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UkrVO Joint Digital Archive: current status and perspectives

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UkrVO Joint Digital Archive currently includes:

- metadata database of 26 th. direct plates and digital images of more than 6000 plates of MAO NASU glass archive (GPA);
- metadata database of 4 th. direct plates and digital images of near 1 th. plates (out of near 4 th. digitized ones) of Lviv AO archive ;
- metadata database of 8.5 th. plates of Nikolaev AO collection (without images, which are accessible on the search pages of NAO website);
- 23 partly filled archives of metadata database of Kiev AO collection and digitized images of individual plates, obtained in aims of current scientific activity;
- metadata database and digital images of 300 plates of Odessa AO collection

The electronic archive of MAO NAS of Ukraine (GPA)

- comprises data of about 26 thousands of direct photographic plates,
- obtained with 14 instruments
- in 9 observational sites
- having plate scales varying from 20 to 412 arcsec per mm
- and exposition duration from ten second up to one and a half an hour
- with number of exposition from 1 to 10
- and the different structure of stars images depending on observational method.

Variations of images structure on the plates of GPA depending of number of expositions and method of observation:



GPA operates under the control of server software and is accessible via web browsers on the search pages of UkrVO JDA.

Since 2008 the process of MAO NASU archive plates digitization and inclusion of plate preview images into GPA database has been under way, using Microtek ScanMaker 9800XL TMA flatbed scanner. Currently the digitization procedure is carried out in two ways:

-higher resolution images of good quality plates for the currently running investigations:

16-bit gray levels, resolution of 1200 dpi, TIFF format. Linear dimensions of the image are of 13 thousands pixels (30x30 cm) for both sides. A volume of the scanned file is near 380 Mb. Until now about 6 thousand plates were scanned twice, second image is made with turning the plate clockwise by 90 degrees on the bed of the scanner to eliminate wobble effects of scanner mechanics.

Since December 2010 the digitization of GPA archive having been carried out with another flat-bed scanner Epson Expression 10000XL with the little better results.



First attempts to digitize plates with spectra: spectrogramms with variable stars of R Corona Borealis type in order to provide their archiving and availability of data exchange as well as to achieve a simplicity of their analysis.



The collection of Lviv university observatory

A great amount of significant information about astronomical observations is stored in the photographic plate archive of Astronomical observatory of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (AO LNU). Digital archive of AOLNU consists of direct images taken in time period 1939-1976 (a few plates are attributed since 1936). This Archive contains about 8 thousands photographic plates, among them there are more than 6 thousands of direct northern sky area plates (mostly of wide-field). Observational programs concerned the search and study of variable stars by means of multicolor photometry, photographic photometry of circumpolar stars, novae stars, selected areas, occultations of stars by the Moon, Solar System bodies, lunar eclipses. This almost 40 year coverage is a unique resource for studying of given objects. Instruments used: the camera with Zeiss lens triplet (D /F= 100/500 mm), Mertz refractor, astrocamera (D/F=140/700 mm) and the Zeiss refractor (D/F = 130/2400 mm). Part of the collection had never been processed at all or processed only partially. Plates with emulsions of 15 sorts were used.

Metadata of 4100 plates of AOLNU collection have been included into JDA; At the moment 3120 plates are digitized: among them there are 497 plates of historic interest as they were obtained in the first half of 20th century. Historic plates are presented not only on the general search web pages of the JDA, but also gathered into the separate exposure on the UkrVO site.

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AOLNU archive general interface

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AO LNU ARCHIVE PLATES GALLERY 7:

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thumbs and scan info

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gallery

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AO LNU HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

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AOLNU archive historic images gallery

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The glass collection of Odessa national university (AOONU)

The archive contains about 100 thousand records:

- since 1909 -20 thousand of old plates ("old collection"), including the collection of Simeiz (Crimea) observatory ,

- since 1957-more than 80 thous. plates obtained in Odessa on the Mayaki observation station.

Greater part of the collection consists of direct photos in photographic light.

The instruments of the "old collection" were the long focus photographic camera – "large astrograph" – on the Cooke refractor with the aperture 165 mm; it was replaced with "small astrograph" equipped with 2 cameras and than three short-focus camera astrograph .

Observations were conducted using plates with "Ilford", "Agfa Astro", "Izoorto" emulsions sizes 13×18 , 18×18 and 18×24 cm with yellow, red filters or without filter. The registered stellar magnitude was 13.5. The exposure time was 0.5 to 3 hours.

The instrument of Mayaki collection is 7cameras astrograph for patrol observations of sky in order to register stars variability





Simeiz collection of minor planets observations consists of 10 thous. plates having been exposed in 1909-1953.

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The catalogue of collection available at : www.astro.od.ua

300 plates of AOONU were digitized with MAO NASU Epson Expression 10000XL and added to the JDA on the MAO computer resources with the access to images through the general search interface on the pages of UkrVO JDA.

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COMMON PROBLEMS OF ARCHIVAL WORKS:

- from one side: lack of scanning and computer facilities in most of small observatories as well as staff enough to manage the great collections...

- improper storage places that creates the risk of fatal collection damage before it being totally digitized...

- necessity of essential financial input without explicit response....

- from the other side: low rate of digitizing with flat bed scanners: the process for years....

- absence of distinctive scientific tasks with immediate scientific output....

- as a result – decreasing of interest (that means – funds) in such projects....