Cuban digital collections: an approach for collaboration and innovation.

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The Office of the Historian of the City of Havana (OHCH) is a Cuban public cultural institution, founded in 1938. It is in charge of managing the 500-year-old cultural heritage of the Historic Center. Since its founding, the welfare of citizens and visitors has been its main focus of work, and culture among its main pillars. To achieve its goals, OHCH is developing a digital transformation plan based on smart city concepts. "The transformation of a city into a smart city should aim to improve the quality of life of the people who use it, both residents and visitors." (Chorabi et al, 2012)

The proposed poster will show one of the results of this digital transformation plan: the OHCH digital collection management system. Based on Omeka (www.omeka.org) it is available at https://coleccionesdigitales.ohc.cu.

It is a virtual space where digital objects are produced and managed from the digitization of the analog collections of Cuban memory institutions. Its main purpose is to provide universal and collaborative access to our cultural wealth, even when for various reasons it is not exhibited in our heritage institutions or is dispersed. It also allows to reproduce, in a standardized way, the relationships between all these objects and between them and the visitors.

The development of this digital tool is part of the International Cooperation project called "The Historic Center of Havana, towards a smart city model" funded by the European Union and the City Council of Barcelona. It has also received the contribution and experience derived from the Humboldt Digital Project (ProHD), developed by the OHCH and the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences. ProHD focuses on knowledge exchange in the field of Digital Humanities. It has provided the OHCH with a methodology and theoretical body that has enabled the implementation of a workflow that yields the expected results. OHCH Digital Collections responds to the need to cover the cultural dimension that involves the processes of identification of citizens with their heritage, their environment and the creation of a collective memory.

The workflow implemented has 5 stages, for which the OAIS model (ISO 14721,2003) is taken as a central reference. The first stage is the selection of the cultural assets to be incorporated into the digital collection, according to an established criterion based on the complexity and diversity of our institution and the collections that compose it. Then the digitization and description of

the new digital object is carried out, where the cataloging work done over the years is reused, whether or not it adheres to standards. New digital data are also incorporated. For the execution of this phase, Federal Agency Digital Guidelines Initiative (Rieger, 2016) were consulted. The third stage corresponds to validation and homologation, which ensures compliance with the Dublin-Core standard, other schemes such as MADS or MODS are also used. Then, the digital objects and their descriptions are uploaded and linked to the management system. Then, finally, publication and communication are performed. The development of all the stages of this workflow, as well as each referential model consulted, was adapted according to the conditions of the national context, in which it is important to include the economic, political and cultural reality of Cuba, being a country technologically limited by the economic blockade of the United States, which forces in many cases to bet on free, sustainable and scalable software solutions, supported by the support of collaboration and international exchange.

Innovation and collaboration have been the keys to the development of OHCH's digital collections. Multinational, inter-institutional and disciplinary collaboration has made it possible to achieve the expected results. Several Cuban institutions have joined forces to recover resources scattered throughout the country, which would otherwise lose their seriality or integrity as cultural phenomena. Multidisciplinary work has made it possible to share digital objects from museums, libraries and archives, which, when integrated, offer a more complete vision of the cultural or historical phenomena they represent.

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