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RESEARCH OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN ARCHIVAL SCIENCE AT AMEU MARIBOR, CLASSIFICATION OF ARCHIVAL SEMINAR WORK BY STUDENTS OF ARCHIVAL SCIENCES AT AMEU MARIBOR

Abstract

Purpose: *The aim of the research is to review the seminar assignments in two methodological study courses of the 3rd cycle programme in Archival Sciences at Alma Mater Europaea Maribor (AMEU Maribor) and to find out whether the students were oriented towards researching historical topics, challenges of the contemporary archival profession or researching questions about further development of the archival profession.*

Method/approach: *After a detailed review, the paper topics of all 20 students of the 3rd cycle postgraduate programme in Archival Studies were classified into: historical topics, topics of the contemporary archival profession and science and topics dealing with the development of archival science and profession.*

Results: *It is found that the largest proportion of students, 11 out of 20 (55%), have chosen a topic in contemporary archival studies, while most of these topics also cover a development aspect. Another group, 8 out of 20 (40%), with seminar topics purely on the development of archival practice and only one seminar topic had a purely historical theme. Most students continue to develop the topic they started in the first year of their PhD to a doctoral thesis.*

Conclusions/findings: *As the PhD students are mostly already employed in the profession, it is therefore considered that the implementation of their research findings will contribute to the advancement of the profession of archival studies.*

Keywords: *archival science, doctoral studies, seminar essays.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Alma Mater Europaea Maribor (AMEU Maribor) website defines Archival Studies as an independent, academic, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary science, which is facing new demands in the handling of archival material as the information society evolves. Under existing legislation, it is no longer just cultural heritage, but also a means of ensuring legal protection for individuals (AMEU, 2023).

In his article "Through some periods of Archivistics to the founding of the Institute and the journal *Atlanti* to the present day", Peter Pavel Klasinc writes that the beginnings of Archivistics can be considered to be the records (drawings) in the caves of Altamira in Spain and Lascaux in France (Klasinc, 2020). These were intended to provide information not only on how to hunt large animals and how to overcome fear, but at the same time the records were also a calendar. In the article, the author divides the development of Archival Science into eight periods, with the last period - in Slovenia - being marked by the establishment of the International Institute of Archival Sciences and the beginning of all three cycles of Archival Science studies, with the most important for the development of Archival Science as a science being the beginning of the doctoral studies (Klasinc, 2020).

At the same time, the AMEU Maribor website states that PhD students in the Archival Science programme will acquire the skills to use complementary sources to objectively understand, present and interpret archival content, and to take responsibility for and manage complex and challenging processes of archival theory and practice in both business and non-business, public and private sectors. (SAA, 2023)

It should be noted that PhD students will also acquire research competences in the field of archival science, which is particularly important for the development of archival science as a research discipline.

Archivists' education: There are many scientific articles in databases that show active research in the field of Archival sciences. Often, the authors of scientific articles are researchers working at high-profile universities who also participate as course instructors of archival studies. Interest-

ingly, the Society of American Archivists publishes recommendations on the design of objectives for graduate degree programmes in archival education on its website, and even proposes a draft curriculum that forms the basis of archival studies programmes at educational institutions in the USA (SAA, 2023).

Ljudmila Varlamova of the Russian State University for the Humanities notes that there have been many changes in the curriculum over the 90 years of archivist education, but that until now, education has always focused on two types of archivists: historian-archivists working in state historical archives and practitioner-archivists working in other archives. Both types could be trained at the Faculty of Archival Studies of the Moscow History and Archives Institute (MHAI), as well as elsewhere in Russia and in countries under its influence. The author argues that the ongoing development of science and technology is creating a need for different ways of archiving documents, and archival studies must adapt to this new situation. The author believes that the future of archival education lies in interdisciplinarity and, consequently, in the integration of some educational programmes (Varlamova, 2020).

Similarly, Magdalena Marosz believes that changes in archivist education are a consequence of the development of archival science as an academic discipline and the development of other sciences, information technology in particular. She believes that, in addition to archivists-historians, it would make sense to educate archivists at university level who will have knowledge and skills in modern documentation and who will also be familiar with sectoral legislation, as well as with administrative management. This would enable archivists to acquire greater competences in the field of information preservation (Marasz, 2020).

Magdalena Marosz (2020) also argues that the changed educational landscape also requires a different teacher-student relationship, where, in addition to the transfer of knowledge, it is also important to foster creative and critical thinking, which allows the problem-oriented learning. The teacher encourages students to search for information independently and gain the knowledge on how to solve problems (Marosz, 2020).

An interesting article by Karen J. Trivette (2022) entitled *Archival Science? Existential Questions and Proposed Answers*, in which the author challenges whether archival science is a real science. Through a literature review and a short qualitative study, the author confirms the hypothesis raised. She argues her claim by comparing research methodologies in archival science and other applied sciences and concludes that they do not differ. At the same time, she notes that archival science also brings together other sciences, such as: information science, media studies, history, etc.; she says that archival science is an 'amalgam' of many sciences (Trivette, 2022).

Alma Mater Europaea Maribor also offers studies in Archives and Records management at all study cycles, including doctoral studies from 2019.

Since the beginning of the PhD in Archival Science, authors were participating in the programme as a lecturer in two courses: *The Methodology of Scientific Research* (20 ECTS) in the first year and *The Methodology of Preparing, Writing and Editing Scientific Papers* (10 ECTS) in the second year.

In the first course, the student chooses the area of research that they intend to develop in the framework of the doctoral thesis and prepares a written thesis that includes a brief assessment of the research in the chosen area, as well as the purpose and objectives of the planned research and possible research questions or hypotheses. The written work shall cite at least 30 scientific works, of which 20 shall be from journals with an impact factor. In the second-year course, the student develops the topic chosen in the first year and complements it by describing the possible methods of work and the expected results and indicating the possibilities of their application. Most students continue to develop the topic they started in the first year of their PhD to a doctoral thesis.

Archival profession is facing many challenges with the development of informatics and other related disciplines, the aim of the present paper is therefore to review the topics of the student seminar papers in the previously described courses of the 3rd cycle programme in Archival Studies at AMEU Maribor and to find out whether they follow the challenges of the contemporary archival profession. Attention is paid to the question if the students are focused on researching historical topics, challenges of con-

temporary archival science or on research questions about the further development of the archival profession.

2. METHODOLOGIES

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Since the beginning of the study programme Archival Science at AMEU Maribor in 2019, 21 students have enrolled in it. In the academic year 2019/2020, ten students were enrolled in the first year, four students in 2020/2021, five students in 2021/2022 and two students in 2022/2023. Lectures were held at the faculty and, during the Covid 19 epidemics, online. Lectures and seminars were held in Slovenian and partly in English, with individual consultations in English for students who did not understand the language.

In the first course, the student chooses the area of research that he/she intends to develop in the framework of the doctoral thesis and prepares a written seminar paper that includes a brief assessment of the research in the chosen area, as well as the purpose and objectives of the planned research and possible research questions.

In the second year, students of the Methodology of Preparation, Production and Editing of Scientific Papers course continue researching their chosen topic, only some of them changed the topic after reading the scientific literature, reflecting and analysing the possibilities but most of them continue with the same topic. As in the first year, the now more developed topic, which included research questions and hypotheses, they present to colleagues and, after presentation and discussion among colleagues, turned into a seminar paper.

After a detailed review, the papers topics of all students of the 3rd level postgraduate programme in Archival Studies were classified into historical topics, topics of the contemporary archival profession and science and topics dealing with the development of archival science and profession. Seminar papers that cover the field of contemporary archival studies usually also contain elements of development (hybrid form).

The grouping took into account the seminar assignments in the course Methodology of Preparation, Production and Editing of Scientific Papers, a second-year study subject.

3. RESULTS

21 students enrolled during the four academic years (2019 to 2023), only one student did not meet the criteria for progression. Most students (15) continue to develop the topic they started in the first year through second year and then to the doctoral thesis. Only five students changed their research topic in the second year of study, therefore the grouping took into account the seminar papers in the course Methodology of Preparation, Production and Editing of Scientific Papers, a second-year study subject.

Table 1: Research topics for students of the PhD in Archival Science at AMEU

Research topics	Number of seminar papers
Historical	1 (5%)
Contemporary archival profession	11 (55%)
Development of the archival profession	8 (40%)

After reviewing the research topics, we found that only one student chose a purely historical research topic. The majority, 11 students chose a topic in contemporary archival profession and science, while a still large proportion of students, 8, chose topics exploring the development of the archival science and profession.

4. DISCUSSION

To identify the topic of the seminar thesis, the topic in the 2nd year was taken into account, which is likely to be the topic of the PhD dissertation project proposal and consequently of the PhD thesis. Interestingly, in the second year of studies, 75% of students continued researching the same topic from the beginning of their studies and continued with it to the doctoral dissertation.

In their seminar papers, students address a number of challenges in contemporary archival science, such as: the security of special archives, how to ensure the effective preservation of medical records, how to ensure the long-term preservation of e-materials in pharmacy, how to efficiently retrieve archival material from documentary material, the direction in which archival science will evolve to keep pace with the development of new technologies, about public administration metadata and UI deployment options, security elements in special archives, about methodology of creating and managing digital historical representations in an objective way and others. The students are predominantly working as archivists, so the selection of their research topics is based on their knowledge of the profession and the challenges that come from the profession's skills. It is anticipated that the results of their research will be implemented in the profession.

In an interesting article written by Karen J. Trivette (2022) entitled „Archival Science? Existential Questions and Proposed Answers“, the author challenges if archival science is a real science. From the current findings we can deduct that archival science is a real science, as it is based on a well-established profession beginning in prehistoric times and has evolved to the present day (Klasinc, 2020). Archivists have been trained at universities (Campanelli et al., 2020; Varlamova, 2020) for more than 90 years and have been responsible for the development of the profession and sciences. Archivists are involved in a large amount of research, some of which is also carried out at AMEU Maribor as part of the Archivists in Science doctoral study programme.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Students of the Archival Science programme at AMEU Maribor start their research work already in the first academic year. The content of the seminar assignments has been reviewed in the courses Methodology of Scientific Research and Methodology of Preparation, Production and Editing of Scientific Papers, regular subjects of the first and second year of the study programme. It was found that the predominant topics deal with the challenges of the contemporary archival profession and its development. This

finding is important because in the seminar assignments students deal with the topic they usually choose for their doctoral dissertation. As the students are mostly employed in the profession, it is assumed that the implementation of their research findings will contribute to the development of the archival profession.

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TPOLOGY: 1.01 Original scientific research

APPENDIX: BROCHURE ARCHIVAL SCIENCE 3rd BOLOGNA CYCLE, PHD STUDY PROGRAMME

Available at: <https://en.almamater.si/archival-sciences-c31#overview>



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ARCHIVAL SCIENCES

PhD 3rd Bologna cycle
PhD study programme

STUDY PROGRAMME

The study focuses on acquiring in-depth knowledge that enables independent, original and scientific research work in a wide field of archival theory, archival practice and archival science as an independent, academic, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary science. Lessons learned are necessary for the planning, management and implementation of the most demanding scientific research projects and comparisons and analyses of research in the field of archival science, based on qualitative and quantitative and other research methods and models.

A wide research field within the doctoral study applies both to relations between documents and related entities, as well as with the archival records as a whole, with a special emphasis on authenticity, integrity, connectivity with record creators, records preservation, concepts of appraisal, the use and accessibility of archival records, as well as the storage and preservation of archival records in physical or electronic forms.

**DURATION OF STUDIES:**

3 years

**ECTS CREDIT POINTS:**

180 ECTS

**OBTAINED TITLE:**

Doctor of Archival Sciences

**LOCATION OF STUDIES:**

Slovenia

**BEGINNING OF STUDIES:**

October

**STUDY METHOD:**

Part-time study



COURSE SYLLABUS

YEAR 1

Subject No.

1st SEMESTER

- 1 Relations of archival sciences
- 2 E-archiving and information infrastructure

2nd SEMESTER

- 3 Methodologies of scholarly research
- 4 Doctoral seminar –
preparation of doctoral dissertation disposition

YEAR 2

Subject No.

3rd SEMESTER

- 5 Methodology of preparation, production
and regulation of scientific work
- 6 Research methods in archival studies
and preparation of doctoral dissertation

4th SEMESTER

- 7 Individual scientific research work
- 8 Elective course I
- 9 Elective course II

YEAR 3

Subject No.

5th and 6th SEMESTER

- 10 Preparation of doctoral dissertation

ELECTIVE COURSES

Subject No.

- 1 Records management systems and archiving
- 2 Organizational systems in archival science
- 3 Typology of archival records
- 4 Basic elements of archival law
- 5 Elements of conservation and restoration of archival records
- 6 Languages and monuments - use, editions and conservation
- 7 The main facts of cultural development of Slovenian territory
- 8 Use of archival records and protection of personal data
- 9 Preservation of electronic records in the private sector
- 10 Exploring the Web and Web Technology
- 11 Risk management in electronic archiving
- 12 Protection and maintenance of archival books and books in archives
- 13 Resources for Slovene Cultural History
- 14 Latin epigraphy
- 15 Latin palaeography
- 16 Archival records and legal interest
- 17 Protecting archival records in time of war and in cases of emergency

ENROLMENT CRITERIA

The following graduates can enrol in the Archival Sciences Doctoral Program :

- of second-level study programs,
- of study programs that train for occupations, regulated by EU directives or other uniform Masters study programs that are evaluated with 300 ECTS credits,
- of previous (before Bologna) study programs to acquire a specialization and previously completed higher education professional program, accepted before 11 June 2004; to these candidates study obligations will be stipulated in the range of 30 to 60 credits before enrolling in the study program,
- of study programs for acquiring a Master's degree in science or specialization after completing the study a program to acquire university education, adopted before 11 June 2004; these candidates at doctoral study programs will have recognized study programs commitments of at least 60 ECTS,
- of study programs for obtaining a university degree education, adopted before 11 June 2004.

Graduates from other national and foreign universities can enrol in accordance with the prescribed conditions as they apply to students of the Republic of Slovenia, after the official process of recognition of foreign education for continuing education at Alma Mater has established equivalence of previously acquired education abroad.

Doctoral study of Archival Sciences enable candidates to have access to the most demanding skills and research needs in the field of archival theory and practice that are based on national and international foundations and standards. The study follows modern, scientific and research fields that represent the highest quality of addressing questions from the field of contemporary archival science.





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ABOUT ALMA MATER

Alma Mater Europaea is an international higher education institution with an office in Salzburg and study centres in larger towns in Europe. It was established by the European Academy of Sciences and Arts Salzburg, which connects over 1,900 scientists and artists, including 32 Nobel Prize Winners. One of the most representative centres of Alma Mater is in Maribor – Alma Mater Europaea ECM.

ACCREDITATION

All Alma Mater Europaea - ECM study programmes are accredited by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.



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