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DIGITIZATION AS A MEANS OF PRESERVING ARCHIVAL RESOURCES OF UKRAINE

Summary: The activity of archival institutions of Ukraine during the full-scale military aggression of the Russian Federation is investigated. The necessity of development of activity on digitization of archival funds for preservation of documentary heritage of Ukraine is characterized. It is noted that digitization allows you to save and make widely available the most valuable documents.

Keywords: *digitization, archival institutions, archival funds, Russian military aggression, Ukraine, digitization of archival documents, information resources of the archival industry.*

During the last decade, digitization technologies have been introduced to the documentary-communication structures (libraries, archives, and museums) of Ukraine as a special technology for preserving the originals of the most valuable documents, which are a part of the national cultural heritage. Another important advantage of digitization technology is providing unrestricted access to digitized resources for an unlimited number of users.

The brutal military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, treacherous bombings, and the enemy's looting of archives, library, and museum collections underscored the importance and necessity of comprehensive digitization of the historical and cultural heritage of our country.

It is known that digital copies allow to preservation of originals of both documents and architectural structures. An example of the latter is the restoration of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris after the fire, which became possible due to previously made digital copies of the cathedral. Based on these, a 3D model of the cathedral was created, which ensured the reconstruction of the construction in its original form.

It is worth noting that with the onset of the armed Russian attack, the most important direction for Ukrainian archival institutions' activities was the organization of archival funds' evacuation to safer regions. However, we still suffer irreparable losses, as Russian forces stole nearly 1,500 funds from the State Archive of Kherson Region (SAKhR). In Chernihiv, in the building of the archival division of the Security Service of Ukraine, 13,000 documents, which attested to the crimes of the totalitarian Soviet

regime, were burned because of shelling. In addition, with the onset of hostilities, state archival institutions in the territories of Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, and Kherson regions turned out to be unprotected. As a result of missile attacks, archive buildings in the Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, and Kherson regions were damaged, but the funds were preserved. The presented data demonstrate what is already known for certain, but since the war is still ongoing, the final results regarding the discovery of losses of the National Archival Fund (NAF) of Ukraine will be known after the end of military operations.

But, despite the second year of martial law in Ukraine, archival institutions continue the work they previously began on digitizing the documentary heritage. Leaders in document digitization among archival institutions are the Central State Archive of the Higher Authorities and Administration of Ukraine (CSAHA of Ukraine), which in January 2022 presented its powerful online resource with a significant array of digital copies of documents.

This direction of activity is supported by the State Archival Service of Ukraine, which defines priority tasks for all archival institutions of Ukraine: “open archives” ensure online access to information; digitization of documents; ensure physical and information accessibility; develop communication through the expansion of social media tools for Ukrainian State Archive; implement electronic storage of insurance fund documents; introduce information search system that provides access to the information about archival information resources and operates online 24/7 (URL: <https://archives.gov.ua/ua/приоритети-державної-архівної-служб/>). All these tasks encourage Ukrainian archival institutions to intensify consolidated work in creating digital content and ensuring free access to it.

The next priority direction of archival institutions' activity in Ukraine is the formation of the NAF digital fund, which is specified in the “Program for digitizing archival information resources for 2022-2025”. Despite the tough working conditions during the military aggression, state archives digitized 271,913 storage units and 31,770 case descriptions in 2022. Due to the digitization efforts of the archives, the most valuable documents stored in the archival institution funds have become widely accessible to users. Thus, in 2022, over 2.3 million 20th-century documents became available online. They were digitized as part of a project initiated by the “Holocaust Memorial - Babyn Yar” Charity Fund. The work is underway to populate the scientific research internet project "Ukrainian Martyrology of the 20th Century" (with the available records concerning 112,562 repressed individuals — victims of political repressions).

(<https://archives.gov.ua/um.php?fbclid=IwAR0y9jbZkcsVCj3B1NdjLe4idN6qRMoQqfTImqYcQLXqousgGsBmwFXn4JM>).

In May 2022, the State Archival Service of Ukraine introduced the “Inter-Archive Search Portal” on the ARCHIUM platform (<https://searcharchives.net.ua>), which provides 24/7 access to consolidated archival information (digital copies of storage objects) through a single access window. It showcased 7,020 archival funds. The following archives are currently involved in the implementation of the project:

- Central State Archive of Higher Authorities and Administration of Ukraine;
- Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine (Kyiv);
- Central State Archive of Public Associations and Ukrainians abroad;
- Central State Archive-Museum of Literature and Arts of Ukraine;
- State Archive of Lviv Region;
- Digital Archive of the West Ukrainian People's Republic.

Therefore, out of seven central state archives, only 60% of the institutions are participating in this crucial project, and among the other twenty-four regional state archives, only Lviv is involved. Hence, the most critical task of today is to consolidate the digital resources of all central and regional state archival institutions of Ukraine into a single access window, which will significantly enhance their service and

communication capabilities. Apart from this project, there are already dozens of other digital archival projects operating in Ukraine on various platforms, offering diverse content (digitized documents, photographs, audio, and video resources, and so on). Among them, there are:

- e-ARCHIVE OF MYKHAILO HRUSHEVSKY – a prominent Ukrainian scientist, public figure, political and state leader (<http://hrushevsky.nbuv.gov.ua>);
- Electronic archive of Ukrainian periodicals LIBRARIA – a project by the company Archival Information Systems (<https://libraria.ua/>);
- Electronic Archive of the UKRAINIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT – a powerful portal with a significant collection of digitized freely available documents (<https://avr.org.ua>);
- “Electronic Archive of Ukrainian Printed Press” – a specialized portal that consolidates online resources from libraries and archives for users interested in Ukrainian history and periodicals from different periods (<http://back2news.org>);
- “Archive of Ukrainian Silent Cinema” – the first online resource in Ukraine for cinema documents, containing a unique collection of documentary films (with an accompanying filmography) produced by the All-Ukrainian Photo Cinema Administration) (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLaiKyJj77P4wlB1K_lrcNnMoetK8Ykxeh);
- “Electronic Archive of Ukrainian Folklore” (<https://folklore-archive.org.ua>);
- Digital Archive of Maidan (<https://digitalmaidan.org>);
- Electronic Archive of Ukrainian Unofficial Art – the “UU#Kyiv” project, representing samples of Ukrainian unofficial art from the second half of the 20th century “Ukrainian Informal” (<http://www.archive-uu.com/ua/golovna>);
- V. I. Vernadsky Electronic Archive (http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_eav/cgiirbis_64.exe?C21COM=F&I21DBN=NAV&P21DBN=EAV&Z21ID=));
- Shevchenko Portal electronic archive and library (<http://kobzar.ua/> or <http://kobzar.ua/site/main>);
- “Polyphony” – online archive of musical folklore (<https://www.polyphonyproject.com/uk/>).

These digital archive collections vary in the themes and composition of their funds, representing unique documentary relics of Ukrainian historical and cultural heritage. They provide the opportunity to access them at any time, which is the most crucial service of an archival institution in the era of digital society development.

Consequently, a vital task nowadays is to continue the digitization of archival funds for the protection and preservation of Ukraine's documentary heritage. This became particularly urgent during Russia's military aggression, as a result of which Ukrainian archives in the occupied territories suffered significant material damage and the loss of some of their archival funds. Only thanks to the high professionalism and patriotism of archival workers, a series of measures aimed at the evacuation and protection of archival funds from destruction under extreme conditions were developed. The most important among these are speeding up the digitization of the most valuable parts of archival funds through the participation of central state and regional archival institutions of Ukraine in joint digitization projects, as well as consolidating digital collections in a single access window of the inter-archive search portal to preserve and provide open access to the fundamental components of the national archival fund of Ukraine.