

THE DIGITIZATION AND DIGITAL COLLECTIONS IN RESEARCH AND ARCHIVAL LIBRARIES IN ESTONIA

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The digital epoch changes our attitude to records and to the ways working with them. In case of libraries and archives the ways as well as the contents of work have been changed during the digital epoch. Besides librarians and bibliographers information officers, information managers, the administrators of databases – different kinds of info-specialists and info-scientists have started their work. There are entirely new tasks, spheres, technical solutions and laws nowadays. Besides, digital innovation connected with the trends of different spheres. Information can be a remarkable resource nowadays, whereas maintaining and making available information demands more resources.

Digital collections are nowadays an actual subject of priority for all the scientific and archival libraries. The attitude of scientific and archival libraries to digital collections is different. This can be explained by different tasks depending on the specification of libraries. In scientific libraries, which are especially the libraries of universities, mainly educational and scientific literature has been made electronically available. Digitalizing cultural inheritance is more actual in archival libraries.

The scientific libraries named by the Estonian Government until 2007 are the following :

Library of Estonian Academy of Arts
Library of Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre
University of Life Sciences Library
Academic Library of Tallinn University
Tallinn University of Technology Library
Tartu University Library

The archival libraries named by the Estonian Government until 2007 are the following

Archival Library of Estonian Literary Museum
Academic Library of Tallinn University
Tartu University Library

National Library of Estonia, Academic Library of Tallinn University, Tartu University Library – have a universal function, fulfil the tasks of a scientific as well as of an archival library. National Library of Estonia is the only public law institution among libraries.

Digital collections:

- Digital information:

Electronical items

Web issues

Traditional items which are also available electronically

- Digitalized information:

Printed items, graphs, microfilms – mainly printed items (books, periodicals, maps, notes)

The principles of digitalizing or why to digitalize?

We can view this as an attractive as well as a resourceful action, so an organisation should have a correct plan. Practical digitalization of cultural heritage can only take place when common goals are set for it at both national and library level, and when rights, responsibilities, resources and principles of delegation in joint efforts are ensured. What is the use of digitalizing? Does it reduce the use of rarities or does it expose any parts of collection? Which is the foundation group? What's the aim of it? Should the digitalized files supplement the original items and should they be the copies of back-up? In what condition is the digitalized collection? Should the materials be dealt differently? In this place the situation of the printed materials of archival collections comes into question. The last examination of the state of the Estonian printed materials – project Thule –, viewed mainly the co-operation of scientific and practical maintenance. In libraries an examination of the state of the Estonian printed items was performed, the results of which were recorded as a database and presented as a textual summary.

When studying the situation of the cultural values in Estonian biggest libraries during 1998-2000, it occurred that the main part of the printed materials (it also contains those which are only copies) lacks the copies of use and guarantee. The project made an entire evaluation of the national items. The project was financed by the Ministry of Culture; and the National Library of Estonia, the Archival Library of the Estonian Literary Museum and the Tartu University took part in it.

The digital collection should raise the quality of the services of libraries (the possible access for users every time not depending on a place). If the access through the Internet is needed, the final capacity of the data of digital materials should be taken into consideration. The problems of digital materials – the ascertaining of texts, the migration of data, the authority defence, who's the owner of the collection, could the materials be copied and so on.

The main function of digital collections is to maintain national documents – it is so in case of “digital born” as well as digitalized materials. The systematization of national items is being dealt with at the present moment. It is the situation how to maintain and digitalize the national items of rare value; on the other hand – how to arrange the work of acquisition and how to keep and make available digitally born items. Since 1998 legal deposit copies contain physical records, but not yet electronical issues. When taking into consideration electronical issues, questions will arise on how to solve conflicts between the law of compulsory copies and the law of authority defence.

What are the digital resources of these libraries at the present moment? The owner of a collection can afford an access, but the assistance of OCR is missing (it will be worked out). Long –time keeping process has been arranged only in DIGAR (this is a digital archive that takes care of the maintenance and the reuse of the preprint files of the materials printed in Estonia).

The strategy and the principles of digitalizing have been described in the following documents: *The state strategy 2004-2007 of the digital maintenance of the Estonian cultural heritage*, *The metadata of the cultural heritage* (manual).

The expectations of an user: an universal access, open environment and standards, the approach oriented to services.

Problems: who's the owner of the collection; co-operation – duplication should be avoided; authority defence; data defence; quality control. In case of collections, services and portals, continuous editing is necessary, what/how to digitalize, the training of the staff, the exploration of the use necessity, the statistics of the use, marketing. At the present moment the state strategy in Estonia is missing.

Perspective: open standards, keeping records according to the long-term maintenance, the creation of the common infoportal / of the portal of libraries / of the portal of scientific libraries, common search between different databases. The stacks of the digital cultural heritage are integrated with the infoportals of other spheres (ESTER (Estonian Libraries' Catalogue), ETIS (Estonian Research Information System), e-training and so on) with the help of e-services.

The possibilities of co-operation

- Project fundamental development: for the achievement of the aims of each project, workgroups are arranged consisting of the specialists of libraries
- Contract fundamental development: Libraries delegate activities through contracts to the Consortium. Activities are financed centrally or through different funds by libraries.

International relations and the use of experiences:

- participation in the co-operation projects of EU
- to use the good practice of other states, to translate into Estonian different instructions and manuals, to translate into Estonian international standards and to use them accordingly
- participation in seminars, conferences and training journeys

This spring the network, coordinating the digitalization of libraries, was created – the workgroup of digitalization. The present situation of the digitalization was confirmed. According to this the Ministry of Culture examines the necessities of investigation, the state strategy will be created.

The plan of the digitalization workgroup 2006-2007

- The co-operation of quality demands and spreading them in libraries
- The co-operation of the digital maintaining necessities and demands and spreading them in libraries
- The creation of the plan of the Consortium 2007-2010

When digitalizing collections, other functions of libraries can't be forgotten.

It is important to notice that different functions are more interrelated. As it is, there are more relations between memory institutions.

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