

SELECTED ASPECTS OF FUNDS PRESERVATION OF THE LVIV NATIONAL VASYL STEFANYK SCIENTIFIC LIBRARY OF UKRAINE

The information stored in libraries is a historic property of the society, the basis of spiritual, scientific and economic progress. Therefore, the issue of preservation of the library funds and timely providing of users with necessary information is one of the key objectives of each library. This multi-aspect problem combines a set of means that serves the realization of the main objectives: efficient fulfilment of readers' inquiries. Preservation of library funds is intended to ensure the integrity and stability of physical state of documents. This requires long-term well-understood concepts. In our library this work is complicated by the formation of its funds. Taking into consideration that the Lviv National Vasyl Stefanyk Scientific Library of Ukraine (LNSL) is based on the unique compilations and collections of more than 80 libraries, many of which have existed for three hundred or more years the fact is indisputable that they require a constant attention and care. Many rare collections are always in need of means for their preservation, taking into account the characteristics of each of them. However, for a long time the Library has had no significant achievements in the professional preservation and restoration protection of the funds because there were no appropriate structures, specialized staff and adequate financing. Only in the early 80's the Restoration Sector was created and in 1988 – the Department of Restoration and Conservation of Rare Books. Since then an active work has begun in preservation of funds, which you can define by the following areas:

- preventive activities (the creation of appropriate conditions of storage, maintenance of cleanness, optimum temperature and relative humidity);
- conservation means (increasing the resistance of materials to chemical and biological factors: disinfection, neutralization, strengthening the paper structure, phase conservation);

¹ Lviv National Scientific Library named V. Stefanyk

- restoration (a set of means that preserves artistic and aesthetic value of certain documents, manuscripts, early printed books, engravings, maps, rare and unique editions);
- preservation of information (the transfer of document content to other data media or making copies).

Nowadays two departments work to solve the problem of preservation of Library funds today: the Department of Printing and Initial Restoration and the Department of Restoration and Conservation of Rare Books. The tasks of the Department of Printing include minor repairs and binding of damaged editions of the 19 – 20th centuries and making copies of documents (to preserve the original sources). For some books conservation means such as: current cleaning, repairs, manufacturing of bindings are carried out. Special attention has been drawn to transferring contents to new types of media.. Therefore, the digitization of funds, which is being implemented now in the Departments of Manuscripts and Periodicals, opens up great reserves as it allows to publish and send texts quickly as well as to be used by several persons simultaneously. Security copies of documents protect the originals from overuse. Digital copies can be used online instead of original, paper documents.

This way we preserve the edition and create an opportunity to expand its information value. Each year we create over 20,000 insurance copies



Fig. 1. Conservation Council in approving the plan for restoration. Phot. by A. Makarowski

of documents. When making photocopies on requests from our readers we take into account that this form of information dissemination is particularly harmful to the media. Therefore, photocopying is allowed only for current books available in multiple copies. Rare books and editions in poor condition are not allowed to be photocopied. Of course, the best solution here would be to make digital copies of the books and issuing them to users in this form.



Fig. 2. Preparation of drawings to the restoration. Phot. by A. Makarowski

The Restoration Department is responsible for the preservation of valuable and unique books and other library materials. The conservatory works have been carried out for nearly thirty years to restore historical, scientific and artistic value of the collections. Specialists in the restoration of manuscripts and old books, graphic works and maps, leather bindings, documents on paper and parchment work in the department. The staff supervises the conditions of funds storage, carries out means in disinfection and disinfestation of publications, conducts the conservation and restoration works (Льода, 2010, p. 315–331).

Primarily, the responsibility of the Restoration Department includes care of proper preservation of funds. The work has a practical guidance related to the implementation of means to promote the funds conservation and the restoration of damaged material basis of manuscripts and



Fig. 3. Preparation for marbled paper. Phot. by A. Makarowski



Fig. 4. Disinfection of books. Phot. by A. Makarowski

printed editions. Preventive means include: maintaining a stable mode of storage, regulatory funds allocation, compliance with the rules of books using are considered the most important. Well organized and systematically conducted preventive means forestalls damage and destruction of the documents in the best way, thereby reducing costs and time for their conservation and restoration. These tasks are implemented in collaboration with the departments of funds keepers. We develop and implement the guidelines and recommendations concerning the maintenance of specific compilations and collections. It should be noted that the funds keepers are actively interested in the status and conditions of documents' preservation. Working with the funds every day, they know their vulnerabilities.

The problems faced by the conservators are quite difficult. The Library funds are placed in ten buildings located in different parts of the city. The buildings which are book depositories are architectural monuments. They belong to the buildings of unregulated microclimate so many funds depositories are threatened with major changes in humidity and temperature conditions and biological damage. Overloading of book depositories exceeding the accepted library standards also affects the efficiency of collection preservation. That is why our main goal is protecting the documents from damage and destruction by reducing the factors that affect the preservation of books. We carry out systematic monitoring of microclimate in storage, consistent inspection and cleaning of funds. A great importance is placed on searching for new methods and technologies of conservation and restoration means, cooperation with institutions working in this direction.

For better preservation of the book and documentary funds in book depositories we support the optimal humidity and temperature conditions, light and sanitary-hygienic regimes. These options are under close supervision of the department staff. It is necessary to observe cleanliness and to dust funds regularly in book depositories to reduce the influence of harmful factors such as dust, chemical and biological factors. The workers with appropriate training are responsible for this. We use vacuum cleaners with water filters to clean the books and documents. Systematic examination and investigation of ecological state of book depositories facilitate the timely detection of biological infection. A microbiological control of air, rooms and documents is organized to detect the source of infection and prevent its spread. The infected documents are removed from the general funds, examined and disinfected. We systematically examine rare and unique editions. The important function for their better preservation belongs to the care of covers and bindings. The means of conservation of leather and parchment bindings of manuscripts and early printed books are carried out by experienced professionals.

An essential condition for the preservation of books is a stable microclimate in the premises. The documents that are in book depositories,

where it is difficult to create appropriate microclimate conditions, may suffer a significant damage. In all premises where we store valuable and rare editions, there are thermo-hygrometers whose parameters are regularly recorded in the database. The appropriate software allows us to capture and process the information from monitoring the temperature and relative humidity efficiently. Analysis of monitoring humidity and temperature mode of the funds storage allows to develop an appropriate system of regulation of micro-climatic conditions. For this purpose, we use portable acclimatizers.

The next problem is the lighting mode and keeping the collection from sunlight. It is the best when the lighting is minimal in book depositories. This factor is taken into account when designing the library funds storage in the Library Art Reserves Research Institute. In other book depositories and reading rooms we use shutters, blinds and curtains to reduce the intensity of light. Effective protection from the ravages of light, humidity, and temperature conditions fluctuations in book depositories makes security packaging: cases, folders, boxes, envelopes.

Local examination of physical preservation of rare book collections allows to set the condition of collections and compilations, identify the editions in need of conservation and restoration. For this purpose, a random qualimetric examination of books, maps and manuscripts stored in the Department of Rare Books is carried. The document collection examination was conducted by using representative sampling. We have used a quantitative method of assessing the funds condition. Typical damages of basic elements of books and handwritten documents have been defined. It has been established that a great number of publications has a significantly destroyed paper media, binding materials and bookends. About 25% of editions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries are under active self-destruction. A qualitative analysis of conservation units has been done, whose results indicate the need for phase conservation of publications to prevent their further damage. The study to determine the physical condition of publications using the Stanford method have started. It allows for conducting the statistical evaluation of the condition of preservation of books and periodicals of the 19 – 20th centuries fast enough (Rams, 2004, s. 164–181).

The professional assessment of the conservation of compilations and collections establishing the causes of their destruction contributes to the development of an effective conservation plan of the collection preservation, allows to determine the sequence of conservation means and makes the selection of objects for the restoration. Fast and qualitative study of historical documents depends on the performance properties of the material basis. That is why the protection and preservation of material information media were essential for modern conservation activities. A large number of rare books, graphic materials, maps and other valuable publications

that are a constituent part of the information treasury requires a constant attention, care and appropriate restoration means. The introduction of handwritten documents and old books restored by us keeping to old technologies of their production, to the scientific use will significantly enrich the source base of research on the history of books, paper, book printing, bookbinding art (Loda, 2014, p. 11).

Saving and passing to descendants the most valuable things that were created by humanity for centuries is an honourable and responsible mission of a restorer. Restorers need a good knowledge of the history, structure and chemical composition of the material basis of documents for the proper choice of practical ways of solving the problems of conservation and restoration of monuments of writing and printing. That is why the experts in restoration and conservation of rare editions assign a significant importance to constant self-education and training in leading restoration centres. The department personnel was trained in Vienna, Warsaw and Wrocław. We study and introduce new methods of restoration of paper, leather and parchment. We develop recommendations for improving the existing technologies with the use of materials and restoration means to prevent any damage to the documents (Дзендзелюк, 2012). We elaborate restoration methods of old books without unbinding a book block. We test ways of strengthening of damaged paper sheets of the late 19th century. We study how to clean and neutralize the paper substrate of books of the 20th century and handwritten documents written in iron-gall ink.

An important condition for a rapid solution of pressing problems, as it has been proved by our experience, is a collaboration between conservators and librarians. Teaching collection keepers is really significant at this point. It is usually in the form of individual lectures or courses for trainees to improve librarians' qualification. We are aware of the importance of communication with collection keepers and that is why we have started periodical workshops this year.

The staff of the department pays special attention to scientific and methodical work to disseminate the knowledge about the preservation and restoration of documents. Excursions for students and librarians from the USA, Austria, Poland, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Belgium have been carried out. The main directions of the department activity, methods of restoration, conservation and preservation of books are introduced to the staff of libraries and academic institutions in Lviv and other cities in Ukraine. Cooperation and consultative, methodological and practical assistance to employees of libraries, archives and museums on mycological and entomological examination of book collections, restoration of documents introduce major innovations in the system of conservation means. The department experts are actively involved in the training and retraining of restoration personnel. The department trains art restorers from libraries and museums

in the region. Lectures for students of the Faculty of Postgraduate Education and students of Ukrainian Academy of Printing have been elaborated.

The means to ensure the preservation of library collections and compilations are more effective when all the structural units of the library pay enough attention and efforts to solving the problems that arise when performing basic tasks of libraries – to be an information medium. The primary task facing the conservators is the creation of a comprehensive plan of preservation of funds of 19-20th century, which is a particularly pressing problem of most libraries in Ukraine. The search for optimal solutions to this complex problem requires an active cooperation of books conservators with academic scientists. We hope that the timely awareness of the existing threat of losing a large reserve of information and material media of spiritual culture will promote more active collaboration of librarians, archivists, museum staff, scientists in developing and implementing programs to save and preserve rare funds of libraries.

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of the Lviv National Vasyl Stefanyk Scientific Library of Ukraine

Abstract

The basic directions of the Restoration Department of the Lviv National Vasyl Stefanyk Scientific Library of Ukraine of preserving the library funds have been analysed: monitoring of funds' storage conditions, means of disinfection and disinfestation of publications, conservation and restoration works, cooperation with funds' keepers, scientists, public, training and teaching of restorers.

Key words: library funds, conservation, preservation, restoration

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Niektóre aspekty zachowania funduszu
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Streszczenie

W artykule są analizowane podstawowe kierunki działalności Wydziału Konserwatorskiego Lwowskiej Narodowej Naukowej Biblioteki Ukrainy imienia W. Stefanyka w procesie ochrony zbiorów bibliotecznych: monitorowanie warunków przechowywania księgozbioru, dezynfekcji i dezynsekcji dokumentów, działań konserwatorskich i restauratorskich, współpraca z opiekunami bibliotecznego zbioru, naukowcami, społeczeństwem, szkolenia i edukacja konserwatorów.

Słowa kluczowe: fundusze biblioteczne, ochrona, konserwacja, restauracja.