

Warsaw, November 2020

KORCZAK DIGITAL REPOSITORY LAUNCHED

The Korczak Digital Repository was launched in mid-October 2020 – this unique online resource brings together a range of previously scattered collections related to the life and work of Janusz Korczak – both his own personal writings and documents, as well as the writings of others on the subject of his life, activities and creative output. The repository is bilingual – available in both English and Polish.

In the year 2018, thanks to a partnership between the Janusz Korczak Association of Canada, the Korczak Foundation, the Department of History of the University of Warsaw along with the KLIO Foundation, the Digital Competence Center of the University of Warsaw and the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, we were able to establish the Janusz Korczak Repository consortium. At this time, we also began working on the vision of a virtual space dedicated to Janusz Korczak, designed not just to gathering together Korczak's legacy, but also the documents and academic works produced on the subject of his life's work which were scattered all over the world. From the very outset, the Repository was supposed to be a reliable and trustworthy source of verifiable knowledge.

Janusz Korczak is universally renowned as a doctor, activist and author, but above all a tutor and spokesman for children's rights. His innovative educational system and way of raising children in the spirit of mutual respect, partnership and self-governance is to this very day an inspiration for many teachers, pedagogues, civic activists and those involved in championing children's rights. Korczak's vision of universal children's rights is the foundation for the United Nations Convention on this subject. The convention was universally accepted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 and is also known as the global resolution on the promotion and protection of the rights of children.

In spite of all this knowledge about Korczak's influence upon the modern world, materials relating to his legacy are scattered and often difficult to find and access. Works penned by and about Korczak can be found in various online libraries, archives and web pages. These materials do, however, vary in terms of quality – often lacking metadata or including metadata which has not been fully researched. Some of the materials stored in museums, archives, libraries or private collections all over the world have never been digitally scanned and archived – they require professional digitalisation.

This is where the idea of the Korczak Digital Repository comes in – an online space which is universally easy to access and where materials based on reliably verified sources are presented in attractive and modern ways.

The Repository is a long-term undertaking. Thanks to a grant secured from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, as part of the "Public Diplomacy 2020: New Dimension" funding program, the first stage of our project is now being launched.

The Digital Competence Center of the University of Warsaw is responsible for the digital aspect of the project. The solutions used meet the standards of modern academic services. We have utilised the Application Programming Interface (API) and the metadata exchange protocol OAI-PMH (Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting). The technical metadata are created in line with current Dublin Core standards and are based on the descriptive standard MARC21.

The repository was launched on the 14th of October 2020 – it contains all the photographs, documents, publications and museum items we have been able to gather thus far. The following institutions have agreed to share their collections: the State Archive in Warsaw, the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Jagiellonian Library, the National Library, the University Library in Poznan, the Central Military Archive (Army History Bureau), the Stanislaw Konopka Main Medical Library, the Jewish Resistance Heritage Museum, the Itzhak Katzenelson Holocaust and Jewish Resistance Heritage Museum, Documentation and Study Center, the Ethnographic Museum in Torun, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Museum of Children's Books in Warsaw at the Warsaw Public Library – Central Library of the Masovian Voivodship, the Museum of Independence in Warsaw, Korczakianum of the Museum of Warsaw, the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute.

All this is merely the beginning. The maintenance and development of the Repository, including the expanding of its collections, demands the involvement of various institutions, associations and experts from all around the world. The project can be supported in a range of ways: by sharing knowledge and experience, offering privately owned collections or providing financial resources to cover the cost of maintaining our online resource.

Welcome! You can find us at:

<http://korczakarchive.ca/> and <http://korczak.ckc.uw.edu.pl/>

Fanpage: <https://www.facebook.com/KorczakDigitalRepository>



Rzeczpospolita Polska

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The grant was received by KLIO – the Academic Foundation of the Friends of the Historical Institute of the University of Warsaw. The responsibility for maintaining and further developing the Korczak Digital Repository rests with KLIO – the Academic Foundation of the Friends of the Historical Institute of the University of Warsaw and the parties belonging to the Janusz Korczak Repository consortium:

- Janusz Korczak Association of Canada
- The Korczak Foundation
- The Department of History of the University of Warsaw
- The Digital Competence Center of the University of Warsaw
- The Columbia University Department of Education

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