

Disaster Recovery and Sustainable Choices - Cologne City Archive: 5 years after the collapse, which decisions for the future?



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30 km archival documents, from 922 until today Biggest city archive in Germany and North Europe Buried at between 12 and 28 meters below street level



Planned for 2019 Conservation labs on site Reading room

Storage facilities

- More than 2 years to salvage all the documents
- 10% definitively lost
- 2 dead people



Frozen photos project: Different workflow Photos often stuck together Unfrozen at ambient temperature Washed in water















Primary Care Operation Center Help from fire services, organizations, volunteers and employees from the City First cleaning steps of archival documents



Charters project: 60,000 parchment and paper charters with seals Oldest and most valuable documents

- Covered with concrete dust
- Dry cleaning, mounting and re-housing









- 14 archivists + 13 assistants 20 "asylum" archives in Germany where documents stored Registration, identification
- of documents; assignation to a collection
 - Unique barcode for each document
 - So far 67% documents registered



Condition of the objects: 15% light damages







50% medium damages 35% heavy damages



Categorization of the documents: A: Usable and digitization possible



B: Digitization possible but not usable C: Not usable and no digitization possible





- Workflow:
 - Identification
 - Photographic and written
 - documentation
 - Conservation (dry cleaning)
 - Quality Control
 - Photo after treatment
 - Digitization
 - Housing \bigcirc
 - 10,000 m² conservation and digitization center
 - Storage: 18 shelf kilometers; 250 plan cabinets
 - 21 conservators and 45 assistants
 - Operating since 2011

- 3 km of documents wet during collapse
- Rinsed and wrapped in plastic film
- Frozen at -26° Celsius
- Vacuum freeze drying (ice sublimation) process on site

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