



## Reflections of the academician of AUAS Fedor Schmitt on the museum audience of 1910-1920s and the relevance of their study in the context of museum sociology in Ukraine (1990-2000s years)

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The aim of the research is to study the origins of the actual direction of the museum activities development in Ukraine — museum sociology, which has been described in the significant array of publications starting from the early 1990's. Those publications are focused on different aspects of learning of needs, motivations, expectations, behaviors, a social-demographic portrait and categories of the museum audience. It has been shown that the attention of the Ukrainian museum staff to the discussed aspects is not only limited by year 1991. The scientific heritage of the academician of All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences Fedor Schmitt (1877-1937) has been analyzed by the author of the study in order to separate aspects of his activity that can become the certain foundations of the study of the museums audience (museum sociology) both in the days of the scientist and in modern Ukraine. The Soviet system not only denied his progressive views, but condemned them to death. It has been summarized by the author that most Schmitt's papers on the issues of the museum audience were published during the scientist's work in Kharkiv in 1912-1921. It is quite predictable that the issue of the museum audience was studied by the heritage saver and art scientist. Beginning of Ukrainian school of museology, where the leader was Mykola Bilyashivsky, the director of Kiev Museum of Antiquities and Arts (National History Museum of Ukraine), happened within the Archaeological Commission under the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. It was led by F. Schmitt. The draft charter of commission, designed by him, pushed to the study of the theory and practice of museology in all its spheres. Schmitt's ideas on museums that had to be built on the territory of the Russian Empire, which suffered from the First World War, were formed under the influence of his travels to cultural centers of Europe. Although none of F. Schmitt works before the beginning of 1920s included direct mentioning of the sociological studies in the museum, but he outlined the foundations for the study of social-demographic, psychological parameters, an attitude of various social and professional groups to the museum, the impact of the museum on the society and vice versa and so on. In the middle 1920s, working outside Ukraine already, the scientists saw that the value of sociology was understood by the government. The situation changed in less than 10 years, when attacks on intellectuals began. It is possible to make the conclusion that part of Schmitt's scientific heritage and his steps in practical museum activities can be used as certain foundations of the modern Ukrainian Museum Sociology. Works, published by Schmitt, have never been reissued. However, his original views on the audience should attract the attention of the Ukrainian museum staff. It is also actual as there exists the lack of knowledge about the lower chronological bound of the arising interest of the Ukrainian museum staff to the study of the audience, at least in the 20th century.

**Keywords:** Fedir Schmitt; museum sociology; museology; museum audience; history of museums in Ukraine

### Роздуми академіка ВУАН Федора Шміта щодо музейної аудиторії 1910-1920-х рр. та актуальність їх вивчення у контексті музейної соціології в Україні (1990-2000-ні рр.)

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Стаття присвячена дослідженню витоків актуального напрямку сучасної музейної діяльності в Україні – музейній соціології, що з поч. 1990-х рр. відображено у значному масиві публікацій із різних аспектів вивчення потреб, мотивацій, очікувань, типів поведінки, соціально-демографічного портрета і соціальних категорій аудиторії музеїв. Узагальнено, що увага українських музейників до розуміння потреб, мотивацій і взаємодії з дійсними та потенційними відвідувачами має рамки, що виходять за 1990-ті рр. Виходячи із зазначеного, у пропонуваній статті проаналізовано наукову спадщину академіка ВУАН Шміта Ф. (1877–1937) для виокремлення віх його діяльності, що можна розглядати як певні підвалини вивчення аудиторії музеїв (музейної соціології), у т. ч. в Україні. Узагальнено, що більша частина праць, які торкнулися проблематики вивчення аудиторії музеїв, були опубліковані Шмітом Ф. під час «харківського періоду» (1912–1921) діяльності вченого.

**Ключові слова:** Федір Іванович Шміт; музейна соціологія; музеєзнавство; музейна аудиторія; історія музейної справи України

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## Размышления академика ВУАН Федора Шмита о музейной аудитории 1910-1920-х гг. и актуальность их изучения в контексте музейной социологии в Украине (1990-2000-ые гг.)

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Статья посвящена исследованию истоков актуального направления современной музейной деятельности в Украине – музейной социологии с начала 1990-х гг. отражена в значительном массиве публикаций по различным аспектам изучения потребностей, мотиваций, ожиданий, типов поведения, социально-демографического портрета и социальных категорий аудитории музеев. Показано, что внимание украинских музейщиков к пониманию потребностей, мотиваций и взаимодействия с действительными и потенциальными посетителями имеет рамки, выходящие за 1990-е гг. Исходя из указанного, в предлагаемой статье проанализировано научное наследие академика ВУАН Шмита Ф. (1877-1937) для выделения вех его деятельности, что можно рассматривать как определенные основания изучения аудитории музеев (музейной социологии), в т. ч. в Украине. Сделано обобщение, что большая часть работ, которые затронули проблематику изучения аудитории музеев, были опубликованы Шмитом Ф. во время «харьковского периода» (1912-1921) деятельности ученого.

**Ключевые слова:** Федор Иванович Шмит; музейная социология; музееведение; музейная аудитория; история музейного дела Украины

In the 1920s the heritage saver, the academician of AUAS museums Fedor Schmitt (1877-1937) while studying so called history of European museum sciences and such sphere of knowledge as «sociological art history,» suggested the typology of museums, acknowledged by the modern museology (which took into account the interests of visitors) and a school museum (a phenomenon of the integration of a museum and an education sectors) [1; 6, p. 25-29; 19, p. 99]. He was one of those who, comprehending such phenomenon of culture as a provincial museum and having no real experience of studying the needs of potential and existing museum audience, but only with the help of observations, he predicted the network of artistic, historical and ethnographic museums for local communities [8]. Even though he was working in conditions of the Soviet state, F. Schmitt, first of all, grounded on the needs of culture development by inclusion of compatriots to world culture, in which the Ukrainian architecture occupies a prominent place. The undeniable fact is that the scientist talked about the «art of October» (talking about the revolution of Bolsheviks — K.T.), but the culture heritage and human potential, which were influenced by the Soviet state, have never been denied in his papers [22, p. 73].

It should be noted that in 1918-1938, the sociology passed the complex process of the institutionalization, interaction with Marxism-Leninism ideology, which led to the situation, when it was announced to be the bourgeois science and caused repressions against scientists [Osipova] [11]. Due to these processes, F. Schmitt firstly used the word «sociology» in museum science works only in 1927 [22, p. 7-75]. However, in publications of 1910-1920's he was describing those aspects which are the objectives of the museum sociology, and noted «... I don't insist on submitting ready conclusions of the general importance. I just want to make some specific suggestions about the way along which, I think, we should move» [21, p. 28].

The content of F. Schmitt works shows that in specific historical conditions he sought to contribute to the

development of the society, which suffered from military conflicts, social and economic crises. So in his book «Laws of history» (1916) and the essay on historical, ethnographic and art museums (1919), the scientist reflected that the French or the German, even without any art education, had an idea of culture just because they lived among ancient, Western European monuments, but «... only the residents of large cities that can go to the museum and look at the statues, paintings are in such conditions in our state» [16, p. 5]. At the same time, F. Schmitt understood the real situation: soviet functionaries did not pay attention that those who were called «consumers of art» by F. Schmitt and who are called «consumers of the museum, cultural product», «museum services» by the modern museum marketing, had only to be formed in the Soviet state [18, p. 4]. So called «museum heritage from pre-revolution times» in Ukraine was small, the museum audience was formed by the professionals and the elite [5]. The level of education of the Soviet Republic's citizens was so low that the government was forced to implement the policy of the elimination of non-educated people. This happened due to the leveling of educational achievements of the Ukrainian Revolution. Even at the 1st Russian Conference on Museums activity (12.1918-02.1919) there was no understanding, for whom the government was trying to create new museums (all population, the masses) [14, p. 77]. Individuals who had almost never been involved into the cultural communication, had to form the motivated, target audience of cultural institutions. As a result, museums started to be visited by such visitors, which had never been visiting museums before [9, p. 488].

Thus, F. Schmitt, having joined the museum activity, tried to predict methods of the interaction between a museum and the above-described personality, as: «... the magnificent museum, even Parisian Louvre, if it appears in our province, in the slums, nobody will want to go in, as in proverb: do not feed the horse» [17, p. 43]. As a result, he not only wrote down his ideas on paper, but together with his fellow-workers, such as Butnyk-Sever-

sky B.S., Hondel L.K. (her biography is not known now — K.T.) organized the Museum of worship and life, the Children's art museum. He also led the seminar on the study of a child psychology and participated in the creation of the Social museum of Ukrholovpolitovsivta [2, p. 25; 10, p. 38-I, 45, 47; 15, p. 117]. Thus, in the period of the first wave of sociological studies of museum audiences, even though it was initiated by the Tretyakov Gallery, Ukrainian museum scientists contributed already to the development of this actual direction of the museum activity [9, p. 488; 12, p. 43].

There is no surprise that the mentioned problem had its place in the activity of the scientist and the heritage saver. Creation of the Ukrainian school of museology, where the leader was Bilyashivsky M., the director of the Kiev Museum of Antiquities and Arts, (nowadays it is the National History Museum of Ukraine) happened within the museology section (its head was Bilyashivsky M.) under the Archaeological Commission of UAS (its chairman was F. Schmitt). The draft statute of the Archaeological Commission, which was developed by F. Schmitt in 1921, prompted the study of the theory and practice of museology in all its spheres [3, p. 26-32; 10, p. 38-II].

On this basis, the aim of this article is to analyze the scientific heritage of F. Schmitt in order to separate the milestones of his activity. These milestones can be regarded as certain foundations of the study of the museum audience, in particular in Ukraine. It is interesting that this happened mostly during the «Kharkov period» (1912-1921) of his work [15, p. 115-122]. But works, which were published by F. Schmitt during that times, have never been released in Ukraine. However, his original ideas on the work with the audience had to draw the attention of modern Ukrainian museum workers as they have a lot in common with the actual directions of activities and give grounds to predict the future. This is very actual as despite the significant body of the contemporary historiography (sources) of the museum sociology, there exists the lack of knowledge about the lower chronological bound of the arising interest of the Ukrainian museum staff to the study of the audience, at least in the 20th century.

Schmitt's position on museums, which had to be built on the territory of the Russia empire and which had suffered from the First World War, was formed under the influence of his travels to cultural centers of Europe. Thus, in his essay on the history and theory of museum activity on historical, ethnographic and art museums (1919), a generalization of the oldest public museum center of Alexandria, Naples, Pergamon, Rome was given, some of these places were marked as the inspiration sources for the development of museums in the 20th century [17, p. 7, 24]. This work of the scientist is perhaps the most interesting in terms of analysis of the museum audience. For example, understanding the educational level of the society, he didn't placed the form of the state on the first place, but trying to assist the Enlightenment, F. Schmitt both in 1916 and in 1919, said that art should be understood not only as fashionable whim of wealthy and indolent people [16, p. 5]. He supposed that there must be a public museum with a large masses attendance

and, as the Roman emperor Constantine the Great, had an utopian dream to turn even streets into museums [17, p. 33].

One of the key aspects in this paper became his reflections on a special category of the museum audience: «... undoubtedly proletarian, working man, a man of physical labor» [17, p. 56-57]. F. Schmitt pointed out that after the understanding of such audience, a new form of museum work, art promotion, had to arise. As the only one, understandable and welcomed to museums was the urban intelligentsia, the audience with the «cultural childhood» (those, who were brought before the Soviet regime — K.T.) [17, p. 45-57]. The social (class) approach to the visitors was not associated with the denial by F. Schmitt, for him all people were the source of the society's development. Also he was thinking about the development of the museum, taking into the consideration the frequency of visits (random visitors, population, which will not find the access to the art without the outer help; the exhibition visitors, which are called «single visitors», «the museum public» by the modern museum workers [4, c. 13; 17, p. 44-56].

On the pages of the quoted essay F. Schmitt outlined a number of others aspects, which were disrupted by the state museum policy. At the same time, parameters, studied by F. Schmitt that reflect the freedom of personality's choice of action, thoughts, tastes in culture, are very actual now while planning a survey of visitors in order to measure the feedback on the visit, optimal time of being present at the exposition, number of exhibits, which can be perceived and psychological aspects of perception, physical comfort during the exhibition, targeting audiences, an optimal exposure schedule and more.

Also in 1919 F. Schmitt published a work on psychology, evolution and style of art. In this paper 9 points of the stages of the culture development were structured by him. Two of them were dedicated to so called interaction between a personality and a museum (psychology of public, who is the consumer of art, sociology of art, issue on class art) [18, p. 4]. Also in 1919, in his program, developed for the museum section of the Ukrainian Committee of protection of monuments of art and antiquities, he suggested creation of the museum network for the promotion of art and historical knowledge to the public [10, p. 38; 7, p. 40]. So, his ideas were embodied in practice. But the idea of the social museum, which was developed by F. Schmitt and other museum workers, was vulgarized by the government and its result was criticized even by its creators [5, p. 8; 7, p. 87].

Later works, which reflected the results of F. Schmitt's work, including the study of children's audience, became the publications on art as a subject of study (1923), psychology of the child's drawing (in 1921, the only book in Ukrainian, written by the scientist) and on the methodological problems of Art science (1925) [19-21]. Publications showed the results of the work of the Children's art museum, where F. Schmitt and his colleagues worked with students, pupils of kindergartens and orphanages, children of beggars, merchants, etc. They developed a method of working with «normal children» and children with disabilities [15, p. 117].

However, during the studying of the structure of this museum in order to determine whether children were visitors of the exhibition and participants of the museum communication, or the museum was the creative space for the realization of ideas of its founders. At the same time, we know that in 1921 the museum organized the special exhibition for children psychology's specialists (children's drawings, stucco samples) and accumulated from 10 thousand till 15-20 thousands of drawings of small participants of the museum experimental laboratory of children's «free creativity» [15, p. 116; 20, p. 27-27]. This collection considered social-demographic characteristics of the audience (age, a gender, conditions in which the child was growing, a name), needs, etc. This allowed understanding the child's ability to perceive and might be useful for work with so called future adult museum visitors, who would grow up from these children and would have «cultural, museum childhood». Relevance of the problem, which was started in 1920s, is realized only now. People who have «museum childhood» are considered by museum workers to be the source of museum sphere and society development. Museum workers try distinguishing such children through surveys and strive to start a dialogue with families, which are seeking «museum childhood» for their descendants [13].

Although none of F. Schmitt works in 1910s- the beginning of 1920s included direct mentioning of the sociological studies in the museum, but he outlined the foundations for the study of social-demographic, psychological parameters, an attitude of various social and professional groups to the museum, the impact of the museum on the society and vice versa and so on. In the middle 1920s, working outside Ukraine already, the scientists saw that the value of sociology was understood

by the government in the context of culture and hoped to continue the work. He led Leningrad State Institute of Art History, the General section of the theory and methodology of art under the Sociological Committee; he worked at the Association of the sociological study of art. In his report, published at the magazine of literature, art, criticism and bibliography «Print and Revolution» (1927) F. Schmitt stated that «... the Museum section is busy with the issue of how to reorganize our present museums and how to conduct the governmental museum policy in accordance with the new order of society» [22, p. 73].

Unfortunately, despite the interesting results, study of the museum audience's requests was disregarded, as it was formed by Marx-Lenin criticism. The Soviet museums staff believed that, unlike the nobility (lords), which were rejected as a class, proletarian were visiting museums with utilitarian needs, such as: to understand the purpose of items (exhibits) and their role in the class struggle [5, p. 13].

As a result, Ukrainian museum activity was also artificially aimed at the necessity to focus on the class needs of the visitor, but not on the understanding of «consumer» attitudes, psychological needs, which is the trend of the modern museum activity. The above-mentioned became notable against the backdrop of the museum's marketing and presentation of the Ukrainian translation of the book «De leertheorie van Kolb in het museum: dromer, denker, beslisser, doener», written by the psychologist and theorist of the adult education (Museum Space, 2015). Thus, the following conclusion can be made that the part of the scientific heritage of the academician of AUAS F. Schmitt and his steps in practical museum activities can be used as certain foundations of the modern Ukrainian museum sociology.

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