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## National heritage protection programs

This article presents the most important projects on protecting national heritage carried by international organizations that develop programs for the preservation and conservation of library and archival collections in Europe. The leading organizations operating in Europe are the European Commission on Preservation and Access, the Commission on Preservation and Access in Europe, the European Commission, the International Federation of Associations and Institutions Library – IFLA, and the UNESCO International Archives Board. Their task is to develop conservation programs for library and archives collections, protect various types of documents, preserve the national heritage, and open it to the public. The European Commission on Preservation and Access makes the documents open to the public and enlightens society about the necessity of protecting these collections. They have produced the so-called Preservation Map of Europe with a database including information on national projects, training for librarians and archivists, and collection protection plans. In this database, one can find the addresses of institutions and people dealing with these problems in 42 European countries.<sup>1</sup> Up to now, the ECPA has developed and implemented the following research projects dealing with the digitization and digital dissemination of the collection: SEPIA (Safeguarding European Photographic Images for Access), EVA (European Visual Archive), REVAMP (European Visual Archives Market Validation Project), TAPE (Training for Audiovisual Preservation in Europe) – this project was related to the protection and preservation of audiovisual collections promoting Europe’s cultural heritage and employee training.<sup>2</sup>

The Commission on Preservation and Access in Washington, established in 1986, promotes cooperation between libraries and other institutions in the field of documentary heritage protection in all possible forms. It also ensures permanent

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1 E. Stachowska-Musiał: *Library protection policy in the modern world*. “Conservation Notebook” 2007, no. 3, pp. 10–13.

2 M. Kowalska: *Digital protection of humanity documentary heritage in the programs and guidelines of the European Commission for Protection and Access, IFLA and UNESCO*. “Library Review” 2005, no. 2, pp. 186–189.

access to scientific information resources. In December 1994, the Commission and the Research Libraries Group set up the Task Force on Digital Archiving, which was supposed to carry out research to ensure permanent access to digitized documents. Between the years 1988 and 1997, the Commission published press reports on national and international steps taken for the protection of documentary work. The Newsletter was addressed to libraries, archives, university directors, consortium representatives, central offices, and all individuals interested in this subject. The Commission news has been published since 1998 in CLIR Issues and the Preservation & Access International Newsletter, a periodical published by the Council on Library and Information Resources.<sup>3</sup>

Another activity implemented in 2000 by the European Commission within the Framework Program was a project on Information Society Technologies, which was concerned with digital heritage and cultural content. It is part of a research area called “content and multimedia tools.” It aims to promote library, archival, and museum resources contributing to the development of cooperation between these institutions.<sup>4</sup> The next program within the European Commission is called MINERVA (Ministerial Network for Valorising Activities in Digitalisation). Its task is to create a network of Ministries from European Union Member Countries. As a result, a common European platform has been founded to develop directives and recommendations on digitization, metadata, archiving, and organization of access.

The latest conservation and maintenance studies for conservators and archivists were published by the ECPA (ECPA reports) and distributed to European countries. These are, among others, RAMP studies – UNESCO materials on the Records and Archives Management Program, various training workshops (e.g., Successful Summer Schools on Preservation Management), and international symposia on protection and access issues.<sup>5</sup>

There are also the IFLA programs for the protection of collections. One of these is the PAC (Preservation and Conservation) program to secure books and documents and implement conservation work. This project has been carried out worldwide on national, regional, and local levels. The IFLA is involved in world heritage conservation activities initiated by various international organizations such as UNESCO, ECPA, CLIR, and the Blue Shield Committees. Moreover, the IFLA publishes IFLA Core Activity on Preservation and Conservation reports annually. CD-ROMs with digital copies of documents are also produced. These are developed in cooperation with UNESCO as part of the “Memory of the World” program. In addition, the IFLA publishes materials devoted to the theoretical and practical aspects of archival protection, such as “International Preservation Issues” and “International Preservation News.” The

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3 Digitization program. Downloaded from: <http://www.nac.gov.pl/wpcontent/uploads/2015/05/Program-digitalization-2009-2020-1.pdf> (18-11-2020).

4 Ibidem.

5 E. Stachowska-Musiał: *International cooperation and dissemination of modern methods of library collection's protection*. In: B. Drewniewska-Idziak (ed.), *Keep the past for the future: Modern technologies for preservation of library collections, materials from an international seminar*. Warsaw 2007, pp. 115–129.

project PAC is an IFLA program for digital content creation. One of UNESCO's tasks is to preserve cultural heritage. At the General Secretariat of UNESCO, an Advisory Committee cooperating with the IFLA and the International Council of Archives was established. There are also regional and national cooperation committees that operate in 64 countries, including Poland.<sup>6</sup>

In 2003, the Open Archival Information System (OASIS) was established, which was accepted by ISO in 2003 as the standard for archiving digital documents. Its purpose is long-term storage, protection, and making electronic objects available to users directly from the archive. OASIS facilitates international discussion, exchange of experience, and development of projects in the archives of electronic documents. It provides uniform and commonly-used naming. Other systems (CCSDS) have been developed for archiving and exchanging electronic data. They identify key processes in the archiving of electronic publications and explain basic terms. CCSDS provide theoretical knowledge on the design, construction, and operation of electronic archives focused on the long-term preservation and storage of digital archives in the future. They point out the need for cooperation with unrelated institutions and emphasize the necessity of modern equipment. The project develops and implements new software to maintain the usefulness of digital information objects. Paper – the primary material books and newspapers are made of – is the subject of the American National Standard for the Sustainability of Paper for Publication and Library and Archival Documents (ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992).<sup>7</sup> The technical requirements for coated and uncoated papers – ISO 9706: 1994 – are based on American standards (the ISO Standard). Publications printed on paper that meet the requirements of ISO 9706: 1994 have the right to use appropriate markings, indicated by an infinity sign inscribed in a circle. Below the mark, there is the international standard number. Papers marked like this can be kept for a very long time in archives and libraries. Paper accelerated aging studies confirm that this paper will not turn yellow for several hundred years, nor will it crumble due to use or copying.<sup>8</sup>

Another project under the name “Electronic Archives of Polish Literary Memorabilia,” running from January 2008 to 2020 in Poland under the auspices of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, has been implemented by a consortium comprised of the National Library, the Head of State Archives, the Scientific and Academic Computer Network, the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Institute of History Polish Academy of Sciences. The project aims to digitize historic collections up to 1600 owned by the state, private, or ecclesiastical institutions. It defines the canon of Polish literature and is developing an IT system that enables the management of digital copies of a Polish literature collection with

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6 W. Stępniaak: *Program UNESCO Memory of the World*. “Archeion” 1994, no. 93, pp. 123–135.

7 A. Januszko-Szakiel: *Open Archival Information System – standard for archiving electronic publications*. “Library Review” 2005, no. 3, pp. 342–349.

8 R. Deventer, J. Havermans: *A comparison of three durability standards for paper*. “Restaurator” 1995, no. 16, pp. 161–174.

universal access through the Internet, which will help in scientific research and open national heritage collections to the public.

Another project funded by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage within the framework of the Chief Director of the State Archives competition was granted to a non-governmental organization to digitize and disseminate its historical documentation, i.e., recordings, reports, and photographs. Subsidies will also cover works related to the digitization of the "Polish Personnel File" (Friends of the Archives of Emigration), the civil status records of Armenian parishes from the former Eastern Borderlands of Poland (Foundation for Culture and Heritage of the Polish Armenians), and different sets of ephemera and photographs from Wąbrzeźno (the International Center for Information Management ICIMS) in the Private Collections Library portal, as well as publishing on-line interviews, recordings, and photographs showing the traditional customs and handicrafts of Lower Silesia, collected by the Wrocław Waja Foundation.<sup>9</sup>

Another government program was the "acid paper" project aimed at saving the Polish cultural heritage in the library and archival collections of the 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>10</sup> In 1998, the National Library organized the first meeting of experts in librarianship, conservation, archives, paper, and chemistry in Warsaw at the Ministry of Culture and Art initiative. The conference was devoted to the analysis of collections and preparation of draft versions of "acid paper," which were sent to the Ministry of Culture and Art and later forwarded to the Social Committee of the Council of Ministers. Afterward, it was sent to the Ministry of National Education, the Research Committee, the Ministry of Economics, and the Ministry of Finance. This year, a panel of experts was convened from the National Library, the Jagiellonian Library, the Environmental Laboratory of Physicochemical Analysis and Structural Research of the Jagiellonian State Archives Administration, N. Copernicus University in Toruń, and the Institute of Pulp and Paper in Łódź, with representatives from MEN, KBN, and MK.

In 2000, the possibility of resuming work on a new, modified version of the project was discussed. There were many meetings, and, in the end, the 1999 Council of Ministers endorsed the multi-year government program, "Acid Paper." This year, the Polish project for the protection of cultural goods from dangers was highly praised by an International ECPA expert forum in Amsterdam. In 2000, the Research Committee announced a competition for researching the individual tasks outlined below. The multiannual government program's tasks and objectives concern condition assessments and a full investigation into threats to Polish library and archival collections from the 19th and 20th centuries. This task was performed by the National Library (BN) and the Supreme Directorate of State Archives (NDAP) and was conducted in three

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9 A. Czajka: *Rules, principles and standards for the protection of archival collections. What they contain, what they do not have and how to use them.* In: A. Czajka (ed.), *Between theory and practice. Protection of collections in small libraries and archives.* Cieszyn 2010, pp. 84–104.

10 A. Barański, J. Grochowski, D. Nalecz: *Memorandum on the need to save the heritage of Polish culture in libraries and archives of the 19th and 20th centuries.* "Archeion" 1998, no. 99, pp. 21–35.

stages. Statistical surveys were performed through the BN method in four libraries and three archives (AP in Poznan, AP in Olsztyn, and AP in Warsaw), where valuable collections of 19th- and 20th-century archives are available. In about 20 libraries and archives located in different parts of Poland, pH measurements were taken from books from the same editions to provide a fair assessment of local conditions, including the impact of environmental pollution. Approximately 200 libraries and archives were surveyed for the risk and conservation status of collections. In turn, the Department of Paper and Leather Conservation of the Institute of Archaeology and Conservation of the N. Copernicus University developed microbiological and conservation methods to protect library and archival collections from the 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>11</sup>

One of the challenges was the development of safe storage rules, in particular:

- conducting risk reduction research by setting optimal storage conditions with due care for sterility, constant temperature, and humidity;
- assessment of biological hazards for papers used in modern methods of document duplication and an evaluation of disinfection methods;
- development of the archival paper products technology (suitable for perpetual storage), including demand recognition, specification of non-standard requirements, optimization of technological operations, start-up of machine production in selected paper mills, and handicraft production in ICP;
- recognition and development of technology to launch the production of acid-free cartons and cardboards;
- development of a national certification system for durable papers, archival papers, and acid-free cartons and cardboards;
- carrying out a paper sustainability assessment on its strength and optical properties based on accelerated aging studies;
- performing exploratory research on so-called alternative papers, paper-like structures made of synthetic polymers and bacterial cellulose;
- understanding existing regulations in countries with advanced technology and developing a database of industry standards for durable paper and related measurement methods;
- preparation of the substantive basis of legislation governing the application of sustainable paper in Poland in the context of existing international studies;
- developing and implementing statistical methods for monitoring the law and assessing the social, financial, and environmental impacts of its implementation;
- collecting scientific data on alternative means of information recording for permanent or perpetual storage;
- assessing the usability of US legislative proposals requiring the use of waste paper in the production of durable paper;
- organizing training in recognizing and marking permanent and archival paper for archive and library staff and paper distributors;
- publication of information on the availability of acid-free paper in Poland and the establishment of two model microfilm laboratories with professional equipment

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<sup>11</sup> Ibidem.

and well-trained staff (Digitization Program) in the National Archives of Mechanics and the National Library;

- organizing two microfilming laboratories equipped with developing machines, copiers, gluers, and readers, and establishing a network of microfilm studios equipped with modern cameras for fast microfilming in the top five national libraries and archives;
- organizing a microfilming system for microfilm localization, consisting of library and archival services in the region with the use of microfilm cameras located in the selected center;
- establishing institutions for coordinating the implementation of microfilm tasks and establishing coordination rules;
- recognizing and evaluating the most advanced paper deacidification and reinforcement technologies.
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- There are also the following additional concerns regarding deacidification:
- implementation of physicochemical and technological research programs focused on the issues of paper sustainability and degradation;
- creation of a specialized laboratory at Jagiellonian University and launching a pilot system for paper deacidification;
- purchasing and start-up of the National Target Library and subsequent archives for mass deacidification and reinforcement of paper;
- work evaluation of established installation networks and adjustments in the organization of the deacidification process;
- training of specialized staff for the implementation of a mass deacidification program through doctoral studies and appropriate orientation of MA theses;
- training of archive and library staff on mass deacidification issues.<sup>12</sup>

To sum up, it is essential to note that large projects in favor of saving cultural heritage have rarely been undertaken in Poland. The sustainability of library, archive, and museum collections is threatened by cellulose's acidic degradation. This process reduces the paper's mechanical resistance to the point where even a mere turning of the original page causes it to tear off. In order to keep these collections as long as possible, it is crucial to protect them carefully and systematically from the destructive activity of various atmospheric factors, the effects of solar radiation, various biological agents, and human devastation, which means ensuring proper storage conditions. Thus, librarians should be trained in the area of protection and storage of library collections.

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12 A. Barański, J. Grochowski, K. Zamorski: *Calendar and implementation guidelines for a multi-annual government program for 2000–2008. Acid paper. Rescue on a mass scale of endangered Polish library and archives resources*. "Conservation Notebook" 2002 no. 4, pp. 11–16.

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## Programy ochrony dziedzictwa narodowego

### Abstrakt

Ochrona i konserwacja zbiorów bibliotecznych sprzyjają zachowaniu światowego dziedzictwa kulturowego. Ich celem są działania zmierzające do opracowania programu czy projektu zabezpieczającego zbiory biblioteczne i archiwalne w zależności od ich stanu zachowania, charakteru oraz wieku. Należy zaznaczyć, iż zakres prac będzie odmienny dla różnych typów dokumentów, jak książki, grafiki, zbiory archiwalne, rękopiśmienne kodeksy z barwnymi iluminacjami. Inne starania muszą zostać podjęte w przypadku pilnej interwencji wobec



dużego zespołu źródeł. Jednym z aspektów programu ochrony dziedzictwa kulturowego jest kompleksowa ochrona i konserwacja wybranych zbiorów bibliotecznych, możliwa dzięki odpowiedniemu finansowaniu. Pozyskanie środków pieniężnych umożliwi doposażenie pracowni konserwatorskich w odpowiedni sprzęt, materiały i odczynniki, by wykonać wszelkie prace konserwatorskie w pełnym zakresie, oraz zapewni przeszkolenie kadry specjalistów zajmujących się na co dzień ochroną i konserwacją zbiorów. Może też przyczynić się do nawiązania współpracy międzynarodowej, której poświęcony zostanie tekst.

**Słowa kluczowe:** digitalizacja, konserwacja, ochrona

### **Abstract**

The conservation and preservation of library collections are conducive to the preservation of world cultural heritage. The goal is to develop a program or project that protects library and archival collections according to their condition, character, and age. It should be noted that the scope of the work will be different for different types of documents, such as books, graphics, archival collections, or manuscript codes with colorful illuminations. Other efforts must be made in cases of urgent intervention for large numbers of sources. Thanks to adequate funding, comprehensive protection and preservation of selected library collections are aspects of the cultural heritage protection program in Poland. Procurement funds will equip conservation workshops with suitable tools, materials, and reagents to carry out conservation work. They will also provide training activities for the personnel who specialize in the day-to-day protection and conservation of collections. There is also the possibility of establishing international cooperation, which will be described further in this text.

**Keywords:** digitalization, maintenance, protection