

Local newspapers as a source for social research Examples from Digital Collections of “Milutin Bojić” Library

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Abstract:

Local newspapers can offer a good material to social researches because the content it has. Social and cultural activities, everyday life, communal problems, etc. in local community creates a content of newspaper. Because of a localized editorial focus, researcher can better detect consequences of wider social circumstances, for example closing a company effect to local community, we can hear in news or read in bigger newspaper that the company is closed and that 1000 peoples left without job but in local media we can see how that community survive. That was the case 10 years before, now social networks do that. Before internet and social networks, local newspapers were a main source of information, if a researcher needs an information from 50 years ago, he needs to read it in newspaper.

Local libraries were a local information centers, local newspapers were, and still are, available there. Today, every information is available on internet, which can be a new perspective for a local public library, to digitize local newspapers and publish it online according to digitization and library's standards and became important part of Digital Humanities.

“Milutin Bojić” Library used ResCarta Toolkit in a process of digitization of local heritage, and local newspapers were part of it. The benefits in using digitization tools for local newspapers are multiple for users and libraries.

Keywords: Local library, Local newspapers, Digital Humanities, Digitization tools.

Introduction

Digital transformation of society affected and libraries also, process of digitization in libraries started long time ago with e-catalogs and continues with digitization of its funds. One of the consequences of this transformation of society is changed role of libraries as information service for wide range of users. When we need some information, today we search the internet, but 30 years ago we go to the library. Local library, as information service, have a potential to participate in delivering of information with a specific content. This content is local newspaper fund and local heritage material. Digital technology has a very useful tools which can be used

in local library to prepare and publish online material it has. Digitally prepared content can be used more effectively, for example, textual, audio and video contents are searchable and can be copied directly, images and manuscripts can be viewed more detailed...

In this paper it will be shown how local newspapers, as part of the fund in local library, when pass through a digitization process, become a wealth source to Digital Humanities. "Milutin Bojić" Library in its fund have a complete collection of "Poljoindustrija" newspaper which consist of 1774 numbers which is digitized. In examples will be shown that local newspaper has a closer perspective on life in community, how events which changed a social, political and economic structure of state reflected on life in a small community. It will be defined several layers which give different types of information that correspond to different social researches. On technical level it will be described what digitization tool is used for preparation and publication of digitized material of "Milutin Bojić" Library and the possibilities of uses those digitized material.

Local newspapers

Local newspapers were one of the main information sources for local community before internet era. Editorial focus was on issues and events which regards local community, for example communal problems, culture and educational programs... besides it also depends of structure of community (if the structure is mostly agricultural articles are more connected to agricultural issues, if it is more urban follows urban issues). There is also part of newspapers that cover state news, part reserved for everyday practical advice...

After the expansion of internet, especially in last ten years, all types of information are available online so the need for local newspapers in printed format is low and not economically payable, now it is cheaper and more effective to have an online edition.

Political and social context from 1967 to 2018

Great political and social changes happened during this period. It starts in SFRY (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), on 1992 SFRY was divided in independent republics while Serbia and Montenegro "stayed" in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), on 2003 FRY became State Unit of Serbia and Montenegro, on 2006 Serbia became independent. In SFRY existed one party system ruled by Communists Party, in 1990 the first multiparty elections organized in all Republics of SFRY. From 1990 to 1996 civil war followed the broke of SFRY in independent states. In 1999 NATO bombed FRY. In period from 1992 to 1994 was great inflation in Serbia. From 1992 to 1996 FRY was under economic sanctions of UN.

Poljoindustrija

Poljoindustrija (eng. Agroindustry) was a newspaper issued by Poljoprivredni Kombinat Beograd - PKB (eng. Agricultural Combine Belgrade), first number was published on March 1967 and last was published on December 2018 and have totally issued 1774 numbers. This newspaper is very interesting research material because it consists several layers for research. First layer is a publisher, PKB is founded in December 27th, 1945 as the biggest food factory in SFRY and was one of the most important project of Communists regime, such a big factory has several thousands of employees and 300 km² of land, it was a Social Company organized in self-management units consists of workers counsels. During the period of transformations¹ economic system was also transformed from socialistic to capitalistic and PKB followed that transformation. Second layer is local community development, the location of PKB is in local community named Padinska Skela which is the largest part of Palilula, urban municipality of Belgrade. Many citizens from Padinska Skela worked in PKB, but PKB also have working

¹ As mentioned in chapter Political and Social context

units in other local communities and was important part of its development. Third level is organization of free activity as is cultural, sports, vacations...

Examples from Poljoindustrija

According to layers defined in chapter before there are several examples:

First layer:

No. 1 Poljoindustrija (1976-03) “Самоуправна дејатност у Комбинату развија се преко зборовна и савета радних јединица, радничких савета и управних одбора организационих јединица и Радничког савета и Управног одбора Комбината. Сва важнија питања и одлуке које проистичу из планова рада, радних задатака и проблема који се јављају, добијају свој коначни садржај на зборовима радних јединица, у радничким саветима организационих јединица или Радничком савету Комбината.

Систем рада органа управљања обухвата и рад појединих комисија чији су задаци постављени одговарајућим програмом рада.”²

Translation: “Self-management activity in Combine is developed through assemblies and working unit counsels, workers counsels and board of governors of working units and Workers Counsels and Board of Governors of Combine. All important issues and decisions which goes from working plans, working assignments and problems get its final content on assemblies of working units, in working counsels of working units or Working Counsel of Combine.

Working system of management parts is, also, activity of some commissions with assignments defined with appropriate program of activity.”

Poljoindustrija No. 1052 (1988-10-29) “...Пољопривредни комбинат „Београд“, из садашњег стања, које карактерише потпуни распад микро и макро економије, треба довести до модерног предузећа. Појам СОУР–а једноставно се мора брисати из нашег речника а и ОУР-и се потпуно укидају. Организоваћемо се по принципу предузећа... ..Циљ нам је да створимо организацију на принципима сличним британском концерну...”³

Translation: “Agricultural Combine Belgrade, from temporary condition which characterize complete devastation of micro and macro economy should bring to modern company. Notion SOUR must be erased from our dictionary and to close OURs. We will be organized on a company principle... ..Our goal is to make an organization based on a principle like British concern...”

Poljoindustrija No. 1152-1153 (1990-11-27) “У предлогу стратегије, рекао је Симановић, пошло се од тога да се ПКБ кроз власничку трансформацију конституише у акционарско друштво.”⁴

Translation: “In a strategy suggestion, Simanovic said, that through owner transformation PKB become a joint-stock company.”

² Copied directly from page 3, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00002011

³ Copied directly from page 1, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00001916

⁴ Copied directly from page 8, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00000434

Poljoindustrija No. 1773 (2018-11) “Поводом окончања поступка продаје ПКБ Корпорације а.д. Београд, господин Кадим Ал Дареи, потпредседник и суоснивач Ал Дохра Холдинга подигао је заставу Ал Дахре 5. новембра испред управне зграде ПКБ Корпорације а.д. Београд. Овом свечаном чину присуствовао је велики број зопослених.”⁵

Translation: “With regard to finalization of a sale process of PKB Corporation Belgrade, Mr Khadim Al Darei, vice president and co-founder of Al Dahra Holding LLC on November 5th rises a flag of Al Dahra in front of management building of PKB. On this celebration there are many employees.”

From these examples we can see how political and economic transformation affected this big factory, but also it shows how Communists transform their main principles.

Second layer:

Poljoindustrija No. 388 (1975-12-28) “Почетком 1975. године, само у ритским насељима, 304 породице уселиле су се у 16 вишеспратница, свака са по 19 станова. Просечна површина новосаграђених станова је између 55 и 60 квадратних метара... Изграђене су или се граде школе, дејча обданишта и вртићи, амбуланте, домови културе, биоскопске сале и читаонице. Ту су ресторани друштвене исхране, продавнице, игралишта...”⁶

Translation: “In the beginning of the year 1975 only in rit settlements 304 families are moved into 16 buildings, everyone building have 19 flats. Average amount of new flats is between 55 m² and 60m²... It still or are built at the moment schools, kindergartens, ambulances, cultural centers, cinemas and reading rooms...”

Poljoindustrija No. 972 (1987-04-18) “У Падинској Скели нема више биоскопских представа, нема игранки, организованих прослава, нема ни културно–уметничког друштва. Зграда која би се у те сврхе могла користити, још увек постоји, па чак се и назива Домом културе...”

...Још увек смо у дилеми да ли је и колико добро што смо под окриљем Комбината...”⁷

Translation: “There are no more movies shows, dancing nights, organized celebrations in Padinska Skela, there are no even cultural-artistic society. Building which can be used for that purpose still exist and still have a name Cultural Center.... We are in dilemma, is it good to be under the Combine jurisdiction...”

Poljoindustrija No. 1375 (1996-11-14) “ПОГОН ЗА ИЗРАДУ ХТЗ ОПРЕМЕ БИЋЕ СМЕШТЕН У ДОМ КУЛТУРЕ У ГЛОГОЊСКОМ РИТУ”⁸

⁵ Copied directly from page 3, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00002009

⁶ Copied directly from page 8, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00001291

⁷ Copied directly from page 10, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00001839

⁸ Copied directly from page 3, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5%2f10000001%2f00000001%2f000000632

Translation: “Factory that make an equipment for chemical and technical protection will be in Cultural Center building in Glogonjski Rit settlement”

Poljoindustrija No. 1633 (2008-04-19) “Недавно је на предвиђеној локацији почела изградња темеља капеле, димензија пет пута осам метара. Према речима оца Зорана, изградњом капеле интензивираће се црквени живот у новоформираној Црквеној општини Падинска Скела.”⁹

Translation: “Not long ago on a planned location started to build a foundation of chapel with dimensions of 5m x 8m. According to priest Zoran, with chapel built a church life will be intensified in a new formed church municipality of Padinska Skela”

Examples from second layer shows development of local community through infrastructural projects but, later, shows that dependency on company don't give benefits to community, also after 1990 crash of communism a religious life in community is established again.

Third layer:

Poljoindustrija No. 1409 (1998-04-24) “Спортски живот у насељу је веома добро организован. Више од 90 активних играча, ангажовано је у три фудбалске селекције и то у ветеранима, првом тиму и пионирима. Сва три тима се такмиче у Београдској лиги.”¹⁰

Translation: “Sport life in settlement is well organized. More than 90 active football players are divided in three football sections which are veterans, first team and pioneers. All three teams are competitors in Belgrade league.”

Poljoindustrija No. 374 (1975-09-20) “Сигурно је да је најприхватљивије за раднике ако им рецитал, представа, предавач, дође ту, у насеље. А да су расположени да прихвате понуђену културну форму сведочи пример масовног коришћења књига, које, сваког петка, доноси аутобус библиотеке „Милутин Бојић“.”¹¹

Translation: “We can be sure that the most acceptable for workers will be organization of poetry evening, theater performance, lectures in their settlement. That they want to participate in cultural events we can see from a massive book reading example, where every Friday a bus of “Milutin Bojic” library bring books.”

Poljoindustrija No. 92 (1970-03-07) “Читаво слободно време 2.115 или 59 посто, дакле, више од половине анкетираних, проводи у кући. Код рођака и пријатеља слободно време проводи 4 одсто, а у кући и код рођака 5,2 посто испитаника...”¹²

Translation: “2.115 or 59% more than a half of respondents, their all available free time spent in their homes. 4% their free time spent going to their relatives and friends, 5.2% spent

⁹ Copied directly from page 3, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00000924

¹⁰ Copied directly from page 3, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00000665

¹¹ Copied directly from page 3, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00001277

¹² Coped directly from page 19, can be find on

https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs/jsp/RcWebImageViewer.jsp?doc_id=990feada-fdef-47a7-996e-28faf8fe10d5/10000001/00000001/00001006

their free time at home and go to their relatives...” This is interesting example, because it gives a result of questioning among workers to see how they spend their free time.

As we see, three layers defined give three types of information which can be useful for different social research, first layer can be interesting for politics researchers, second for sociologists, third for culture researchers. Thanks to the focus on a smaller community, every change is registered and saved as information. That information become a good Digital Humanities research material when it passes through digitization process and library categorization.

Digital tools for researchers

Digital municipality heritage collection of “Milutin Bojić“ Library¹³ is published on ResCarta¹⁴ repository. ResCarta Toolkit is an excellent tool for digitization of newspapers, it have several good solutions, which are easy installation (on click), support Linux, Windows and MacOS, consists a complete tools digitization process after scanning and image post-process, metadata description (METS¹⁵/MODS¹⁶), OCR tool¹⁷, audio and video transcription¹⁸, OCR-ed text correction, audio transcript correction, collection manager with additional functions to define a level of access (connected with MySQL base), file verification and web app. Complete process of preparation of digital objects is offline on a PC, web app is one java app and is easy to install it on java server (just copy in webapps directory in Tomcat or other java server), after that it is only needed to sync these two directories and that is it. Work fast, no need for hi-speed server and RAM just enough space on HDD for digital objects. There are two identical copies on PC and on server which is practically basic back-up. Web app offer collection view, title view with additional functions for filtering and specification, simple search within a text in all or a specific collection, view of digital object and help.

Functions of web application are presented in next images.

¹³ <https://zavicajna.digitalna.rs>

¹⁴ <https://www.rescarta.org>

¹⁵ The METS schema is a standard for encoding descriptive, administrative, and structural metadata regarding objects within a digital library <http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets>

¹⁶ Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS) is a schema for a bibliographic element set that may be used for a variety of purposes, and particularly for library applications. <https://www.loc.gov/standards/mods>

¹⁷ Use Tesseract OCR tool <https://github.com/tesseract-ocr/tesseract>

¹⁸ Use CMUSphinx Open Source Speech Recognition Toolkit <https://cmusphinx.github.io>



Image 1. Title view

On this screenshot is shown Title view page, functions on this page are (1) choose a sub collection, (2) sort by title or date published and (3) Limit browse list according to metadata.



Image 2. Simple search page

On this screenshot is shown Simple search page, functions are (1) word entry, (2) suggestion from existed words in OCR-ed texts, (3) define a time range and (4) choose in which collection to search.

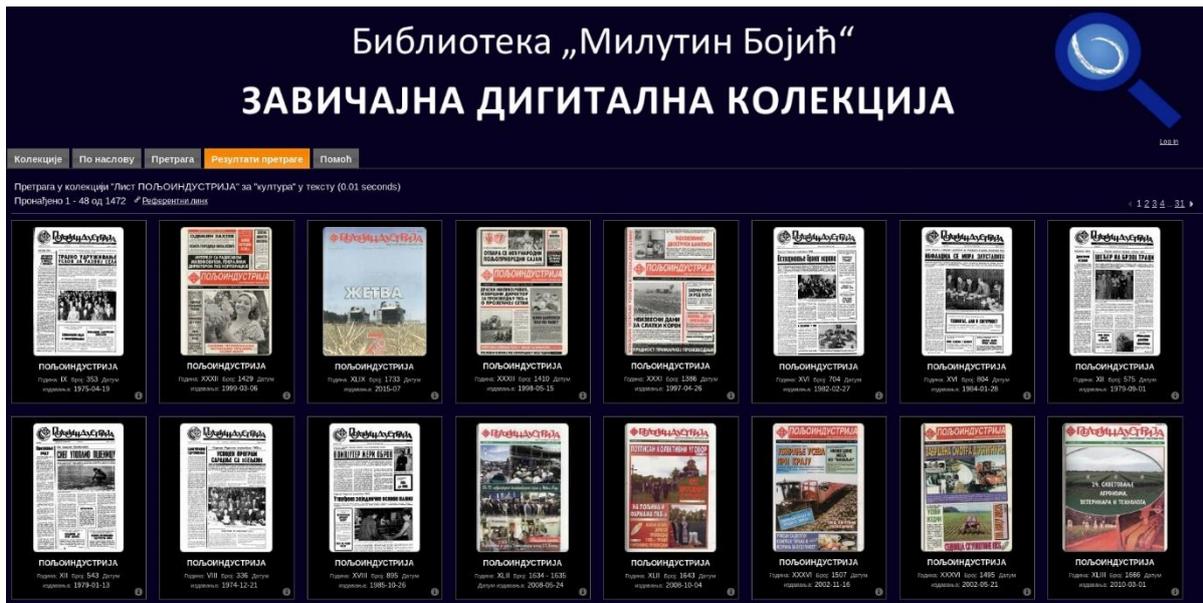


Image 3. Search results

Search results show object with founded terms. In brackets is shown measured time of findings, below are number of objects. Objects with founded words are posited in main area. Click on object page with searched words opened. Results are marked with yellow layer and shows an exact location in text as shown on Image 4.

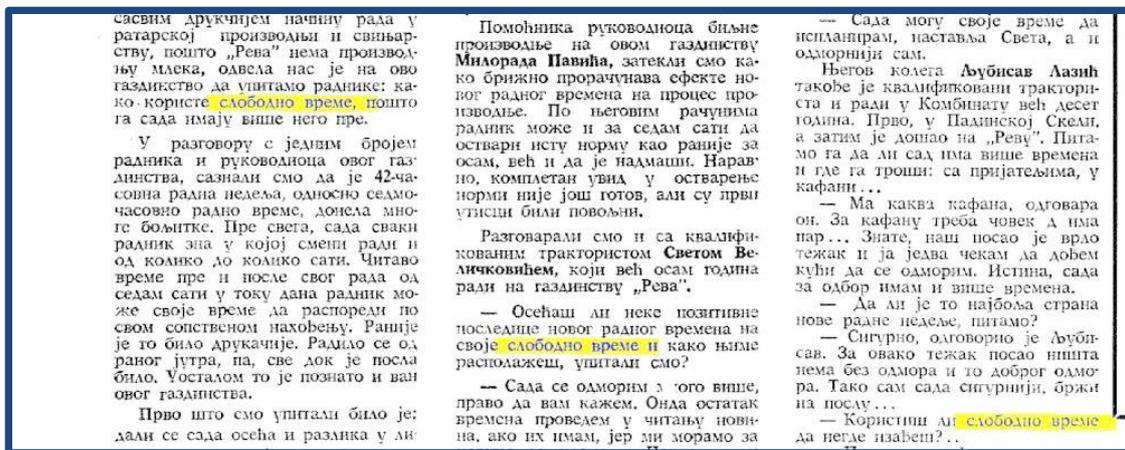


Image 4. Marked results in object

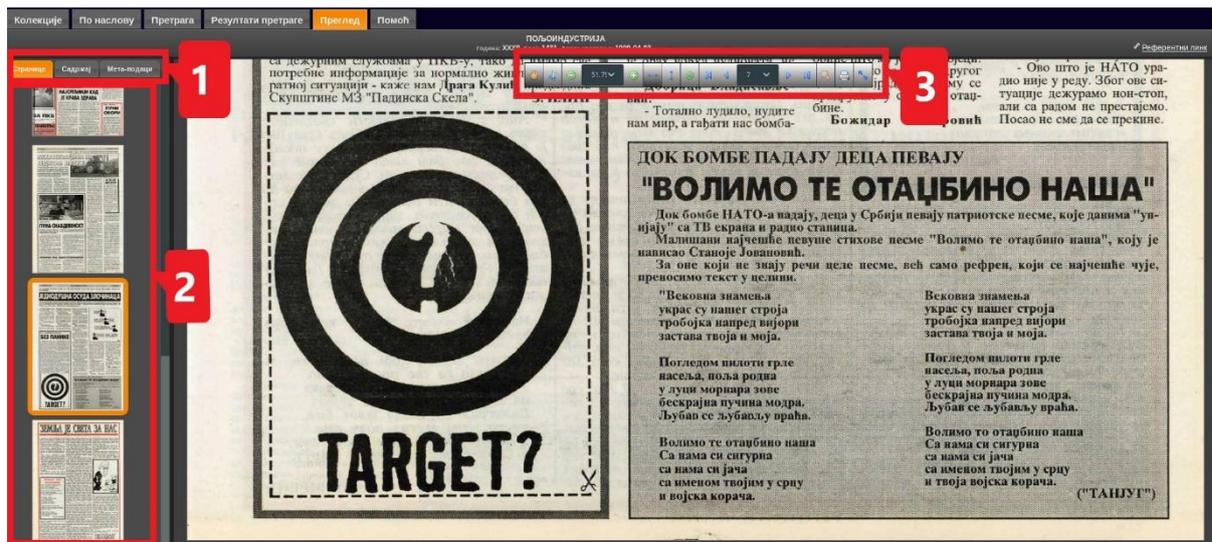


Image 5. View object

View object page is divided as two screen parts. On left side by tabs (1) define a view of thumbnails, metadata or content (2). On main screen, view the page and use toolbar (3) for additional functions (copy part of text, zoom, list, print and full screen view).

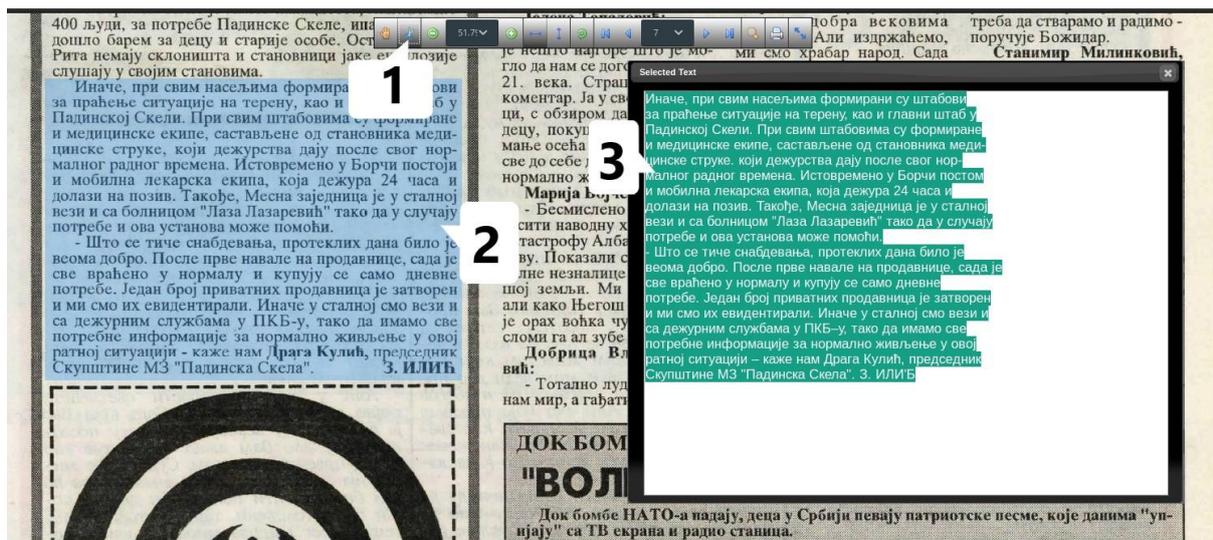


Image 6 Copy content from newspaper

Text can be copied directly from page using (1) scissors from toolbar. Click the scissors, mark a part of text (2) and window of selected text is shown (3) in textual format. Just copy and paste it wherever you wish.



Image 7. Mirador IIF viewer

ResCarta in version 7 implement IIF¹⁹ and Mirador²⁰, now it is possible to preview several objects on one screen, copy a manifest to another Mirador viewer to compare with objects in other repositories, make annotations and adopt an image view.

Local libraries in internet era

Expansion of internet, in last 20 years, brings a lot of challenges to local libraries, one of them is losing a access to information service, all information needed are on internet, but this open new opportunity for local libraries. All material they have, for example newspapers, old books, magazines they can digitize and publish it online, they also have a resources to make an agreement with local newspaper to publish their printed editions, besides presentation of local cultural heritage can also be presented on library's digital platform. National libraries don't have enough resources to deal with local sources, but local libraries might have resources and interest to create a digital platform to present it. Open Source community offer great solutions, equipment is not expensive so local libraries can be, again, information local service.

Conclusion

There is material for social researchers in local newspapers, we detected from presented examples that local newspapers are closer to community than national or regional newspapers. In pre internet era newspapers, radio and TV informed citizens, but newspapers have an advantage over other media because they are printed, while it is questionable that local radio and TV stations are recorded their news. That advantage gives to local libraries important role in Digital Humanities because it can offer well organized, functional and standardized material to researchers.

¹⁹ IIF – International Image Interoperability Framework <https://iif.io>

²⁰ Open-source, web based, multi-window image viewing platform <https://projectmirador.org>