



The history of archival affairs in different countries: A comparative analysis of structures and organisational methods

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Abstract. This study aimed to examine the historical development of archival affairs and compare the specific features of its evolution in countries with well-established archival traditions, such as the USA, France, Germany, and Ukraine. Another key aspect of the research is the analysis of the structure and principles governing the functioning of archives, both in Ukraine and in other countries where archival science forms an integral part of historical scholarship. The development of archival science has been assessed, highlighting both its strengths and weaknesses. The study explored the history of archival affairs across different countries through the lens of comparative analysis, focusing on organisational structures and working methods. Additionally, it examines how historical, cultural, and socio-political contexts have influenced the development of archival institutions in various regions worldwide. Particular attention was given to ancient civilisations, such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Roman Empire, where archives served as repositories for important documents and administrative records. Furthermore, changes in archival operations during the Industrial Revolution and colonial expansion, which influenced the development of modern archival systems in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, have been analysed. Contemporary trends in archival studies, such as digitisation and the globalisation of archival practices, as well as the challenges faced by archivists in different countries, are examined. A comparative analysis revealed that, despite significant differences in the structure and organisation of archives, a common objective is the preservation of documentary heritage and the provision of access to archival resources. This comparative approach highlighted both shared and distinctive aspects of archival development

Keywords: archival science; document collections; sources; collections; registers

Introduction

Archival preservation has been a fundamental aspect of governance since ancient times. A strong state could not exist without a written record and documents to underpin its administration and laws. Special mechanisms were required to store up-to-date documentary

information for the stable functioning of state institutions. The needs of government bodies led to the creation of the first archives, and states began to organise the storage and use of documents. Private archives also emerged, primarily to provide legal grounds for

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regulating relationships with the state and through it. The concept of an “archive” can be understood as a sphere of public (state) activity that integrates into the scientific, legal, and practical aspects of organising the custodial preservation and use of documents.

Archival science, as a scientific discipline, emerged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries at the intersection of historical science and state legal practice. It is a complex scientific field that develops theoretical, legal, and methodological problems of archival affairs and integrates several specialised branches such as the theory and methodology of archival affairs, the history and organisation of archival affairs, archival law, and the scientific organisation of archival affairs. H. Rumschöttel (2001) in his research investigated the evolution of archival science from the 16th to the early 21st century. The author focused his research on the last 50 years and discussed the establishment of archival science as an independent academic discipline. He considered the goals, methodologies, and results of archival research, as well as communication channels within the field. The interdisciplinary nature of the field was also examined.

The textbook by M. Donnelly & C. Norton (2020) is useful for those interested in the practice of historical research. The authors provide clear instructions on all stages of the historical process – from research planning and material collection to analysis and writing of historical texts. Theoretical concepts and practical advice are successfully combined. However, the book may be insufficient for those seeking deeper theoretical discussions or a detailed examination of a particular approach. Overall, the work is a valuable resource for understanding the historical research process and its practical application. C. Guardado da Silva (2020) provided valuable information about the integration of archival materials into the history curriculum. The author demonstrates how the use of authentic archival sources can increase interest in history and promote the development of critical thinking. Successful examples of using archives in education and specific practical examples make this article useful for history teachers and archivists.

S.H. Ebrahimi & I. Milford (2022) provided a valuable overview of how innovations in digital technologies are transforming archives, with a focus on the preservation and accessibility of archival materials. The author delved into the impact of digitisation on current preservation and data processing, as well as on the accessibility of historical documents. A significant feature of the article is its emphasis on practical aspects and examples that illustrate how digital technologies either improve or complicate the work of historians and archivists. K. Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2021) conducted research and published research by renowned experts that offered new perspectives and interpretations in archival science. The studies in this book cover various aspects of ancient archaeology and the origins of

archival science in the form of document preservation, providing researchers with a deeper understanding of contemporary research and methods.

F. Blouin Jr. (2019) examined in detail the innovative contributions of Terry Cook to archival affairs, particularly his approach to archival theory and the concept of a contextual approach. The research focuses on how T. Cook transformed archival practice, emphasising the importance of context in processing and preserving archival documents. While this scholarly article highlights the positive contributions of Terry Cook, it could have done more to illuminate the critical aspects of his work and potential contradictions in his approach. A more in-depth analysis of the responses and critiques of his work would have provided a more balanced perspective.

N.B. Tognoli & J.A.C. Guimarães (2018) offered an innovative perspective on postmodern archival studies and contemporary diplomacy, focusing on new approaches to organising archival knowledge. The authors conducted a detailed analysis of the evolution of archival practices in the postmodern era, including the impact of new technologies and theoretical concepts on records management. Their findings highlight the need to adapt traditional archival methods to contemporary needs and contexts. The research provided an understanding of the changing practices of archival science and its adaptation to new challenges.

In his study, G. Klinken (2019) analysed the integration of archival studies into academic curricula, using Indonesia as a case study. The author provided examples of the successful integration of archival studies courses into university education and analysed how this impacts the training of archival professionals. He also discussed the challenges faced by educational institutions and provided recommendations for improving curricula. Additionally, the study addressed broader issues concerning the development of archival science in Southeast Asia.

In the modern world, archives face new challenges related to digitisation, electronic records preservation, and cybersecurity. An understanding of the historical background and evolution of archival systems enables not only an assessment of their current effectiveness but also the identification of new strategies for improving archival organisation and management. This research aims to conduct a detailed study of the structures and methods of managing archives in different countries, to identify the key principles underlying archival activities, and to analyse the influence of historical and cultural factors on the development of archival systems.

■ Materials and Methods

To achieve the research objectives, a comprehensive approach was employed. The primary sources used for the analysis were official documents and regulations related to the development of archival science. Specifically, the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine (2024), the National Archives USA (2024), and The National Archives

UK (2024) were utilised. Documents from these national archives containing primary data on the establishment of archives in each of the listed countries were analysed. In collecting the material, documents directly related to the research topic were carefully selected.

The research methodology involved a comprehensive analysis of documents, allowing for a detailed study of the content and significance of each document examined. The content analysis method, which played a crucial role in this research, enabled the assessment of the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the analysed texts, as well as the identification of key trends and patterns in contemporary archival science. The primary method employed in this research is the historical method, which, in conjunction with logical analysis, allows for a comprehensive investigation of the origins and development of archival affairs. It enables the identification of key stages in the formation of archival systems, highlighting the contributions of leading archivists to the science and practice of archives, as well as analysing the impact of specific historical factors on the state and nature of the archival field. A comparative analysis of the archival systems of several countries, including the United Kingdom, the USA, Germany, France, and Ukraine, was conducted, focusing on their structure, functionality, and the application of new technologies. This allowed for the identification of similarities and differences between centralised and decentralised systems, as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of each model.

The historical-systematic method was a crucial tool for the comprehensive study of archival systems within the context of their historical development and systemic changes. The first stage of applying this method was the analysis of the historical context, which involved studying the political, social, and economic circumstances that influenced the formation of archival institutions. It was important to consider how historical events, such as wars, revolutions, or reforms, shaped the organisation and functioning of archives. The second stage involved investigating systemic changes, which entailed analysing changes in the structure and functions of archival systems over time, including changes in legislation, organisational structure, and archival working methods. The third stage was the systematisation and comparison of data, which allowed for the identification of general trends and specific features of archival systems in different countries, as well as an analysis of the adaptation of archives to new conditions, such as the digital age. The fourth stage was the analysis of cause-and-effect relationships, which allowed for an understanding of how historical events influenced the development of archival systems and their role in society. The final stage was the evaluation of the impact of historical changes on the current state of archival systems, including an examination of how historical stages of development have influenced their present organisation and functioning.

Another important component of the research was the mandatory adherence to the principle of historicism. It is also necessary to mention the application of the principle of the interrelation between archival science as a scientific system or discipline and archival practice. This principle plays a key role in applied research dedicated to the organisation of archival affairs, techniques, archival research, and reference literature.

■ Results and Discussion

Archival science is a complex academic discipline belonging to the historical sciences that studies and develops theories and methods for working with archival documents. In the history of archival science as an independent field of knowledge, four periods can be distinguished (Burr, 1902):

1. Antiquity – 16th century. This period is associated with the emergence of archival science;
2. 16th to 18th centuries. Archival research emerged as an independent field of activity and knowledge. The accumulation of empirical material and the appearance of the first practical developments in this field marked this period.
3. 19th century. The establishment of archival science as an academic discipline;
4. 20th century. A period of maturity for the science, characterised by the analysis and generalisation of accumulated experience, the formation of a stable theoretical basis for the science, and the expansion and deepening of the research field.

Archives exist in every country today, and each one is of research interest. Archives already existed in ancient Eastern states such as Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria. These were typically temple or palace repositories where economic documents, diplomatic texts, and literary works were stored ("Archives – Libraries"). These collections of documents, written in cuneiform on clay tablets, included diplomatic, legal, and private law documents, business reports, and letters. Cuneiform archives were created in palaces and temples of various countries in the Near East (Sumer and Akkadian Empire, Babylonia and Assyria, Elam, the Hittite Kingdom, Phoenicia, Urartu, and Persia), as well as in the houses of large slave owners (especially merchants and usurers). The largest surviving cuneiform archive is the Nineveh cuneiform archive in Iran, which was once part of the library of the famous Assyrian king Ashurbanipal. In Iraq, there is also an archive in the temple of the god Shamash in Sippar (modern-day Abu Habbah).

In Egypt, there is the extensive Tell el-Amarna archive (the diplomatic archive of Tell el-Amarna); in Syria, archives in Mari (Tell Halaf) and Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit); in Iran, the cuneiform archives of Persepolis, the capital of the ancient Achaemenid dynasty; and in Turkey, the archives of the Assyrian colonies of the 20th-21st centuries BC, such as the Assyrian colonial archives of Kaneš (modern-day Kültepe).

In Ancient Greece, official documents date back to the 6th century BC. In the 4th century BC, the state archives of Athens were centred in the temple of the Metroon. Other ancient Greek city-states and temples (Delphi, Delos) also had archives. In Ancient Rome, archives were initially under the care of priests, but in the middle of the 5th century BC, a senatorial archive was founded in the Temple of Saturn, managed by censors and inquisitors. When the empire was established under Augustus, an imperial archive appeared on Palatine Hill, as well as archives of censors and temple archives (Kalogeropoulos *et al.*, 2021)

Eastern archives are highly developed, with a large number of documents dating from the first quarter of the 8th century, the period of the Arab conquest, as well as materials related to the system of state administration, tax collection, and so on. Some archaeological artefacts have also survived, containing information about writing in the ancient states of Central Asia. For example, fragments of large vessels with inscriptions dating back to the 1st century BC have been found, describing the economic relations and systems of state administration of the Parthian Empire and other states of Central Asia. Early and medieval Central Asian archives are well-known (Rumschöttel, 2001).

Between the 7th and 13th centuries, that is, before the Mongol conquest, many countries in Central Asia (Iran, China, and later under the Babur dynasty, the so-called Mughal Empire) had well-developed systems of record-keeping and document storage, which were at a higher level than in Western Europe and other countries at that time (Colavizza & Blanke, 2021). In early medieval Western Europe, "barbarian" royal archives emerged, which were usually transported from place to place. Archives were located in large monasteries, bishoprics, and feudal knightly castles. Numerous fires and conflicts destroyed archives; only a few secular archives from the 5th to 9th centuries have survived. The most important monastic archives were those of Monte Cassino (Italy), Paris and Saint-Germain (France), Fulda (Germany), and Saint Gallen (Switzerland).

During the 10th to 12th centuries, municipal archives were established to store royal charters, city statutes, court decisions, and financial reports, as well as notarial archives as commercial operations developed. The role and significance of royal archives grew as royal power and centralisation increased. For example, the French royal archive (Imperial Treasury), after the unification of the country, came to contain the archives of provinces and individual feudal lords (Müller, 2013). In Spain, after unification in the late 15th century, a general Spanish royal archive was created in the fortress of Simancas. In 14th century England, several royal archives existed, including those at the Palace of Westminster, one of the towers, and the Rolls Chapel. The early development of the English legal system and the relative security of its island status led to the preservation of a large number

of medieval documents. In England, there were typically many unrelated archives (Donnelly & Norton, 2020).

Most concepts related to the organisation and functioning of archives were developed in earlier periods. The primary task of archives remained unchanged, which was to store documents in a simple order (often chronological) and protect them from loss (Wadhvani *et al.*, 2018). In this regard, the long period of antiquity and the Middle Ages can be characterised as a period of forming the archival model. In subsequent centuries, this independence intensified: in the 16th and 17th centuries, the Royal Archives of Sweden (Swedish: Riksarkivet), the Habsburg archives in Vienna and Innsbruck, the Central Archive in Spain, the Vatican Secret Archives (Latin: Archivum Secretum Vaticanum), and other royal archives were founded in various European countries (De Vivo *et al.*, 2016).

At the same time, archives of many churches, cathedrals, cities, and feudal houses were also organised. People with extensive experience working with documents typically worked in these archives. Their many years of observations formed a serious basis for processing archival material, which was sometimes very mature and methodologically sound. One can speak of the emergence of a practical inductive school that developed methods based on the generalisation of their own practical experience and the results of applying various approaches to processing archives (organisation and description). Based on the results of archivists' experiments, a scheme for systematising documents was developed.

There was also an attempt to develop a sample (an approximate scheme) of the most studied and widespread type of ordering archival documents. Evidence of the application of such a method can be found in the instructions and inventories prepared in Austrian archives in the 16th century, as well as in the example of the organisation of documents in the Royal Archives in Krakow. The existence of archives and the need for a method of organising and describing their contents led to the appearance of the first publications: between the 16th and 18th centuries, a significant number of works appeared in this field. The most famous are the works of authors such as Jacob von Rummingen (1571), Balthasar Bonifacius (1632) and Nikolaus Hussani (1684), as well as Agassis Frich (1664), Jacob Wencker (1713) and L.A. Muratori (18th century), as well as numerous German publications on the state of archives and repositories. Many researchers attribute the beginning of archival science to the 16th century and associate it with the separation of archives and repositories as document storage facilities and the creation of a new profession of archivist as a specialist in archival documents (Tognoli & Guimarães, 2018).

In the 18th century, archival management emerged as a distinct specialised field and underwent significant changes. With the improvement of forms of government and the strengthening of their influence on society, the focus and depth of inquiries from various spheres of national life, directed to state institutions through

administrative bodies, increased. Following these changes, the role and tasks of archives changed. In addition to the traditional function of storing documents in a specific, usually long-established order, the following functions were added:

- ✓ regular replenishment of the archive with various types of acts;
- ✓ ordering the archive's mass, which was more complex than before, according to the functions of the institution that was the author of the act;
- ✓ developing descriptions of archival documents and other means of information retrieval, as well as accounting documents;
- ✓ making documents accessible to users with various purposes.

Thus, a new model of the archive began to form for a new era with new economic and social tasks and functions. The main tasks of archives became: the accumulation, systematisation, and provision of archival documents to users. However, most archives were not independent and remained structurally linked to larger organisational units. The French National Archives, founded in 1790, became a model for the creation of similar institutions in other European countries. Its rapid quantitative growth marked the beginning of the organisation of an entire network of archives – a phenomenon that developed over the next century.

The creation of the French National Archives coincided with the establishment of the position of chief archivist. This event plays a significant role in the history of the archival profession. It was also at this time that the first theoretical works appeared, describing the modern model of an archive (primarily by German and French authors), emphasising the public duty of archives to provide documents for research. A new approach to the methodology of organising and processing documents emerged during this time, known as the rational-deductive school. Its essence was the use of ready-made, pre-developed logical schemes for organising documents. It should be noted that the traditions of record-keeping in archives and the concept of a fonds as an independent and integral complex of documents originating from a single author did not yet exist at that time. The collection of documents from various institutions and individuals in archives was grouped according to various criteria that were most logical from the personal point of view of the archivist or according to the purpose for which the documents were used. The concept of dividing the entire archive by subject matter and topics, regardless of the origin of the documents, formed the basis of the processing program (Dorado & Mena, 2009).

In the 19th century, archival science entered the scene with a significant theoretical and practical foundation. The first stage of this process was the publication of J.A. Ogg's work *Ideas for a Theory of Archival Science* (*Ideen einer Theorie der Archivwissenschaft* (Oegg, 1804). The very title of this book signified the emergence of a new

discipline. Subsequently, the term "archival science" was repeatedly used in the titles of publications about archives. The French model of archives and archival networks began to spread throughout Europe, including Belgium, the Netherlands, Prussia, and the Duchy of Warsaw. At the same time, the view was expressed that the most suitable grouping in archives that store ancient historical acts should indeed be thematic, but the most convenient method for researchers should be adhered to. Historians acknowledge that this marked the beginning of a critical discussion about the appropriateness of subject-based methods of organising documents, which do not guarantee the same success for everyone in finding the necessary material or its accessibility. The controversy surrounding this issue "gave birth to truth", which was presented as the principle of universal organisation of archival documents: in 1838, the French archivist Natalis de Wailly formulated the principle of "respect des fonds" (Dumanskyi, 2023).

Fonds were defined as collections of documents accumulated by institutions, companies, private individuals, and families, and it was forbidden to divide these fonds or mix them with documents of different origins. Natalis de Wailly explained that only the organisation of fonds by actions could ensure a unified approach, as it corresponded to the very nature of the objects themselves. Other classification schemes, based on themes, types (noun-based), or other characteristics, posed a significant risk of failing to locate the necessary documentation. The spread of de Wailly's rules was facilitated by their incorporation into a special regulatory law in 1841, which mandated their adoption in all French prefectural and municipal archives (Burak *et al.*, 2022). Soon, these rules were adopted by other European countries, including Belgium, the Netherlands, and Prussia. The rule of respect for collections shifted archival research towards issues of methodology and terminology, the history of the archival complex, and the scope of its description. The results of archival research in the second half of the 19th century were extremely significant. Efforts were made to systematise the key theses and compile them into a specialised manual on archival affairs.

Such studies were primarily textbooks by French (A. Champollion-Figeac, 1860, G. Desjardins, 1890) and German (G. Holtzinger, 1883, F. von Lohran, 1890) authors. After the French "breakthrough" in the direction of the fonds concept in archival research, it received further development in Germany. This is associated with the names of researchers such as L. Ranke and H. Sybel. The conditions for the transition to fonds classification were formed in Germany in the second half of the 19th century (Hedstrom, 1995). By this time, German historiography had turned its attention to a new subject – political history, and along with it, to a new source – government documents. Ranke's research made a positive contribution in this regard. Ranke's methodology of archival research made it clear that when working with "official"

materials, it is important for the researcher not only to consider their content but also the accompanying documents, as well as the logical and informational connections between the actions produced by the institution. The thematic and other classification systems prevalent in German archives at that time confused these connections and often made it difficult to find materials. Thus, German archivists faced the task of preserving the internal structure and unity of the archival complex. This idea was supported and developed by L. Ranke's protégé, the historian and director of the Prussian National Archives, H. Sybel. He formulated the so-called principle of provenance in the arrangement of documents in archives: in 1881, this principle was introduced into archival practice.

The essence of this principle lies in the division of documents according to their provenance and the prohibition of an institution from splitting up the unity of its documents and destroying the internal and historically formed structure of this unity. Unlike the French rule of respect des fonds, the German principle was based on the need to preserve the internal structure of the archival complex intact at the stage of record-keeping in the repository. France recognised the possibility of its alteration within the fonds. The term "fonds", considered exclusively French, was also not accepted by the Germans. They used the term "Beschtand", which denoted a more meaningful concept that did not allow for concessions in logical classification (Cook, 2006). L. Ranke and his school played a decisive role in changing the academic community's view of archives. Authenticity was now primarily limited to official documents. At that time, archives mainly contained documents of this type. Thus, among historians, the opinion was strengthened that without official documents, there could be no reliable history. The principle of provenance had the potential to become a universal approach to solving all theoretical problems in archival research. However, the form developed in Germany was somewhat internally limited and gradually acquired the characteristics of a "principle of provenance".

This meant that the internal structure of fonds had to be preserved in its original form within the institution that carried out the registration, regardless of potential inconveniences for users. The concepts of "fonds" and "principle of provenance" were further developed in the Netherlands, where archival research, like historiography itself, was strongly influenced by Germany: in 1898, Dutch authors S. Muller *et al.* (1920) published *Handleiding voor het ordenen en beschrijven van archieven*. This book was the most popular publication across Europe at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. In a sense, it "summarised the principles of provenance that were already being used in practice and consolidated them in the theoretical foundations of archival research". For this reason, some researchers call the Dutch the authors of this basic archival classification. This document defines the concept of a fonds as a collection of documents officially received by an institution or

officially formed by an employee of that institution and intended for storage by the institution or its employees.

The principle of originality was understood in terms of the nature of fonds. Everything that was not officially received and officially created had to remain outside the fonds, and the principle of provenance was recognised both in terms of archival arrangement and historical research, as well as in terms of the classification and cataloguing of each archival collection. It was recognised as the best system. The officially approved formulation at this meeting was as follows: "In the classification and storage of archival documents, each document must be placed in the group of documents or part of a group to which that collection (referring to the fonds) belonged during the period when it was still active". Thus, from the 16th to the early 20th century, palaeography underwent a long journey in its development. It has come a long way in its development and has become an independent scientific field of practical knowledge. As a field of knowledge with a practical orientation, it has developed its own principles (Kenosi & Moathodi, 2012).

The concept of archival collections as independent entities, or "fonds" as a self-contained complex of documents created by a legal or natural person (family, lineage), took precedence in the field of archival science. The inherent value of such a complex was recognised, and the importance of its characteristics such as independence, indivisibility, and the organic integrity of the documents contained within it, as well as state principles that include a certain internal order and structure, was emphasised. State principles demanded the preservation of this integrity in archives. They also required that collections be formed solely based on the unity of origin from a single creator (Klinken, 2019). Therefore, the first attempts were naturally made to develop the principles of archival science, laying the foundation for a unified scientific basis for organising documentary fonds in all state archives. This included state archives, organisational archives, and personal archives (De Vivo *et al.*, 2016). The network of state and private archives reflects the administrative structure of each country, its legal framework, administrative-territorial division, and cultural level.

Central archives have the status of national archives and perform the same functions of preserving the national archival heritage, providing archival information to citizens who seek it, and organising work with current government documents. The activities of departmental archives are usually controlled by a national archival body, which provides them with methodological support (Rydén, 2023). Corporate archives house the documentary resources of various public, scientific, cultural, educational, and other non-governmental organisations. They are, in principle, not subordinate to state archival institutions and have autonomy. Many Western countries, including Canada and the USA, have extensive experience in organising work with private archives, which is worth utilising. Based on management principles, two

main types of archival systems are distinguished worldwide: centralised (France, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal) and decentralised (USA, Canada, Germany, Sweden, Great Britain, Spain, and Japan) (Blouin Jr., 2021).

Archives management ensures the preservation, access, and management of documents that have historical, cultural, and legal significance and are an important part of any country's cultural heritage. While the general principles of archival work may be universal, specific methods and organisational structures vary greatly from country to country (Delsalle & Procter, 2017). The French archival system is known for its centralised and multi-level structure. The National Archives (Archives Nationales) play a significant role in preserving state documents from the Middle Ages to the present day. Regional and departmental archives also exist in France, where important regional documents are stored. The main principles of archives management in France are centralised control, clear legal regulation, and a high level of professional training for archivists. Particular attention is paid to ensuring that archival materials are accessible to researchers and the general public (Yale, 2016).

Unlike France, Germany has a federal structure, which influences the organisation of its archival system.

Each of the 16 federal states has its own archival system, governed by local laws and regulations. In addition to federal archives, there are municipal and private archives (Blouin Jr., 2019). German archives actively use modern information technologies to manage official documents and access them, ensuring a high level of efficiency and transparency in archival activities. In the United Kingdom, archives have a centralised structure, represented by The National Archives, which also serves as the country's primary archive. A significant feature of the UK's archival system is the presence of archives in universities and other educational institutions, fostering a close link between academia and archival affairs. British archives are characterised by high accessibility and the use of digital technologies for preserving and disseminating archival materials. The United States has a decentralised archival system with a large number of autonomous archival institutions. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is responsible for preserving federal documents, but each state has its own archival institution, independent of the national body (Table 1). Particular attention is paid to digitising archival materials and making them available online. US archives actively use advanced technologies to ensure efficient management and preservation of documents.

Table 1. The United States archival system

Level of subordination	Type of archive	Description and functions
Federal level	National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), USA	Preserves federal documents and historical materials. Managed by the federal government, with several regional branches
State level	State Archives	Managed by the individual state governments. Preserves documents related to the state's legislative and executive branches, as well as local history
Local level	Local Archives	Covers documents related to specific cities, counties, or regions. Typically managed by local authorities or historical societies
Private level	Private Archives	Includes archives managed by private organisations, foundations, or individuals

Source: R. Rydén (2023)

The Canadian archival system is also decentralised, although there is a central body – the Library and Archives Canada – responsible for preserving the country's documentary heritage. Provincial and territorial archives have significant autonomy and can take into account local characteristics and needs. Canadian archives are distinguished by a high level of professionalism and the use of modern technologies for preservation and access. The Japanese archival system combines traditional methods and modern technologies. The National Archives of Japan is the country's main archival institution, responsible for preserving national documents and providing public access. In addition to the National Archives, there are prefectural and municipal archives that store important regional documents. Particular attention is paid to the digitisation of archival materials and the use of modern information systems for managing archives (Guardado da Silva, 2020).

China has a long-standing tradition of archival affairs, which is reflected in the country's modern archival system. The State Archives Administration of China is responsible for the preservation and management of official documents. Each province and autonomous region has its own archival management body, operating within the national system. China is actively implementing digital technologies in its archival activities, ensuring efficient management and access to archival materials through the Internet (Caswell, 2017). The Mexican archival system is characterised by a centralised and multi-level structure. The National Archives of Mexico (Archivo General de la Nación) is the country's main archive, which preserves national documents and makes them available to the public. In addition to the National Archives, there are regional and municipal archives that store important local documents. Archival affairs in Mexico are actively developing, implementing modern technologies



for the preservation and management of archival materials. The Brazilian archival system also has a centralised structure, represented by the National Archive (Arquivo Nacional), which is responsible for preserving the national documentary heritage. Regional archives store important regional documents and operate within the national system. Particular attention is paid to the digitisation of documentary materials and the use of modern technologies to ensure effective document management.

Archival systems share common features, such as the desire to preserve a country's documentary heritage, ensure access to information, and promote transparency in management processes. However, there are significant differences in the organisation and methods of archival work (Delsalle & Procter, 2017). Centralised systems, such as those in France and Mexico, provide clear management and control over the preservation of documents. This enables effective coordination of archival work at a national level and the implementation of unified standards and rules. However, such a system can be inflexible and may not take into account local specificities (Klasinc, 2019). Decentralised systems, such as those in the USA and Canada, grant regional archives more autonomy, allowing them to consider local needs and characteristics. This promotes administrative flexibility and innovation but can create challenges in terms of coordination and standardisation of archival work. The emergence of the first archives on the territory of Ukraine is directly linked to the formation of the state, primarily on the lands of Kyivan Rus. The main centres where documents were concentrated were princely courts, monasteries, churches, metropolises, and bishoprics. Personal archives of knights and boyars were also formed. Documents were intended to protect private property (especially land) and to consolidate class privileges. Government documents were used for chronicling.

The Mongol conquest of Kyivan Rus and the decline of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia had a negative impact on the development of archives, but the established archival tradition continued during the Lithuanian-Polish period of Ukrainian history. Administrative and judicial archives in the Lithuanian-Polish period (15th-early 17th centuries) In the 14th-16th centuries, the Ukrainian regions of Volhynia, Podillia, Kyiv, and Chernihiv-Sivershchyna came under the control of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The centralisation of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania also influenced the archives. The development of statehood in Ukrainian lands during the Lithuanian-Polish period, the strengthening of state administration, and the improvement of documentation methods led to the creation of central and regional archives, as well as to an increase in their significance in public life. Archives and repositories of important documents, known as the national and state treasury, were closely linked to the functioning of state power (Cook, 2006).

The origins of the National Archival Fund of Ukraine are associated by scholars with the emergence of the

Cossacks, the formation of the Zaporozhian Sich, and the appearance of the Cossack administration in the 16th century. The existence of a military archive in Trakhtemyriv, Kyiv Region, testifies to this. In this city, registered Cossacks stored weapons, a treasury, royal banners, and important documents (Cossack privileges). Following the establishment of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi's rule, the archive became a State Archive. Under the Hetman, the General Military Chancellery operated, which received and issued several laws related to internal affairs and diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries. Since the Hetman's administration required various references, an archive was created within the Military Chancellery. In the 18th century, in addition to the Hetman's government chancelleries, the higher Hetman's government institutions also included the Ministry of Finance (which also had its own archives) and the General Chancellery (the General Chancellery had its own archives).

Right-bank Ukraine, which became part of the Russian Empire as a result of the partitions of Poland at the end of the 18th century, was one of the first regions where archival affairs developed. In the region, archival affairs underwent radical changes: the creation of a new executive branch in 1775 and the introduction of provincial and district courts were accompanied by the introduction of Russian-language paperwork. Archives were created at new state institutions based on the Russian model. Old archives of judicial and administrative bodies and municipal self-government bodies were massively destroyed. Almost all books on Magdeburg law and city chancelleries were destroyed, and some books on city chancelleries ended up in private collections.

In the academic history of Ukrainian archival science, three periods are distinguished (1917-1931 – "golden age", 1931-1938 – ideological period, 1939-1990: "era of centralisation and restrictions"; 1991 – revival of national traditions and institutional development), each with its own characteristics and different outcomes. The first stage (1917-1922) is characterised by the recognition of archival science as an important component in the construction of culture, an understanding of the importance of archives as a repository of historical memory, an understanding of the significance of archives as one of the guarantees of the spiritual development of the nation, and an understanding of the significance of archives as a factor in nation-building in the context of the Ukrainian Revolution. The construction of the Ukrainian state during the Ukrainian Revolution actualised the need for ethnohistorical research.

The creation of the Central Archival Administration in 1923 and its subordination to the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee marked the second stage of the development of archival science (January 1923-October 1931). Such subordination of the central archival administration, on the one hand, ensured state patronage of archival science, and on the other hand, created problems for state-ordered science. The main

direction of activity of Ukrainian archival institutions was the classification and systematisation of archives. The smoothing over of personal assessments and the suppression of creative research: in 1931-1937, as a result of "purges" and fabricated accusations, representatives of "bourgeois documentation science" were morally and physically destroyed, and document science was completely ideologised. As a result, the development of documentation studies in the Ukrainian SSR stagnated for an extended period.

Between 1917 and 1938, Ukrainian archival science underwent a transformation, evolving from the development of a prophetic model of archival organisation based on scientific evidence to accusations of sabotage. This period also saw the formation of the Ukrainian archival school with centres in Kyiv and Kharkiv. V. Vere-tennikov's open development of research programs and educational functions, focused on the creative use of foreign experience while taking into account national characteristics was completely destroyed. The third period of development of Ukrainian archival science ("the era of centralisation and restrictions"). The integration of archives into the totalitarian regime and the strengthening of party dictatorship led to the stagnation of Ukrainian archival science, the loss of leading researchers, and the reorientation of archaeological activities towards using archival information for operational-political purposes, effectively replacing archival research. Thus, the scientific basis of archival affairs was replaced by a tendentiously interpreted methodology of single-case archaeography, and archaeography was supplanted and trivially reduced to the development of rules and instructions. The normalisation of archival activities required competent specialists in archives (Yekelchuk, 2007).

Qualified specialists and the development of archival technical methods were needed, and in 1944, the

Department of Archival Science was established, and soon afterwards, the archival postgraduate program was transferred to the Central State Archival and Information Administration in Kyiv; in 1947, the "Scientific and Information Bulletin of the State Archives of the Ukrainian SSR" began to be published – a peripheral journal for solving scientific and methodological issues, reproducing scientific and methodological documents and providing them to city and district archives. Thus, archival periodicals were revived. Archival affairs were headed by the Bureau of Archives under the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR and remained under the control of party and state bodies. The 1970s were marked by a strengthening of instructions regarding the content and forms of using archival information.

The most notable archival work of this period was the monograph by O. Mitiukov, which became the first generalisation in domestic historiography of factual material on the development of archival affairs from 1917 to 1973. However, the defence of the monograph and several doctoral dissertations did not indicate a strengthening of archival research: until the end of the 1980s, only a biographical orientation developed. With the declaration of Ukraine's independence in August 1991, a new wave of national and cultural revival occurred. Ukraine democratised and joined the international community. This necessitated a new understanding of the role of archives in society and the state, the importance of historical, archival, heritage, and archaeological research, reforming Ukraine's archival system in line with its democratisation. A crucial component in the development of archival research was the creation of the Ukrainian Research Institute of Archival Affairs and Records Management in 1994 (Yekelchuk, 2007). Archives can be created by state authorities, local self-government bodies, and legal and natural persons, regardless of their ownership (Table 2).

Table 2. Archival system of Ukraine

Management level	Main archival institutions	Description
National level	State Archives of Ukraine	The main state archive responsible for storing and organising state documents and important historical materials
National level	National Archives of Ukraine for Contemporary Documents	Stores contemporary documents and ensures their long-term preservation
Regional level	Regional State Archives	Responsible for storing documents related to specific regions, including historical and administrative documents
City/district level	City and District Archives	Stores local documents, such as those from city and district administrations, and historical documents of local significance
Specialised archives	Archives of specialised institutions and organisations	Stores documents related to specific sectors or institutions, such as archives of museums, universities, and research institutes

Source: Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine (2024)

The central government body with special powers in the field of archival science and record management is the State Committee of Archives of Ukraine, which is responsible for the main direction of activities of bodies in this field, starting from the creation of the National Archival Fund of Ukraine (NAF) and ending with the creation of appropriate conditions for the storage and

use of archives, the development of archival affairs, and ensuring the preservation of documents, etc. The organisation is responsible for the main directions of activities of departments in this field – from the formation of the National Archival Fund of Ukraine (NAF), the creation of appropriate conditions for the storage and use of official documents, to the development of international

cooperation. Archival institutions subordinate to the State Committee of Archives are part of the Ukrainian archival system (the system of the State Committee of Archives of Ukraine) (Ivanushchenko, 2011).

The National Archival Fund of Ukraine comprises the Central State Archives, other central archives, and regional archives. National archives are divided into general and specialised archives, fonds archives, and historical archives. National archives aim to preserve documents regardless of their age, material, or recording technology. They ensure the preservation of a variety of documents, including those created on different media and using different methods of recording information. Unlike general archives, specialised archives focus on documents that have specific temporal, thematic, or technical limitations. Accumulation archives, also known as national accumulation archives, constantly replenish their holdings with documents from specific sources that correspond to their profile. Historical archives, in turn, preserve documents from institutions that operated in past historical epochs and no longer function. Archives in Ukraine operate following national legislation, as well as rules and instructions approved by central executive authorities. They adhere to national standards and other regulatory legal acts. The classification of archives is based on two main criteria: the type of archive and the form of ownership under which it was created. The main links in the Ukrainian archival system are state archives (archival departments of central, regional, city, and local state administrations), sectoral archives (archives of state institutions or public organisations), and archives based on collective or private ownership.

Research findings demonstrate a variety of approaches to organising archival systems in Ukraine, France, Mexico, Brazil, the United States, and Canada. Centralised archival systems, such as those in France, Mexico, and Ukraine, have proven effective in ensuring uniform standards, document preservation, and management at the national level. For example, a study conducted by O. Vernik & Yu. Vernik (2022) showed that in France, centralisation contributes to the preservation of documents and makes them accessible to researchers and the general public. On the other hand, decentralised archival systems, such as those in the USA and Canada, exhibit a high degree of adaptability to local conditions and needs. Therefore, regional archives can take into account local specificities. According to a study by M.L. Caswell (2017), decentralisation in the USA has led to the preservation of a wide range of documents at the local level. However, the lack of unified standards and coordination between bodies involved in preservation can lead to inefficient document management. Historical and political changes have had a significant impact on the development of the system for ensuring the preservation of documents in Ukraine.

The digitisation of documents and the use of modern technologies ensure the longevity and accessibility

of archives. This has been confirmed in research by P.L. Punzalan (2023), which found that the digitisation of documents in Canada has made them accessible to a wide range of users and significantly simplified the search process. This aligns with the findings in this study, which showed that the implementation of digital technologies in archival systems not only preserves documents but also makes them accessible anytime, anywhere. The research confirms the importance of archival systems for preserving documentary heritage, which aligns with the thesis of G. Colavizza & T. Blanke (2019), who notes that archives play a crucial role in preserving national history and culture. A comparison of the results of this study with other studies shows that different models of archival systems have their own advantages and disadvantages. The choice of model depends on the specific conditions and needs of each country. Centralised systems offer a high degree of control and standardisation, while decentralised systems offer greater flexibility and adaptability. In Ukraine, for example, the centralised archival system ensures effective management of documents at the national level, as confirmed by H. Ivanushchenko (2011). However, as noted in the research, this model may be less adaptable to local needs.

Research has shown that international cooperation in the field of archives can foster the exchange of experiences and the implementation of best practices. P.L. Punzalan (2023) demonstrated that archival institutions from different countries can implement the latest technologies and methods for preserving documents by working together. This would contribute to improving the efficiency of archival systems and preserving documentary heritage on a global scale. The use of modern technologies for digitising documents and creating online databases can significantly improve access to and preservation of documents. D.E. Marsh *et al.* (2023) analysed how anthropologists, using scientific approaches, utilise archival materials in their work, as well as their attitudes towards archives. The authors noted that modern archives serve not only as repositories of documents but also as important resources for interdisciplinary research. The research shows that archival materials, even in scientific disciplines where their influence was previously minimal, are gaining increasing popularity and significance. Concerning this topic, the research demonstrates the importance of comparing international practices and methods of archival work. D. Marsh points to different approaches to preserving and accessing archival materials, which can vary depending on the country or region. These variations may be related to the historical development of archival affairs, cultural differences, and the legal and institutional frameworks that regulate archival activities.

Based on this, it can be concluded that archival systems are a crucial tool for preserving documentary heritage and ensuring access to historical documents. Different models of archival systems have their advantages

and disadvantages, and the choice depends on the specific conditions and needs of each country. Reforming archival institutions, adapting to new technologies, and international cooperation are key to the further development of archival research. Archival institutions play a vital role in preserving historical memory and ensuring access to important documents, which is essential for government administration and cultural identity. The study of R. Rydén (2023) is an important work that explores how national archives define their role in shaping national memory and identity. The author analysed the strategies used by national archives in different countries for self-representation, as well as how these strategies influence the perception of archives as institutions that preserve and transmit national heritage. In the context of this topic, R. Rydén's research is highly relevant. It shows how national archives in different countries may approach their mission differently, depending on the historical, cultural, and political context. These differences in approach can be important for comparative analysis, as they highlight that the structure and functions of national archives are not universal but depend on specific national circumstances.

Research into the role of technology in archival affairs demonstrates that digitising documents not only increases accessibility to information but also reduces the risk of losing valuable historical documents. For instance, in many countries, the implementation of automated systems has significantly simplified the processes of cataloguing and information retrieval. As a result, archives can respond more effectively to requests from researchers, the public, and government agencies, which in turn contributes to increased transparency and efficiency in government operations. International cooperation has also opened up new opportunities for archival institutions. Interaction between archivists from different countries allows for the exchange of experiences and knowledge, which helps in developing universal standards and protocols. Such cooperation promotes innovation in the field of archiving, which is critical for preserving documentary heritage in an era of rapidly developing information technologies. Archival systems in different countries reflect not only the technological level of development but also the cultural and political characteristics of those countries.

It is also important to note that archives play a key role in shaping national identity. Preserving cultural heritage, including literary and historical documents, is critical for safeguarding national memory. Models of archival systems, both centralised and decentralised, have their advantages but also face certain challenges. For example, centralised systems may have a problem with flexibility, as standards set at the national level may not meet local needs. At the same time, decentralised systems may encounter difficulties in coordinating between different regional archives, which can lead to duplication of efforts and inefficient use of resources. Another issue concerns

the accessibility of archival documents. In countries with decentralised systems, access to documents may be complicated due to the lack of a unified database and standardised access procedures. In such cases, the use of modern technologies, such as cloud services for protecting and tracking documents, can significantly improve the efficiency of archival institutions. Future research in archival affairs could focus on improving digitisation technologies and the management of archival documents. For instance, the use of artificial intelligence for automated classification and cataloguing of documents can significantly reduce time and resource costs. Additionally, a crucial area of research is the impact of globalisation on archival systems. In an environment of increasing international cooperation, preserving cultural and historical heritage can become a global challenge. Developing international standards and protocols for preserving and accessing archival documents could be a key aspect of future research. Another direction for research is the ethics of managing archives. How can the confidentiality and security of personal data be ensured in the context of increasing information openness? This question becomes increasingly relevant with the development of digital archives and global data exchange networks.

■ Conclusions

This study conducted a detailed comparative assessment of the history of archival affairs in various countries, with a focus on the structures and methods of organising archival systems. The research results confirm that while archival affairs share common principles, they vary significantly depending on the cultural, historical, and social contexts of each country. This was revealed through an analysis of the evolution of archival structures, methods of storing and processing documents. Today, archival science has become one of the fundamental branches of historical science, without which the positioning of history as a science would be impossible. The study analysed the structures and methods of organising archival affairs in the most developed countries, which allowed the identification of the main approaches to preserving documentary heritage. It was established that archival affairs reflect national characteristics, including political and cultural traditions. In countries with a longer history of centralised power, archival systems were usually more developed and structured, which contributed to the more effective preservation of historical documents even to the present day, but today a significant factor in archival affairs is the decentralisation of archives.

The research findings indicate a need for improvement in national archival systems, particularly through the implementation of new technologies for digitising archives, creating unified standards for organising and preserving documents and ensuring open access to archival materials. However, the research also has certain limitations related to differences in cultural and political contexts that influence archival affairs. These

limitations made it difficult to apply universal approaches to organising archives, highlighting the need for further research aimed at developing adaptive models of archival management. The obtained results show that the performance indicators of archival systems can vary from efficiency in document management to the level of information accessibility for users. A comparison of systems revealed both the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to archival affairs. For example, countries with developed archival systems demonstrate a high level of standardisation and technological progress, which positively impacts the preservation and access to archival materials. At the same time, in countries with less developed systems, there may be problems with providing access to documents and their long-term preservation. Understanding these differences allows for better identification of the most effective practices and approaches that can be used to improve archival affairs at the international level.

Further research in this field should focus on finding new approaches to organising archives that ensure their efficiency and accessibility in the long term. This may involve developing technologies that facilitate digitisation and the formation of international standards for document preservation that take into account national specificities. The research was subject to certain limitations, including data availability, as some official documents and legislation were inaccessible for research due to information access restrictions and confidentiality. Cultural and linguistic differences also significantly influenced the interpretation of certain aspects of archival work in different countries.

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■ Conflict of Interest

None.

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Історія архівної справи в різних країнах: порівняльний аналіз структур та методів організації

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Анотація. Метою дослідження було висвітлити історичний процес становлення архівної справи, і порівняти специфіку розвитку в країнах з розвинутими архівознавчими студіями такі як США, Франція, Німеччина, Україна. Також важливою складовою частиною дослідження було пояснення структури та принципів функціонування архівів як в Україні, так і в інших країнах де архівознавство є базовою частиною історії. Було проаналізовано процес розвитку архівознавства з його позитивними і негативними рисами. У дослідженні розглядалась історія архівної справи в різних країнах крізь призму порівняльного аналізу організаційних структур і методів роботи архівів. Досліджувалось, як історичний, культурний і соціально-політичний контекст вплинув на розвиток архівних установ у різних регіонах світу, Стародавніх цивілізацій, таких як Єгипет, Месопотамія та Римська імперія, де архіви використовувалися для зберігання важливих документів та адміністративних записів. Крім того, проаналізовано зміни в роботі архівів під час промислової революції та колоніальної експансії, які вплинули на розвиток сучасних архівних систем у Латинській Америці, Африці та Азії. Розглянуто сучасні тенденції в архівних дослідженнях, такі як зацифрування та глобалізація архівної практики, а також виклики, з якими стикаються архівісти в різних країнах. Порівняльний аналіз показав, що, попри значні відмінності в структурі архівів і способах їх організації, спільним знаменником є прагнення зберегти документальну спадщину і забезпечити доступ до архівних ресурсів. Цей порівняльний аналіз продемонстрував як спільні, так і унікальні аспекти розвитку архівів

Ключові слова: архівознавство; зібрання документів; джерела; колекції; реєстри