Patrycja Popowniak
Silesian Digital Library- its character and collections

In my report I would like to present you the Silesian Digital Library- it's character, collections (focusing on the german-language materials), and the process of digitization.

The Silesian Digital Library (SDL) was established in July 2006, by the agreement between the Silesian Library in Katowice and the Silesian University. The main mission of the project is to create and constantly expand the SDL digital collections, containing first of all cultural heritage of Silesia (and Silesian Voivodship) in its former and present variety, national, European and world cultural heritage collected in the region, scientific publications and educational materials. SDL also supports teaching and educational activities.

The coordinator of the actions associated with the creation of the SDL is the Silesian Library in Katowice. It also supports the SDL hardware and software platform.

Participants of the SDL create digital content according to the Agreement on co-creation of the Silesian Digital Library. Text of the Agreement was established together by all institutions declaring the participation in the SDL in October 2006.

Thanks to the open formula of the Agreement, every institution interested on showing its collections online, can do that by signing the terms of Agreement. What's most important, publication of digital content via the SDL by the Participants is free of charge. At the moment, there are over 60 various institutions (mostly libraries, but also museums or archives), that co-create digital content in our library.

Members of the SDL have full autonomy in the choice of materials for digitization. Each member of the Silesian Digital Library publish their content on equal rights and can decide autonomously which publications and how many of them will be published. Open cluster formula of SDL also allows participants to acquire content from the resources of other institutions and individuals.

Institutions also take responsibilty for the problem of copyrights. If the rights are not terminated, a proper agreement with an owner of the rights must be concluded.

SDL is enabled in the Polish system of regional and institutional digital libraries in the country called Digital Libraries Federation. DLF is a web service, whose primary purpose is to collect, process and disseminate informations on collections of Polish cultural and scientific institutions

available on-line. Besides, resources of our digital library are indexed and available through global Internet search engines. An important fact I should mention is that, since 11 December 2009, SDL publications are available in Europeana- one of the biggest repository of cultural heritage in the world.

Being a part of the DLF helps with seeing other institutions activity and can be usefull in selecting materials to digitization- for example we can elimintate duplicates.

As I mentioned, every member of SDL can organise digitization itself, based on their own resources. Most frequently used method of financing the equipment, workers and entire infrastructure is to start a project, which aim is to digitize and publish concrete types of documents. These projects are often financed from external sources, such as ministerial funds or european budget intended for the culture.

First project I'd like to present, is "Silesian Internet Library of Rare Collections". That project was co-financed by the European Fund for Regional Development within the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment. Thanks to that activity, Silesian Library was able to create digital workshop, with professional scanners, hardware infrastructure and a team of full time workers. An effect of its project is almost 30 000 of publications in DSL, grouped in 10 subcollections, such as photographs, graphics, periodicals, cartography and so on. Now, when the project is over, workshop became a part of Digital Media Department of Silesian Library.

In 2007 Silesian Library realized another idea, called The Social Digitization Workshop. It was funded by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage Program "Mecenat 2007". What is worth to say about this iniciative, is that in SDW volunteers are engaged in the digitization process. The number of scans done in this workshop is about 950 000. Workers of SDW also provide training of the new participants, who need to learn how to digitize and publish content in the SDL collections. Institutions can also use our equipment to digitize its materials.

In 2014 we started another big project, "Digitization of regional magazines 1887-1939". The aim of this activity is to crate a collection of silesian magazines.

At the moment there are about 140 000 publications available in our digital library. Over 100 000 of them come from the Silesian Library's collections. The number of pages digitized by the Silesian Library only is now over 3 000 000. I would like to present you our recources, focusing on the german-language materials.

Silesian Digital Library's collections contain variety of publications, for example legal documents, calendars, periodicals, address books, photographs and graphics. Most of them are improtant for historicians, genealogists and other scientisits, who are interested in the history of Silesia in their historical boundaries.

First type of materials I want to present, is legal documentation. These publications concern mainly Opole Silesia and Lower Silesia (especially Wroclaw).

The main title is "Amts-Blatt der Königlichen Oppelnschen Regierung ". This yearbook was published in Opole from 1816 to 1939. That's a rich source for the study of history of Prussian Silesia administration in 19th century.

Similar title, related to administration in Lower Silesia, is "Amts-Blatt der Königlichen Breslauschen Regierung".

Next type of documents we digitise, are publications related to industry. There are mainly statistical data, like in publication "Statuten und Verhandlungen des Schlesischen Fortsvereins", and its continuation "Jahrbuch des Schlesischen Forstvereins". This yearbook was published in Wroclaw and contains very detailed datas about forestry in Silesia, including maps, diagrams and so on. "Statistik des Oberschlesischen Berg-und Huttenwerke" is an important source of information about mining and steel industry in Upper Silesia.

One of the biggest parts of our resources are periodicals. One of our participants, published recently a digital version of interesting regional magazine. Its title is "Wochenblatt.pl". Articles in that magazine concerns the German minority in Poland. Text is written in polish and german. Its also an example of cooperation of our participants with the small, local editorial offices.

"Der Oberschlesische Wanderer" is an example of german policital weekly, printed in Gliwice in the period 1828-1945. Another socio-political magazine published in Silesia at the beginning of 20th century, is "Der Oberschlesier". Other significant title available in our library, is "Kattowitzer Zeitung"- daily magazine edited in Katowice from 1869 to 1945.

In the last few months, in Social Digitization Workshop, we digitized and published nearly hundred of calendars from the beginning of 20th century, up to 1940's. Calendars were released in the area of Opole Silesia and Upper Silesia, in cities such as, for example Gliwice, Olesno, Opole or Bytom. What we can find in these publications, is mainly propaganda materials related to the Nazi regime.

Important part of our resources are photographs. Within the project ""Silesian Internet Library of Rare Collections" we published "Das Schöne Oberschlesien"- It's a photo album of Upper Silesian cities. Another album- "Oberschlesische Landschaften" contains over 500 photographs of Silesian landscapes, architecture and portraits.

Genealogists and other scientists often use adressbooks we digitized, for example "Adressbuch Gleiwitz", released in the beginning of 20th century. That adressbook contains usefull informations about business in Gliwice. "Adressbuch der Stadt Beuthen" is also popular publication.

As I mentioned, every participant of DSL can acquire content from the resources of other institutions and individuals. By that way, resources of our library were enriched by one of the Europe's biggest private collection of graphics related to Silesia. Exemplary items in this collection is an album of Wroclaw's most representative architecture. There is also a few graphics displaying castles in Silesia.

Interesting iniciative, related to the german heritage in Upper Silesia, was taken by the Upper Silesian Association. The project called "The digitization of cultural heritage – school chronicles" is co-financed by the European Union funds and involves digitization of Katowice school chronicles and their presentation online in the Silesian Digital Library. Some of them were translated into polish and that translations are published as an addictional file.

In conclusion, although SDL resource is composed mainly of historical writings, it is one of the most popular digital libraries in Poland.

Titles above are, of course, only selected examples. There is much more german-language heritage presented in our digital library. Our collections are important base of knowledge about Silesia. Scientists use our resources as source material in their researches.

Now, I would like to present you how digitization in Silesian Library looks like. Our activity takes place in two workshops. Generally, about 25 people are involved in the digitization process.

First team is called Social Digitization Workshop. It contains 3 full-time workers and 14 volunteers. Volunteers are responsible for scanning publications, and it's graphical correction. Second workshop has large-format scanners, and is concentrated on digitizing periodicals and, in general, mass production of digital content.

Digitization process begins with scanning paper documents (books, periodicals etc). File format we choose is TIFF, with no compression, scanned almost always in colour. Tiff is also our archival format, that we store on our disc arrays. Resolution recommended for archival files is 300 DPI, but in some cases (for example maps, graphics or photographs) we use higher resolution, up to 600 DPI.

 After graphical correction, TIFF files are now most often compressed to a PDF. Second file format presented on SDL is Djvu. Both of these formats have advantages and disadvantages. PDF is certainly more "friendly" for users. Nowadays, most of internet browsers have build-in plugins to show pdf files, so the user doesn't have to install anything more to view the document. Djvu files are smaller and there is a possibilty to show the reader a text layer only (without the background) .That makes reading a publication more comfortable. But, sometimes readers have problems with opening content published as a djvu file because they don't have the proper plugin.

Technical recommendations that I mentioned, are not obligatory. Every member of SDL can do its own methods of making digital content. There is autonomy in, for example chosing file formats presented online, creating collections and making a description of the digital content. However, Silesian Library, as a coordinator of entire Library, **supervises and gives instititutions some advices and instructions**, how to digitize and present their content in the best possible way. There is also no coordination between National Library of Poland (who has its own gigital content available on the Web) ,and other libraries, when it comes to digitiziation.

The main problem we have with 19th century german-language materials, is their condition. We have to be very carefull not to destroy the paper, and- at the same time- we want to get the highest quality digital version of our document.

The other issue, especially when it comes to a 19th century publications written with the gothic font, is the text recognision. OCR recognision software is quite expensive and number of sites that can be recognised is limited.

As you can see, resources of the SDL are very rich and diverse. Our library expands and there are many more materials waiting to be available online. **Based on the given examples, we can say, that the DSL is most of all the regional repository, and thats one of the first criteria of selecting content to publish.** The aim of our activity is to show the Silesian heritage and evolution.