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Archives – guardians of historical memory of humanity

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Архивы – хранители исторической памяти человечества

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Abstract

Although history deals with the past and the legacy of the past, it can never be thought of as a static phenomenon that is finished, completed and does not move. History is a science that connects the times with the evaluations and interpretations of the past from the present and makes important contributions to the heritage of humanity. Archival documents, on the other hand, play a key role in preserving historical memory and transferring the heritage of humanity to the modern society. Because archives are places where the records of government institutions, countries, nations and humanity are kept. Considering the important role of the archives, which enable us to witness the past, contribute to our understanding of the people's intentions and deeds and interlinks of the events, it becomes clear how important the institutions that protect and preserve the archives are. With the understanding of modern archiving, archives are no longer places that only preserve and classify historical information and documents. It is obvious that archives are institutions with very important responsibilities in terms of transferring cultural heritage, with their role in areas such as the protection of the sovereignty rights of states and national law, the protection of individuals' constitutional rights such as life, personal immunity, property, freedom and security.

Аннотация

Несмотря на то, что история занимается вопросами прошлого и наследием прошлого, ее нельзя рассматривать как статичное, завершенное и не развивающееся явление. История – это наука, которая соединяет эпохи, оценивая и интерпретируя прошлое с точки зрения настоящего, вносит важный вклад в исследования наследия человечества. Архивные документы играют важную роль в сохранении исторической памяти и передаче наследия человечества в современное общество, поскольку именно в архивах хранятся записи государственных структур стран и народов. Учитывая важную роль архивов, документы которых позволяют нам стать свидетелями прошлого и помогают понимать помыслы и поступки людей, внутреннюю связь между событиями, становится ясно, насколько важны учреждения, обеспечивающие защиту и сохранность исторических источников. С точки зрения современного архивного дела, архивы – это уже не просто места, где хранятся и классифицируются

исторические данные и документы. Очевидно, что архивы – это учреждения с важнейшими функциями передачи культурного наследия, выполняющие определенную роль в области защиты суверенитета государств и национальных законов, защиты конституционных прав граждан, таких как право на жизнь, неприкосновенность личности, право собственности, право на свободу и безопасность.

Keywords

Ottoman State, archive records, record keeping, cultural heritage.

Ключевые слова

Османское государство, архивные записи, хранение документов, культурное наследие.

As it is known, human memory is weak; It has limits and a certain capacity. Human can only add new information to this capacity by reducing the knowledge and experience he/she has in the past. When human body completes its life, memory also disappears. So, human and memory are both mortal.

The heritage of humanity as a whole is the knowledge and experience gained from the sum of all lifetimes on earth, starting from Adam, from past to present; In other words, it is what human beings have accumulated. Each new generation either progresses by building on what they have taken from the previous generation, or continues on its way by destroying what was left to them.

I would like to state that history and historical events are phenomena that cannot be ignored and undeniable. Although history deals with the past and the legacy of the past, it can never be thought of as a static phenomenon that is finished, completed and does not move. History connects the times with the evaluations and interpretations of the past in present time. Therefore, it is a fundamental science in making sense of the difficult journey of humankind from the past to the present and the connections between the past and the present. It is not only useful, but also essential.

Understanding humanity well and correctly provides the opportunity to understand people properly. Because human beings exist to the extent that they can know and understand their past. Imagine a person who has lost his/her memory. How can such a person benefit and contribute to him/herself and his/her environment? Knowing and understanding the past allows humanity to build itself on a secure foundation and to change when necessary. So, how do we preserve the knowledge that people have acquired with their limited memory and mind capacity, how do we transfer it from generation to generation, and how do we benefit from this knowledge? Although there are many different methods, the “archive documents” that bring us together today are accepted as one of the most important sources that convey the human heritage to the present day.

Archives are places where the records of states, countries, nations and humanity are kept. However, archives are also structures that invite us to think about what the past means, and that itself has this consciousness.

Human memory is temporary and limited. Humanity, on the other hand, is more holistic and comprehensive. However, human memory is also complex. In other words, it takes, examines, evaluates and uses the acquired knowledge and experience. Archives, which we describe as the memory of humanity, work in a similar way. Archive owns the knowledge, protects it, evaluates it and uses it for the benefit of humanity. Archive provides us with evidence and testimony of the past. It provides data about people, events, and institutions. In a way, it tells us their story. It makes us comprehend the sense of identity of states, gives the understanding of culture of nations, and most importantly, it helps to establish justice. While most of the archival documents created in the past were just the records of what had happened. In other words, today's archival sources were not created for the purpose of historical research, as they are commonly used nowadays. Therefore, archival documents allow us to reach a less biased narrative compared to secondary sources.

Another factor here is undoubtedly the archive institutions. The duties and responsibilities of archival institutions, which are responsible for maintaining the existence of historical documents, are not limited to preserving and classifying information and documents. This view of archives is very old. Along with the modern archival understanding, the idea and perception of the archive is also changing and developing. Of course, the preservation of information and documents is of primary importance; however, we need to make great efforts to make the most effective use of these resources. From this point of view, archive institutions should provide all the facilities for researchers to access historical documents in the fastest and safest way and to work with them easily.

In today's global understanding, cultural heritage elements belonging to different nations and societies have a universal value and are considered as the common heritage of humanity. Conservation of this valuable heritage, which presents diversity, will help to avoid the negative effects of uniformization and ensure the formation of a rich universal structure. Having a universal perspective on the preservation of cultural heritage will also contribute to providing global solutions to common problems. In addition, bringing cultural memory to the society is the most important legacy that can be left to future generations. On the other hand, archives have an indispensable importance in the protection of the constitutional rights of individuals such as life, personal immunity, property, freedom and security, as well as in the preservation of the sovereign rights of states and national law. In addition, being a primary source for historiography on interstate political, economic, cultural and social issues increases the value of archives. People can often be mistaken, but the probability of doing something wrong is low due to the documents created with seriousness of the state.

The Directorate of State Archives of the Republic of Turkey, which has a rich archive heritage dating back centuries, is among the leading archival institutions of the world today. Currently, most of the documents kept in our institution have been classified and these have been made available to the researchers in the electronic environment. Our efforts to increase our service quality continue with great enthusiasm and effort.

This article deals with the archival documents prepared in different languages with different alphabets in the exhibition, which were selected on the occasion of the conference “Native Language – Source of Historical Memory and Cultural Heritage” and it contains samples of documents preserved in the Directorate of the State Archives of the Republic of Turkey. No matter what language and alphabet they are recorded in, archive documents created by human beings should be used for the good and for the benefit of humanity, which is our common goal.

Сведения об авторе

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