description, reference code, information on its creation and its historical and social context. Without this professional framework, a digital copy remains an isolated image, whereas archival processing enables it to be properly understood, connected with other sources and used for research, educational and cultural purposes. Contemporary technologies therefore do not replace professional archival work, but expand its possibilities and accessibility. Top of FormBottom of Form

8. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the selected archival material demonstrates that the social and cultural life of Boka Kotorska can be explored through a range of seemingly routine administrative documents that today possess a much broader research significance. Correspondence, permits, minutes, programmes and notices relating to lotteries, tombola, bocce, sporting competitions, cultural events, dance, cinema and traditional games make it possible to reconstruct different forms of gathering, entertainment and public life. Their value lies not only in the individual pieces of information they contain, but also in the possibility of identifying continuity, change and the social significance of particular practices by linking documents from different historical periods.

It is particularly important that the analysed material shows how many activities that initially appear to have been forms of entertainment or everyday social gathering also fulfilled broader social functions. Lotteries and tombola were connected with charitable and humanitarian purposes, bocce also served as a space

for social interaction and local communication, while cultural societies, public events, dance gatherings, sporting competitions and cinema formed an important part of Kotor's social and urban life. The Kolo of St. Tryphon represents a particularly significant example of a tradition whose archival traces make it possible to examine its place within the ceremonial life and cultural identity of Boka Kotorska.

These examples confirm that an archival document should not be regarded solely as a record created within an administrative or official procedure. Its broader value becomes visible when it is connected with other sources, with its temporal and social context, and with the processes that shaped the life of the local community. This also highlights the importance of professional archival processing, since the identification, description, interpretation and contextual linking of records make it possible to understand an individual document as part of a broader picture of the social and cultural past.

Contemporary information technologies further expand the possibilities for the use of such material. Through digitization, professional description and thematic linking of documents, their accessibility can be increased, research can be facilitated, and new forms of presenting cultural heritage can be developed. In this way, the archival material of the Municipality of Kotor fonds does not remain merely a testimony to the past, but becomes a foundation for new interpretations, further research and the contemporary presentation of the cultural memory of Boka Kotorska.

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POVZETEK

Prispevek obravnava arhivsko dokumentacijo o tradicionalnih družbenih in kulturnih praksah v Boki Kotorski na podlagi gradiva fonda Občina Kotor, ki ga hrani Zgodovinski arhiv Kotor. Izhaja iz predpostavke, da dokumenti, nastali za upravne namene, pogosto ohranjajo informacije, katerih zgodovinski in kulturni pomen presega njihovo prvotno funkcijo. Korespondenca, dovoljenja, zapisniki, programi, obvestila in drugi dokumenti so zato obravnavani kot dokaz institucionalnega delovanja ter kot viri za proučevanje vsakdanjega življenja, družbenih odnosov in kulturnega spomina.

Izbrano gradivo zajema obdobje od prve polovice 19. do sredine 20. stoletja. Analiza vključuje loterije in tombole, balinanje, organizirani šport, javne prireditve, kulturna društva, sokolske dejavnosti, ples, kinematografsko dejavnost in kolo svetega Tripuna. Te prakse so se razlikovale po obliki in namenu, vendar so bile vse povezane z javnim in družabnim življenjem lokalne skupnosti ter so pogosto vključevale sodelovanje z občinskimi ali drugimi javnimi oblastmi.

Dokumentacija o loterijah in tombolah razkriva tesno povezanost zabave, sodelovanja javnosti in dobrodelnosti. Dokumenti iz let 1936 in 1941 kažejo, da so javne tombole združevale družabna srečanja, institucionalni nadzor in zbiranje sredstev v humanitarne namene. Tradicionalne igre in športne dejavnosti omogočajo dodaten vpogled v vsakdanje življenje. Posebej pomemben je dokument iz leta 1943 o gostilni »Miramare«, saj se omemba giuoco di bocce pojavlja v upravni zadevi glede dodelitve sladkorja. Ta primer ponazarja, kako se lahko informacije, pomembne za družbeno in kulturno zgodovino, ohranijo v dokumentih, nastalih za povsem druge namene. Dejavnosti športnega kluba »Primorac« in

kolesarska dirka na progi Kotor–Prčanj–Kotor kažejo na vse bolj organizirano športno življenje.

Arhivski viri o kulturnih društvih, gostujočih pevskih skupinah, sokolskih dejavnostih, javnih prireditvah, plesnih srečanjih in kinematografski dejavnosti razkrivajo raznoliko mestno kulturno okolje. Vključenost občinskih oblasti kaže, da je bilo kulturno življenje odvisno od sodelovanja med društvi, ustanovami in lokalno upravo. Dokumenti o kotorskem kinematografu iz let 1941 in 1943 pričajo tudi o njegovem delovanju, obdavčitvi in prizadevanjih za vzdrževanje prostorov v vojnih razmerah.

Posebna pozornost je namenjena kolu svetega Tripuna kot izrazu obredne tradicije in kulturne identitete. Dokument iz leta 1838, nastal v okviru priprav na potovanje saškega kralja po Dalmaciji, v programu za Kotor vsebuje izraz »Ballo così detto di S. Trifone«. Uvrstitev plesa med vsebine, s katerimi naj bi mesto predstavili uglednemu obiskovalcu, kaže, da je bil že v prvi polovici 19. stoletja prepoznan kot značilen element lokalne obredne in kulturne tradicije.

Raziskava poudarja, da se širša vrednost arhivskega gradiva razkrije s povezovanjem dokumentov iz različnih obdobij in njihovo interpretacijo v zgodovinskem, družbenem in institucionalnem kontekstu. Strokovno arhivsko prepoznavanje, popisovanje in interpretacija so zato bistvenega pomena. Zadnji del prispevka obravnava sodobne informacijske tehnologije in poudarja, da digitalizacije ne smemo omejiti na izdelavo digitalnih slik. Digitalizirani dokumenti ohranijo polno arhivsko in raziskovalno vrednost le, če so povezani z ustreznimi popisi, signaturami in kontekstualnimi informacijami. Tako lahko fond Občina Kotor služi kot vir za upravno zgodovino, obenem pa tudi kot podlaga za nove raziskave, izobraževanje in sodobno predstavljanje kulturnega spomina Boke Kotorske.