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## ARCHIVAL SCIENCE AND ITS POPULARIZATION

### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** *The purpose of this article is to inform about the importance of the popularization of the archival sciences in order to maintain a close relation with the users and adapt the archival activities to the needs of the consumers, that implies a constant transformation of the Archives from a closed institution, into open and accessible institutions.*

**Methodology:** *Presentation of some of the ways and approaches of the Archives in the processes of the popularization of the archival sciences and establishing contact with the public in order to introduce them to what archival science means.*

**Results:** *Informing the wider professional public, as well as the broader community, about the efforts of the Archives to popularize the archives sciences and make it more understandable, thus addressing the challenges in the archival work.*

**Conclusions:** *In a society that is constantly changing, most of it with the development of information technologies and their implementation in the archival work, the Archives and the archivists have to popularize the archival sciences in order to prove their relevance to the community and promote everything that they have to offer to the wider range of users.*

**Keywords:** *Archival sciences popularization, publishing, exhibitions, users, cultural and educational activities.*

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## LA SCIENZA ARCHIVISTICA E LA SUA DIVULGAZIONE

### **Abstract**

**Scopo:** *Lo scopo di questo articolo è quello di informare sull'importanza della divulgazione delle scienze archivistiche al fine di mantenere uno stretto rapporto con gli utenti e adattare le attività archivistiche alle esigenze dei consumatori, il che implica una costante trasformazione degli archivi da istituzioni chiuse a istituzioni aperte e accessibili.*

**Metodologia:** *Presentazione di alcuni dei modi e degli approcci degli Archivi nei processi di divulgazione delle scienze archivistiche e di contatto con il pubblico al fine di introdurlo al significato delle scienze archivistiche.*

**Risultati:** *Informare il pubblico professionale più ampio, così come la comunità in generale, sugli sforzi degli Archivi per divulgare le scienze archivistiche e renderle più comprensibili, affrontando così le sfide del lavoro archivistico.*

**Conclusioni:** *In una società in costante evoluzione, soprattutto con lo sviluppo delle tecnologie dell'informazione e la loro implementazione nel lavoro archivistico, gli archivi e gli archivisti devono divulgare le scienze archivistiche per dimostrare la loro rilevanza per la comunità e promuovere tutto ciò che hanno da offrire a una più ampia gamma di utenti.*

**Parole chiave:** *Divulgazione delle scienze archivistiche, pubblicazioni, mostre, utenti, attività culturali ed educative.*

## ARHIVSKA ZNANOST IN NJENA POPULARIZACIJA

### **Izvleček**

**Namen:** Namen članka je opozoriti na pomen popularizacije arhivske znanosti, da bi se ohranil tesen odnos z uporabniki in da bi se arhivske dejavnosti prilagajale potrebam uporabnikov. To pomeni stalno preobrazbo arhivov iz zaprtih ustanov v odprte in dostopne institucije.

**Metodologija:** Predstavitev nekaterih načinov in pristopov arhivov v procesih popularizacije arhivske znanosti ter pri vzpostavljanju stikov z javnostmi z namenom približati jim pomen arhivske znanosti.

**Rezultati:** Seznanjanje širše strokovne javnosti ter družbe kot celote s prizadevanji arhivov za popularizacijo arhivske znanosti in njeno boljše razumevanje, s čimer se naslovijo tudi izzivi arhivskega dela.

**Zaključki:** V družbi, ki se nenehno spreminja, predvsem z razvojem informacijske tehnologije in njeno uporabo v arhivskem delu, morajo arhivi in arhivisti popularizirati arhivsko znanost, da bi dokazali svojo relevantnost za skupnost in promovirali vse, kar lahko ponudijo širšemu krogu uporabnikov.

**Ključne besede:** popularizacija arhivske znanosti, založništvo, razstave, uporabniki, kulturne in izobraževalne dejavnosti

## **UNDERSTANDING THE ARCHIVES AS A CONDITION FOR THEIR POPULARIZATION**

In accordance with the Law on Archival Records (2012 with additions) in the Republic of North Macedonia, the main focus of the archival activity as an activity of public interest includes researching, keeping record of the documents of interest for the state and its citizens, collecting, taking over, storing, arranging and processing of the archival material, implementing measures for the protection of archival material in the State Archives, publishing scientific and information resources, evaluating and categorizing, using, presenting and publishing of the archival material, supervising the storage and the protection of the archival and documentary material located outside the State Archives and other matters determined by the Law. Therefore, archival sciences not only dealing with the above-mentioned activities, but it is also dedicated to how to make the documents accessible to the public. Despite its importance, archival science often remains a mysterious for the majority of the citizens and a field that is underappreciated. There is a consensus among archival scholars that the role of the Archives is often obscure as they do not make their presence felt to the public. As a result, people who could benefit from the services of archives repositories do not know that such institutions exist. In some cases, even though the majority are aware of the existence of Archives repositories, they did not understand the role of the archives.

There should be more studies to investigate the extent to which archivists have mainstreamed archives as a tool for national development. In order to change this, archivists should make efforts, and they should work on a planned popularization of archival science. Archival science popularization aims to raise awareness about the significance of the Archives and promote a deeper understanding of the role they play in preserving the cultural heritage.

The work of the Archives has been significantly altered and expanded under the influence of the development of information technology, the expansion of knowledge, and the increasing importance of information sciences. In such social conditions, the Archives are no longer limited to the acquisition, storage, and use of archival material, but the Archives are expected to transform and find appropriate ways to respond to current demands. For this reason, modernization of the archival activity is needed, as well as promotion and continuous development and

a greater openness for the public, that can be achieved by raising the awareness among citizens about the activity of the Archives, because the right to access cultural heritage is a right of every person, regardless of their racial, national, religious affiliation, or educational status.

In order to popularize archival science, we need to understand the role and the importance of the Archives. Archives are repositories of historical records and documents that provide valuable insights into the past. They contain primary sources that historians, researchers, and scholars rely on to reconstruct historical events, understand cultural contexts, and analyze social and economic trends. Archives are essential for preserving collective memory and promoting historical accountability. Archives are both a substantiation and a protector of the past and the present, but also, they are an irrefutable vindication of our existence.

Despite the importance of the Archives and the need for their popularization, archival sciences face several challenges. These include:

- Preservation and Conservation: Archives are often fragile and susceptible to deterioration, making preservation and conservation a significant challenge.
- Digitization: The rapid pace of technological advancements requires archives to adapt and digitize their collections to ensure accessibility and usability.
- Funding: Archives often rely on limited funding, which can hinder their ability to preserve and provide access.

## **POPULARIZING ARCHIVAL SCIENCE**

To address challenges and promote archival science, popularization efforts are essential.

These can include:

- Public Outreach: In order to raise awareness about the importance of the Archives and Archival Sciences, Archives can engage with the public through publishing of archival documents, exhibitions, workshops, lectures, lectures, forums, radio broadcasts, web presentations etc.
- Digital Initiatives: Archives can digitize their collections and make them available online, that can certainly contribute to increasing accessibility and promoting research.
- Collaboration: Archives can collaborate with other institutions, researchers, and scholars to promote the use and understanding of archival materials.

To further popularize archival science and archival activity, archivists and the management of the Archives should consider:

- Developing targeted outreach programs: Archives can develop outreach programs tailored to specific audiences, such as students, researchers, or public.
- Utilize social media: Archives can leverage social media platforms to promote their collections, share research experiences and results, and engage with the public.
- Foster partnerships: Archives can partner with other institutions, researchers, and scholars to promote the use and understanding of archival materials.

## **CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AT THE ARCHIVES**

One of the most important segments of archival activity, from the aspect of meeting the needs of modern society, and in the direction of the popularization of archival science, is the cultural and educational activity.

Today, there are numerous cultural and educational activities at the State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia, such as: publishing of archival documents and publications about the archival sciences, promotions of publications, exhibitions of archival materials, educational visits from schools, special events that opens the doors of the Archives for the public (Archival week/Archival day), student internships, etc.

It is very important how the Archives are presented to the public and how do they attract public attention.

Archives must constantly adjust to the working conditions in modern society, and the relevant bodies should outline the cultural policy of the Archives in accordance with the global interactive communication, professional skills, management, and partially with the market orientation.

In the process of modernizing archival activities, the importance of activities related to the use of archival material is emphasized, and in that context, a more significant role is entrusted to the activities within the scope of cultural and educational work. This activity aims to inform the public about the Archives and the archival material as cultural heritage, and in this way raise awareness about the importance of protecting this type of heritage. Changes in social expectations, along with the possibilities of modern technologies, most significantly influence

the creation of new user services in the Archives. Cultural and educational activities, apart from the protection and processing of archival material, represent one of the most important functions of today's Archives.

The goal of the Archives and the archivists is to protect the reputation of the Archives as institutions accessible to the public, their work programs should reveal the enormous potential of the archival material in informing and educating society and should receive the attention they deserve. It is important to work on how the Archives are interpreted in the social context, that is, in the area of public relations. In the cultural policy of the Archives, a special emphasis should be placed on educating young generations, starting with preschool and school-age children, so that archival material becomes educational material.

Archives should build good relationships with a specific target group, for example, students as potential users, and use their interests as a starting point.

The cultural policy of the Archives in the modern environment should be based on the following activities: participation in commemorating the anniversaries of significant historical events in various settings; redefining the role of Archives as places for research; expanding cooperation with educational institutions and enriching the offer of content for educational programs; improving the working conditions for interested parties in the archive programs and enhancing communication with the public through social networks and other modern communication channels. Viewed in the long term, cultural and scientific institutions cannot function on their own, separately and isolated from society, focused only on internal activities or scientific and professional work. The importance and value of the institutions in the culture lie in their dedication and work towards enriching individuals, that is, enriching the entire community.

In a period when our country was going through transition from a closed socialist system of values and facing increasingly present globalization, it was particularly important to the State Archives, as a national institution in the field of culture, to be given the right significance and to be popularized by the wider public. A period of opening the Archives and presenting historical processes and figures from the past occurred, in order to gain a clearer picture of past events and to bring them closer to those who have a scholarly interest in studying history, but also to those who need to realize their civil rights through the archival material.

The cultural and educational activity of the Archives in modern times, when information is of invaluable importance, has a particularly significant role. Through this segment of the archival activity, the Archives has the potential to become a place where people gather to gain knowledge and expand their horizons, while also fostering a positive relationship with the Archives, archival material, and history. At the core of this activity is the character of the archival material, which represents a source of information and irreplaceable testimonies of historical processes, and certainly the need to achieve an adequate valuation of archival material in the processes of democratizing culture, as an important segment of cultural heritage.

One of the ways to promote the Archives and the Archives Sciences is to bring the Archives closer to the youngest generations of preschool and school age, within the framework of cultural and educational activities, that is, the educational process.

From recently, Archives in the frame of the educational activities have a task to inform children of preschool and school age about the Archives and the archival material as cultural heritage. The State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia has intensified its work in this area over the last years.

Archives cease to be just custodians of cultural heritage; instead, they become active participants that open up and approach the community in which they operate through the organization of various cultural and educational activities. As a result of modernization and the approach of archival institutions to the public, their pedagogical function is increasingly emphasized. Archival pedagogy is particularly important in shifting awareness of the activities of Archives.

In order for the educational potential of the Archives not to remain unused in the field of culture and educational activities, various forms of work are organized with the aim of getting closer to the public, familiarizing the community with the activities of the Archives, and attracting an increasing number of users from different structures. Expanding the circle of users of archival material is one of the ongoing tasks of modern archives.

Lectures on various topics, creative workshops, as well as cooperation on various projects and programs with schools and extracurricular institutions, as well as with other cultural institutions, are also a significant part of the cultural and educational activities of the Archives, aimed at popularizing the Archives.

With the collaboration and the partnerships between the Archives and the educational institutions, a new cultural policy of the Archives is being developed, more oriented towards the public and providing long-term benefits for both institutions. The Archives are descending from the pedestal of dedication to a narrow circle of researchers, mostly historians, and are opening up to new users upon whom the future of the Archives depends.

In developing awareness among the children through the educational process, it is necessary to place special emphasis to the role and the importance of the Archives and the Archival Sciences, as well as their significance for the functioning of the entire society.

The awareness of the importance of preserving documents among children is a matter of general culture, and it is promoted by presenting the Archives in educational institutions.

Recently, educational institutions in Macedonia have started to include Archives in their work plans and programs as potential partners in the educational process. Archives and educational institutions will become strong partners in the education of young generations only if both parties recognize the opportunity that such long-term interactive cooperation offers, and a program for such activities needs to be developed in the Archives to precisely determine the pedagogical function of the Archives. The potential of the Archives in the field of education is indeed great, and archival material covers various areas that can be utilized for educational purposes, directs students towards research work, and provides various didactic-methodical possibilities through direct manipulation with original documents, publications, maps, posters, audio and video materials, and other original archival material. Through the analysis and use of the archival material, among other things, the development of critical thinking is encouraged, and the informational literacy of students is enriched.

When we talk about the forms of cooperation between Archives and educational institutions and methods of work, it is necessary to emphasize that until now this cooperation has mainly been limited to short visits to the Archives or visits to exhibitions of archival documents. Only students from higher grades of primary schools, high school students, and university students have been involved in this. Preschool institutions, as well as lower grades of primary schools, are most often

not included in any form of cooperation with the Archives, which certainly needs to be changed with the offer of appropriate content, the design of workshops, and various games aimed at familiarizing them with the historical heritage.

The cooperation of the Archives with the educational institutions should focus on conducting professional training in the Archives, implementation of projects with historical themes, writing papers based on archival material, research work, roundtable conversations, screenings of educational and documentary films, lecture cycles on archival and historical themes, organizing practical work for the students with the archival material etc., while ensuring that the content and the method of work are adapted to the age of the targeted group.

### **PUBLISHING OF ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS AS A METHOD OF POPULARIZATION OF THE ARCHIVAL SCIENCE AND ARCHIVAL ACTIVITY AT THE STATE ARCHIVES OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA**

One of the ways in which archival document become available to the general public is also by means of its publication. Through the publishing activity, the use of original documents is avoided, and they become more visible to the general public. Publishing archival material facilitates the work of researchers, the documents become available to a wider circle of users, and the final result is increased awareness about the state of the archival material and the history that is kept in the repositories of the Archives and its availability to the present and future generations.

The resources that archives use to establish contact with the public are primarily the professional and scientific publications, as well as special editions intended for cultural-educational and promotional activities.

Publishing means providing access to documents/information by the public.

Publishing archival material and scientific-information means is an important function of the State Archives of Macedonia. Publishing documents is a logical end to the previous archival work in the Archives. This allows documents to live a new life and benefit a wide range of users. Based on the published documents, historiographic and other papers with greater factual and historical value are prepared. In this way the archival material is better protected (the editions are used, not the original material).

Traditional publishing refers primarily to printed editions; but with the development of technology publishing takes on new forms, such as publishing books, made on the basis of archival materials, on CDs, DVDs, electronic books, websites and similar.

Archival material is the source and foundation on which historical interpretations in academic papers and books are based and recently are also used in many on-line interpretations. The State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia enables researchers to have access to archival material, so that later in their scientific papers many text documents, stored in the State Archives, and a large number of photographs are presented and cited.

In the State Archives, many documents deposited by government departments over the years are stored. These documents are the basis of the official history of our country, and they are witnesses to the influence of the State and official politics on individuals.

Publishing of archival material was started by the State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia in 1963, and more than 200 publications have been published so far. Major series involve Turkish, Serbian, British, French, Italian, Austrian and German documents about the history of the Macedonian people, and a series of Documents on state-legal development of Macedonia.

By publishing, the documents become available to the general public, not only to the researchers, thus increasing interest in our national history. This primarily refers to the documents obtained from foreign archives that are published translated into Macedonian language, which makes them available to users that cannot use the original because of lack of knowledge of foreign languages.

Through its publishing production, the State Archives is included in current events and so promotes itself proving that it is not only “a custodian of old papers” but also a dynamic institution involved in the latest social trends.

One of the most significant ways of popularization of the Archival Sciences and promoting the archival activity in Macedonia occurred with the launch of a professional archival journal, named “Makedonski ahivist” (translation: “Macedonian Archivist”), aiming to address issues related to both archival theory and practice. The first issue of the Macedonian Archivist came out in May 1973. The journal “Macedonian Archivist“ is being published by the State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The main goal of this journal is the popularization of the archival sciences, the popularization of the archival work and the accomplishments at the Archives, as well as enabling a promotion and implementation of new experiences in the archival work. The journal was published annually until 1992, and there was a twenty-three-year hiatus, until 2015 when it was reactivated and its 20th issue was published. Since then, the journal has been published in print continuously every year. Starting from 2016, the journal has also been published in electronic form, and it could be downloaded at the official web site of the State Archives for free.

The print run of the printed edition is 150 copies.

The journal publishes articles for a wider range of scientists, researchers, and other readers, and in its content could be found papers on archival theory and practice, papers on the theory and the methodology of the studying and the using of the written historical sources, papers on archival education, papers presenting archival funds from the State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia and from other Archives, articles with historical content, chronicles, travelogues, memories, biographies, reviews, and announcements in which archival documents were used. The journal publishes papers in Macedonian and in some of the world languages, and it has an international editorial board.

Copies of the journal are distributed to some of the most important libraries in the country and abroad, and to some of the high schools and faculties.

## **EXHIBITIONS AS A WAY TO CONNECT WITH THE PUBLIC AND POPULARIZE THE ARCHIVAL SCIENCES**

One of the most important and commonly used means of communication with the public is the exhibitions of archival material. They represent one of the oldest and most attractive forms of cultural and educational activity in the Archives.

Exhibitions of archival material represent a mass form of utilizing archival material for cultural, educational and propaganda purposes with the intention of showcasing the most interesting and significant documents from the Archives. The theme of the exhibitions is conditioned by the relevance of certain historical topics, political currents, anniversaries, and propaganda in the archival service.

There are various types of archival exhibitions. According to the theme, they can be divided into exhibitions on specific topics, events, and historical figures. Based

on nature, on movable and immovable, regarding the duration on temporary and permanent. Most often, they are commemorative, on the occasion of certain anniversaries, and propaganda to represent a specific institution or establishment. The archival exhibitions with their themes, number, visitor attendance, and the lasting impressions on the visitors reflect a unique projection of the state of the society, the position of the Archives within it, as well as the relationship towards history and its interpretation.

Archives today face significant challenges. In the past, they had a dilemma of what and how to present, while today the dilemma is how to make what is presented attractive to visitors. In today's sea of easily accessible information and content, there are several questions that occur:

- How can Archives attract visitors to archival exhibitions?
- Can visiting exhibitions become a habit?
- Can Archives secure a place as one of the creators of cultural life in the community in this way?
- Is dependence on state investment inevitable?
- To what extent can Archives be creators of an independent cultural policy, and how much are they dependent on the current political and ideological situation?
- To what extent should the Archives be adaptable to the demands of the audience, or rather, the financier of cultural activity?

These are just some of the questions that arise when preparing exhibitions.

The places where exhibitions are organized must be interesting for the audience, but at the same time easily accessible. It does not have to be an exhibition space within the Archives.

In organizing the exhibitions today, the role of mass media, television, radio, and especially the Internet and social networks must not be overlooked. The Internet should and can become the main weapon of the Archives for attracting an audience and users of archival services.

Preparing exhibitions of archival documents sometimes can be accompanied by the publication of appropriate catalogs that are released on the occasion of the organized exhibitions. These catalogues include an analytical description of the exhibited documents.

## USING ARCHIVAL MATERIAL AS A WAY TO INTERACT

The least possible amount of attention, in the frames of popularizing the Archives and archival sciences, is given to the segment of working with clients, i.e. users. But interacting with users is one of the most important activities of the Archives and one of the most important ways to popularize the Archives and archival sciences. This is direct way to promote the archival sciences, the archival material and their importance.

Using archival material at the State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia is regulated by the Law on Archival Records (2012 with additions) and other acts of the Archives, as well as by the deadlines and conditions determined between the holders of the material and the State Archives upon its receipt.

The archival material can be used if the funds and collections that are of interest to the users are in an arranged or archived state. In principle, copies of the material (xerox copies or microfilms) are used. The State Archives of the Republic of North Macedonia has dedicated rooms - reading rooms for the use of the material in all of its buildings.

Based on the authorization from the Law on Archive Material, the Director of the State Archive of the Republic of Northern Macedonia adopts Rulebook on the general and special conditions for the use of archival material in the Archives.

The archival material is available for use for state, scientific and other purposes under equal conditions.

Foreign citizens can use the archival material in accordance with the Law, the Rulebook and the Rulebook for stay of foreigners in the State Archives.

The Rulebook confirms the general legal deadline for using the archival material (20 years after its creation), i.e. the agreed deadlines between the holder and the Archives, as well as the longer deadlines for use prescribed by the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia. If the holder who submitted his/her own material to the Archives has not determined the deadlines, the manner and the conditions for its use, it is determined by the Archives.

The Archives will not allow the use of archival material if its use is not in accordance with existing regulations, if it would reveal a state or official secret or would violate the personal interests and rights of citizens. The use of the material can be postponed according to the criteria for longer terms of use, prescribed by the Government.

The original archival material and certain documents of special historical and cultural significance are not given for use in their original form, except in some cases, when its use is required by state, scientific and cultural institutions. It should be emphasized that archival material is used by various categories of users who have different interests and needs through the different services of the Archives. Cooperation with them and their involvement in specific segments of the Archive's work can help better understand the users' needs.

The primary task of the Archives in the modern environment is to increase the ability to connect with new categories of users and to enable the accessibility and use of archival material, thus promoting the creation of new values for the community and individuals.

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## Summary

*Archival sciences promote the Archives as open institutions. They are constantly growing and accepting new principles and regulations related to archiving, which also means implementation of the process of digitization of historical documents and materials and developing new ways to approach the public and make the documents more accessible.*

*It is especially important for the Archives to be modernized as much as possible and to be open to researchers, scientists, students and all those who are interested in history.*

*Archival science popularization is crucial for promoting a deeper understanding of the importance of Archives and preserving our cultural heritage. By raising awareness about the challenges and opportunities in archival science, we can work towards ensuring the long-term preservation and accessibility of historical records and documents.*

*The State Archives of the Republic of Macedonia has a task for the future to continue its transparent operation, making its stacks available for all researchers in printed and electronic form and to continue publishing the ongoing series, monographs of documents from the State Archives and those brought from the archives abroad, related to the history of Macedonia.*

*Archives around the world, as well as the Archives in Macedonia, are increasingly using modern technologies. Through web presentations, virtual exhibitions, PowerPoint presentations, and similar types of modern communication, Archives promote their institutions, archival materials, and archival sciences.*

*Archives and archival sciences should progress and should work on the relationship with the public. Therefore, it is necessary to transform people's awareness of the place and role of the Archives as a cultural institution in modern society. To establish a proper interaction between the Archives and the public, it is essential to overcome uncreativity and monotony in the presentation of documents and popularization of the archival sciences.*

*Archival material is an inexhaustible source of information about historical processes and as such is an inevitable means of serving the scientific research and legal needs of citizens. However, the importance of archival material is undeniable also in fulfilling the goals of cultural and educational activities. Archival material and archival institutions conceal great educational potential, which draws its power from the fact that they keep the original archival document.*

*Introducing new methods in the process of the presentation and popularization of the archival material and archival sciences is a testimony about the efforts of the archival workers to embrace new ways of presenting archival material and the work of archival institutions.*

*The inclusion and active participation of Archives in everyday social life is the basis for the modern approach to the popularization of the archival sciences.*

***Typology: 1.04. professional article***