

Development of Chinese Archives Profession in New Situation

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Abstract: China's archives professional development faces new opportunities and challenges with the advent of the Internet + era. Based on the annual statistical report published by the National Archives Administration of China, the manuscript combined the characteristics of the current era and then analysed the current situation of the development of the archival profession in China. The manuscript found out the problems and shortcomings in the archival profession in terms of subject, object, occupation content, skills and conditions of the archives. The new orientation of the archival profession, the construction of the subject specialization and the object resources were put forward. The manuscript provide suggestions on department construction, and provide ideas on improving and expanding professional skills, improving professional environment and promoting professional identity. Ideas in promoting the professional skills and the professional identity were provide to improve the professional environment.

1. Promoting the Development of Archives by Social Change

New technologies such as digital technology, cloud technology, big data, and mobile Internet communication with the advent of the Internet+ era have been widely used in social administration, commerce, culture, and human life. These new technologies have profoundly affected social administrative management methods, public thinking, and behaviours and value pursuit. People's cognition and expectation of the property, function and value of the archives under the new social environment also affect the development direction and function expansion of archives profession. In the period when the voucher recording function was concerned, the main content of the archival profession was to save and keep the archives, and to wait for the archives needed. But when people began to discover the value of the archives in seeking cultural identity and retaining social memory, the archives profession began to slowly step out of the limitations of administrative functions, paying attention to a broader social culture and living space.

Canadian archivist Terry Cook ^[1] proposed four paradigm theories for archival thinking and archival work from the 19th century to 2011—evidence, memory, identity, society. He believed that archivists had been passive in these four stages. The custodians have been transformed into active intermediaries, social activists, and community promoters. In China, the archival profession has not yet achieved the leap and transformation of the functions above. However, it can be affirmed that the various elements of the archives occupational subject structure, object form and vocational skills and conditions are constantly changing with the development of society. The archives profession itself is undergoing changes either actively or passively

2. Analysis of the Current Situation of China's Archives Profession

According to the nature of professional activities, the elements of the archive profession include the professional subjects, the professional objects, the occupational conditions and the professional skills. These elements together constitute the basic form of the archive profession, which determines the basic status of the archive profession and affects and the development trend of the archives profession ^[2]. At present, China's archives professional team has grown steadily. Social

archives resources have been greatly enriched. Archives professional skills have been continuously improved. The working environment and conditions have improved significantly. However, modern digital, information and network technologies in the new era are changing with each passing day. The development of the archives profession shows obvious lag with many new problems.

2.1. Profession Subject: Coexisting Across Growth and Structural Issues

At present, the ranks of archives professional subjects in China have continued to grow, and the level of education has improved significantly. However, the construction of specialization is still weak. The trend of aging is obvious, and the young practitioners are insufficient.

According to the statistics by the National Archives Administration of China, the statistics of 2005 and 2017 were selected for comparison. Table 1 shows the education level of full-time archives staff in administrative department and archives in China. The number of full-time archives staff in China has doubled in number. The number of the bachelor degree or above was leapfrogging in the 13 years. The staff with the bachelor degree or above grew from a total of 35.28% to 65.3%. The academic level of the archives professional team tends to be reasonable.

Table 1 Education level of the full-time archives staff in administrative department and archives in China.

Year	Staff number	PhD	Master	Double Degree	Bachelor degree	Specialist	Secondary school and vocational high school	Junior high school and below
2005	22620	13 (0.06%)	85 (0.38%)	48 (0.21%)	7626 (33.71%)	10720 (47.39%)	3552 (15.7%)	320 (1.41%)
2017	48505	78 (0.16%)	1727 (3.56%)	351 (0.72%)	28793 (59.36%)	14000 (28.86%)	2348 (4.84%)	133 (0.27%)

Table 2 shows the archive professional education of the full-time archives staff in administrative department and archives in China. As shown in Table 2, China's archives professional team is still lacking in high-level professionals despite 13 years of professional construction. High-level professionals are far from meeting the needs of the archives career development. In 2005, the proportion of China's full-time archives staff who had received professional archives education was 17.41%. By 2017, the proportion fell to 11.08%, a decrease of 6.33%. In 2005, 5.71% of the professional education in bachelor degree and above were accepted. In 2017, the proportion was 6.37%, which was no more than 1% compared to 2005. In the past 13 years, compared with the doubling of the total number of full-time archives staff, the proportion of archival professionals has not risen but fallen, and the proportion of educators who have received bachelor degree or above in archives is not obvious. These phenomena must have our attention and reflection. The professional construction of the archives professional team can be said to have a long way to go.

Table 2 Archive professional education of the full-time archives staff in administrative department and archives in China.

Year	Staff number	PhD	Master	Double Degree	Bachelor degree	Specialist
2005	22620	3 (0.01%)	9 (0.04%)	1280 (5.66%)	2101 (9.29%)	524 (2.32%)
2017	48505	11 (0.02%)	181 (0.37%)	2900 (5.98%)	1677 (3.46%)	491 (1.01%)

Table 3 shows the age distribution of full-time archives staff in administrative department and archives in China. The proportion of people over the age of 50 increased by 10.81%, while the proportion of young people under the age of 34 decreased by 5.08% from 2005 to 2017. These two percentages indicate that the current aging trend of the archives professional team is obvious, and the young reserve forces are insufficient.

Table 3 Age distribution of full-time archives staff in administrative department and archives in China.

Year	Total staff	50 years old and above	35-49 years old	Under 34 years old
2005	22620	4228 (18.69%)	13193 (58.32%)	5199 (22.98%)
2017	48505	14312 (29.50%)	25490 (52.60%)	8703 (17.90%)

2.2. Profession Object: Difficulty of Archiving by Massive Growth

The archive professional object is the archive resource. In the era of Internet+, people's democratic awareness and self-awareness are prominent. Various online platforms and social media provide a stage for social groups or individuals to express their aspirations, to show their self and to preserve their memories. Everyone becomes a producer and communicator of information and data. The source of archival object is no longer confined to social management, e-government and other fields, but extends to all aspects of social life such as public life and personal growth. The archival form is also diverse, which has experienced the storage from traditional paper carriers to media storage to data transmission. The process is also tangible to intangible. From the perspective of archival work, massive network information and digital information have become the object of archive professional activities. Cyberspace has become a potential treasure house of people's livelihood archives and social memory resources.

At the same time, the widening of archive distribution, the complexity of sources, the diversification of forms, and the uncontrollable nature of content security in the new situation have also increased the difficulty of collecting, identifying and maintaining archives. It is urgent to expand the scope and coverage of the collection for traditional archive resources. China has not issued relevant guidelines for collection, archiving principles and standards for network archives and new media archive resources. Therefore, the collection and archiving of current archival resources is far from meeting the functional needs of social memory, cultural heritage, knowledge management, and public services.

2.3. Profession Skills: Improving Skills Becoming Hot Spots

Archive professional skills are the behaviours, sequences of actions and intellectual activities that people engage in archival work activities ^[2]. China's archival professional skills continue to improve and expand in the new situation. In addition to basic skills such as collection, identification, collation, editing, repair and protection of traditional archives, ascending skills such as information capture, big data analysis, new media dissemination, and digitization are increasingly becoming important archival professional skills.

At present, China's archives information construction has initially established a platform for informationization. The platform based on the local area network, government affairs network and the Internet. The platform was supported by the archives information management system. The platform was also based on the archives catalogue centre, basic database, and archive utilization platform and information release of the archive website ^[3]. However, the construction of archives informationization is still far behind the libraries in terms of digitization, networking, construction of shared platforms, and smart services. The construction of archives informationization is still in its infancy for file promotion and service in the use of social media, mobile clients, etc. There are many business notifications and publicity contents. The results of fine products, knowledge promotion, and precision service are few. The update speed is slow.

2.4. Profession Conditions: the Long Construction of Professional Environment

This section must be in one column. The occupational conditions of the archives should include two aspects: hard conditions and soft environment. Hard conditions refer to the material conditions for the professional activities of archives, such as institutional settings, warehouses, equipment,

equipment and other hardware facilities. The soft environment mainly refers to the spatial status of the professional activities of the archives and the cultural and the social environment, such as the space for career development, moral ethics, legal constraints, and social prestige.

At present, China's archives professional conditions continue to improve. Hardware facilities have been significantly improved. Supporting facilities have been continuously improved. The construction of warehouses has been continuously upgraded. The archives work has moved from electronic paper to digital, networked. But there are still obvious problems and deficiencies.

There are still obvious gaps between the eastern and western regions, and between the coastal and inland regions when the archives halls are constructed in China.

There are two reasons for the hardware. First, the standardization construction is relatively lagging. The more mature file standardization system that is compatible with the professional needs and technical level has not yet formed. Second, the regional economic development is not balanced.

There are also two reasons for the software. First, there is a lack of professional access mechanism. The professional recognition of the archives profession is not high. Second, the archives professional ethics and ethics construction are weak, the professional evaluation system is not perfect, and the professional credibility is questioned^[4].

3. The Strategy of Chinese Archives Career Development

In today's society, information awareness, efficiency awareness, equality awareness, and sharing awareness are deeply rooted in Chinese. This puts higher demands on social occupations, including archival occupations. And this brings new opportunities and challenges. Archival professions are often seen as "marginalized" occupations. Archival staff must do a new job orientation, optimize the main structure, enrich the guest resources, enhance professional skills, promote professional identity, and expand professional functions if the archival profession do not be replaced in Internet+ era, or even find new profession growth points. In this way, the archival staff can follow the trend of the times, seize development opportunities, and achieve professional value better.

3.1. Proper Profession orientation

The archives profession has both social and cultural attributes. The archives profession can not only meet the needs of social administration and service, but also fulfil the duties of the social memory, the cultural communication, the knowledge management and the public services. The focus of the archives activities should take into account the macro and micro, and adhere to the "big file view". The archives activity records both the state and the citizenship, recording both the centre and the edge, recording both the mainstream voice and the dissident voice, recording both the national policies and the cultural expressions^[1]. In this way, the professional mission of "serving the archives for the party, keeping the history of the country, and serving the people" is accomplished.

3.2. Strengthening the Construction of the Main Team

The first is to raise the level of specialization. The archive departments should further strengthen the scale and intensity of academic qualification education and on-the-job training for archives. They should take into account the academic level and the professional background. And they should optimize the team's knowledge structure, and reasonably match the talents of archival science, informatics, history, and sociology. They should form composite, scientific, and echelon of professional teams to enhance professionalism and image.

The second is to optimize the personnel structure. It is necessary for the archive departments to continuously absorb young high-level professionals to join the professional teams. In this way, we can inject fresh and innovative vitality into the professional development of the archives, and enhance the impulse, enthusiasm and stamina of the professional team. Thereby archive departments are provided a strong human resource guarantee for professional sustainable development.

The third is to enhance professional awareness. In the Internet+ era, it is necessary to

continuously strengthen the consciousness of the times, the learning, the innovation, the service, the haring, the propaganda, and the cooperation for the development of archives. Only by increasing awareness can we further guide our actions. This will keep pace with the times and continuously improve service granularity and public satisfaction.

3.3. Promoting the Construction of the Object Resource System

On the one hand, the archives department should increase the collection, reception and storage of archive resources, broaden the sources of archive resources, and speed up the formulation of standards and the standards for the network information archiving. The archives departments should truly collect all of the archives. For the archival resources that cannot be included in the collection for the time being, the source and custody information should be registered. The archives departments should encourage and support the establishment of files by community, family or individual. The archives departments should provide proactive consultation and technical assistance. The archives department interacts with the public of the benign, and builds a social archives resource system that is equal, open, sharing, and covering the public.

On the other hand, the archives department should increase the development of archive resources, strengthen value mining and knowledge editing, improve the quality of results, and expand the depth and breadth of archive services. The 21st century is the era of knowledge economy. Archives resources are the most authentic and most credible primitive resources. The social value, the cultural value and the knowledge value are expected in this era. The archives profession should combine the needs of the public and the needs of knowledge and interest, explore the deep cultural connotation of archive resources, compile and promote high-quality archives knowledge, provide archival services for the wider masses, and tell the archives stories. This will show the social memory, cultural heritage and intellectual charm of the archive resources.

3.4. Inheriting and expanding professional skills

The archives departments have inherited traditional professional skills. Archives identification technology, restoration technology, file protection principle and technology, and literature editing ability are the "housekeeping skills" of the archives profession. And they belong to the "core technology". It is impossible to ignore the inheritance and the promotion of the core technologies because of the development of the information technology.

The archives department must expand and enhance the "Internet + Archives" compound skills. The archival profession must master information security technology, ensure its true integrity from data source to data transmission if the archives departments want to provide high-quality public services. The archival profession must master digital technology, realize digital storage and transmission of file information, and protect file entities from the harm. The archival profession must master the big data collection and analysis technology, accurately analyse user needs through user browsing, searching so as to provide more targeted and effective services. The archival profession must continuously improve the level of network platform construction, and realize the sharing of archive resources as soon as possible. The archival profession must use new media such as two micro-ends, new technologies and new methods such as audio and video, H5 pages, VR, etc. to carry out file publicity, provide file services, and realize real-time interaction with the public, so that "dead files" become "live data".

In the Internet+ era, the improvement of new skills determines the effectiveness of archival work to a certain extent, determines the expansion and upgrading of the professional functions of archives, and determines the social recognition of the archive profession.^[5]

3.5. Building a Proper Professional Environment

The archives departments should increase investment and improve the hardware environment of the archives. The standardization construction of archives, database construction, digital construction and network sharing platform construction should be strengthened. The investment in the research and the development, the equipment of the related technologies such as the archival resources big data and the cloud computing should be increased. Hardware support and technical

support for the construction of digital archives, smart archives and sharing of archive resources should be provided.

The archives department should build a professional, efficient and positive file security environment. Archives professional ethics construction, professional consciousness promoting and self-knowledge, and credibility enhancing should be strengthened. The professional access mechanism and the assessment system will promote the social identity of the archives profession and enhance the social image and status. The salary of the professional team of the archives will enhance the sense of professional well-being and satisfaction, promote the stability of the team internally, and increase the professional appeal to the outside world.

4. Conclusion

The development of the archives profession is the result of a combination of social technology promotion, changes in public demand, construction of professional subjects and objects, and functional expansion. The archives profession must conform to the needs of the times, clearly define the position, and strengthen the construction of the subject specialization and the construction of the object resource system. The archives profession should continuously improve and expand vocational skills and improve the professional environment. At the same time, self-innovation and comprehensive value enhancement will revitalize new vitality. The archives profession can stably stand in the social occupation.

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