HOW DIGITIZING THE PAST HELPS SHAPE THE INSTITUTIONAL SHARED FUTURE

The case of digitizing the Students’ Publications of the American University in Bulgaria

**Project background**
- Unique and fragile collection
- Danger of losing the paper copies
- Alumni demand for access
- Students and faculty research
- Institutional history preservation and dissemination

**Objectives**
- Preserve the collection
- Provide equal access to it
- Increase visibility and enhance access
- Choose a suitable platform and enrich the content

**Students’ Publications Scope**
- The majority published in the first years of democracy in Bulgaria
- Multicultural experience – unique for the 90s in post-communist countries
- Strong civic engagement
- Powerful statement of the students’ opinions on social justice, political issues, freedom of speech

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**The Start**
- The flood in September 2019 “pushed” the digitization process to start
- Prior to that – only small scanning initiatives

**Cooperation**
- A call for help for restoring the Archives was sent to the University community
- Many got involved with tracking down and collecting old issues of the Students’ newspapers and magazines
- Alumni, staff, students, faculty collaborated in this project
- Administrative support received

**Technical Settings**
- The Library drafted a plan for the digitization process
- Selecting the standards for description, formats, and other requirements
- DSpace platform with NALIS Foundation cooperation
- Started scanning immediately

**The Result**
- The Library opened
- The first student newspaper *Aspect* was published
- In September sudden flood damaged the Library archives
- In October the new Digital Collection of Students’ Publications was born
- New book scanner was purchased through a donation
- The University community helped in restoring the Archive Collection
- 0 out of 11 titles have been digitized completely and are fully accessible
- 30th Anniversary of the American University in Bulgaria

**INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY PRESERVATION**

- Alumni
- Librarians/Staff
- Faculty
- Students
- Administration

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