Building Research Infrastructure for Long Term Studies of War

Project-Based Laboratories for Field Research, Information Systems, and Decision Support
Laboratory of Information Systems
New Euro Vision: exhibitions, marketing, research s.r.o.
Czech Republic
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Slide 1 Building Research Infrastructure for Long-Term Studies of War

00:00–00:55 / 55 seconds

The previous presentation examined soil after war as a changed research object. That argument has an organizational consequence. A soil system can continue to change after the battle, the recovery programme and the research grant have ended. Understanding it requires an organization capable of retaining the question, the observations and the methods across changing projects. This presentation describes our response: two laboratories with different functions, working within a common permanent framework. We also ask why conventional signs of scientific authority cannot substitute for this infrastructure. A prestigious institution can produce a weak result. A small laboratory can also fail. The relevant distinction concerns the work each organization actually performs and preserves. We present a structure for organizing that work, and the conditions by which others should judge it.

Slide 2 The changed soil determines the research task

00:55–01:51 / 56 seconds

Our proposed soil theory treats war as a change in the configuration of a territory. Chemical pollution belongs within that configuration, alongside physical disturbance, water movement, biological processes and changes in human activity. Research must therefore connect different observations in space and time. A concentration measured today may answer one question while leaving the subsequent pathway unresolved. Clearance can move material. Reconstruction can alter drainage or access. Later land use can introduce another set of disturbances. These are research questions whose significance depends on the actual territory and the evidence. An organization designed only to deliver a short report may leave those connections outside its scope. The organizational requirement follows from the proposed object: preserve territorial history and make later observations comparable with earlier ones. The new object requires continuity in inquiry.

Slide 3 Verdun and the Somme as a problem of integration

01:51–02:47 / 56 seconds

The contribution on Verdun and the Somme supplies a historical example. More than a century after the battles, specialists examine military history, archaeology, landforms, unexploded munitions, soils and environmental risks. The paper argues that expanding knowledge of these fragments does not necessarily reconstruct the complete process. Material consequences can cross boundaries between

disciplines and between historical periods. Post-war burial, relocation, clearance and afforestation can become part of the explanation. This is an argument about the architecture of inquiry. We need to know which records describe the same place, which transformations connect them and where the evidence for those connections remains missing. A new laboratory should make that integration a responsibility with identifiable work behind it. Simply assembling a consortium of respected names does not establish who will reconstruct the relationships.

Slide 4 The Gordienko citation error

02:47–03:44 / 57 seconds

The earlier presentation examined O. A. Gordienko's Impact of War on Soils. Its opening global estimate gives 121,406 square kilometres as territory affected by wars. Reference fifty-nine leads to a Military Times article about the land portfolio of the United States military. That source reports nearly thirty million acres across forty-five countries and eight United States territories. Converting thirty million acres produces approximately the published square-kilometre figure. The quantities match, but the objects differ. A military property portfolio cannot establish the global extent of war-affected soils. The claim nevertheless appeared in Eurasian Soil Science and circulated through the publisher's platform. This is an elementary failure of verification. It demonstrates that institutional standing can accompany an unsupported claim. Its organizational lesson is precise: every consequential statement needs an inspectable relationship to its source.

Slide 5 Permanent capacity and temporary projects

03:44–04:41 / 57 seconds

Our model separates the permanent institutional layer from the temporary project. The laboratory retains a substantive mission, methods and organizational memory. Each project specifies a question, participants, budget, deliverables and responsibilities. Its team can change completely when a different problem requires different expertise. This separation addresses a recurrent weakness of project work: useful knowledge can become inaccessible when personnel leave or funding ends. Continuity requires more than keeping a final publication. A later team needs the source records, the data structure, the methodological decisions and the conditions under which reuse remains possible. The laboratory provides a continuing location for those responsibilities. A project provides the operational means of carrying out defined work. The published framework specifies the relationship. Its performance must be demonstrated through the records and outputs that actual projects leave behind.

Slide 6 One company and two distinct laboratories

04:41–05:36 / 55 seconds

The framework places both laboratories within New Euro Vision: exhibitions, marketing, research s.r.o., in the Czech Republic. The laboratories have institutional identities but no separate legal personality. The company supplies the continuing organizational basis for contracts, assets, accounting and rights in project outputs. Individual projects remain separately identifiable. Participation in one project does not automatically create participation in another. This arrangement allows us to assemble teams around a problem while retaining a stable institutional home for their work. The distinction also matters for responsibility. A laboratory name cannot conceal who directed a project, who produced a result or who controls the records required to examine it. The framework

describes how these responsibilities should be documented. The practical research programme must supply the evidence that the arrangement functions as intended.

Slide 7 The published laboratory charters

05:36–06:33 / 57 seconds

These are the two published charters. They define different substantive missions under the same framework. The Laboratory of Military Ecotones concentrates on territories transformed by war and military activity, with field assessment as a principal mode of work. The Laboratory of Information Systems concentrates on complex information and the conditions under which it remains interpretable and usable. Both documents provide for changing project teams and continuing institutional knowledge. Their publication makes the proposed organization inspectable. It does not demonstrate that every proposed capability already operates at full scale, or that a long-term programme has already succeeded. A charter records responsibilities against which work can be evaluated. Readers can compare those responsibilities with project records, methods and outputs. That comparison is a more useful test than the prestige associated with a laboratory name.

Slide 8 Laboratory of Military Ecotones

06:33–07:30 / 57 seconds

The field laboratory investigates what can actually be observed and measured in the affected territory. Its charter includes repeated presence, georeferenced records, sampling and cooperation with qualified analytical partners. Historical and documentary information helps formulate questions, but field evidence must test them. The charter also includes evaluation of remediation. A declared recovery objective is a question for examination rather than a scientific conclusion supplied in advance. We need baseline observations, comparison with subsequent conditions and an account of residual or secondary effects. The field team may include technicians, drivers, interpreters and operational specialists alongside researchers. These roles make observation possible and belong within the project design. Continuity depends on recording where a sample came from, what happened to it and which limitations affected the result. Otherwise later comparison can lose its evidentiary basis.

Slide 9 Laboratory of Information Systems

07:30–08:26 / 56 seconds

The information laboratory works on the life of information after acquisition. Records may come from different institutions, countries, languages and formats. A common structure can make them comparable, but normalization must preserve the original meaning. The charter requires source material to remain distinguishable from translations, corrected values and analytical products. Conflicting records can remain conflicting. Missing information remains missing. A database does not make an uncertain value certain. This is directly relevant to the Gordienko example. A number can survive processing while the category it measures disappears. Provenance control must therefore connect a value to its source and to its actual object. The laboratory’s purpose includes preservation, analysis and decision support. Its competence concerns the controlled relationship between information and its uses, extending beyond storage or the choice of a software platform.

Slide 10 A joint soil project

08:26–09:23 / 57 seconds

A joint project connects these competencies around one soil question. The information laboratory reconstructs territorial history and records what the sources can establish. The field laboratory uses that reconstruction to design observations and sampling. Results then return to the information system with locations, methods, dates and evidence status attached. Contradictions can change the next field question. An interpretation must identify which link rests on a measurement, which on a documentary record and which remains a hypothesis. The table describes a proposed working arrangement, not a completed field experiment. Its value depends on the quality of the exchanges. Sending an unstructured report from one team to another would leave the integration problem largely intact. A common project record must preserve the connections between the research question, the observation and the resulting interpretation.

Slide 11 Verification as organized work

09:23–10:18 / 55 seconds

The laboratory model makes verification a task that someone must perform. Source verification asks whether the cited record supports the specific claim, including its object, period, location and units. Data verification records what changed during extraction, translation or calculation. Methodological verification asks what the selected indicators can answer and what they leave unresolved. An elementary defect should have consequences for acceptance of the output. In the Gordienko case, the relevant question would have been whether reference fifty-nine actually measures global war-affected land. A completed reference list did not answer that question. Our proposed standard therefore connects acceptance to inspectable work. The framework provides for documented acceptance and correction obligations. Actual project arrangements must identify who conducts each check and how a detected failure changes the resulting publication or analytical product.

Slide 12 Expert–AI work within the laboratories

10:18–11:16 / 58 seconds

AI changes the practical cost of working with large and heterogeneous bodies of information. It can help extract records, compare texts, manage terminology, translate material and formulate hypotheses. The information charter includes these uses while retaining human responsibility for consequential interpretation. The important organizational question is how AI work enters the evidence record. A generated summary cannot silently replace its sources. A proposed connection cannot acquire the status of an observed relationship merely because it appears in fluent prose. The expert–AI inquiry must preserve the question, the evidence considered and the reasons for accepting or rejecting a formulation. These requirements apply when AI supports criticism as well as when it supports our own research. They give the laboratories a way to use new tools while keeping scientific responsibility attached to identifiable people and inspectable records.

Slide 13 Funding, independence and decision support

11:16–12:12 / 56 seconds

A new structure can reduce dependence on institutions that reserve authority for themselves while leaving substantive questions unanswered. It can also reproduce the same defects if its own interests

begin to determine the result. The charters address this directly. The field laboratory must distinguish a sponsor's objectives from the evidence. The information laboratory distinguishes source records, analysis, interpretation and the final decision. The framework provides separate project accounting and oversight. These are organizational commitments whose implementation requires examination. We should be able to connect expenditure to the work undertaken and to identify who accepted its outputs. A company structure provides no automatic scientific immunity. Our reason for creating laboratories is to organize research around the problem. Their legitimacy must depend on the knowledge they enable others to examine and continue.

Slide 14 Project closure and research continuity

12:12–13:07 / 55 seconds

Project closure is a critical point in the model. The operational team may dissolve, but relevant records and continuing obligations remain. The framework specifies a closure record covering deliverables, financial position, intellectual-property arrangements, data location and remaining responsibilities. The scientific handover also needs enough methodological context for a later team to understand the results. A retained spreadsheet without definitions or source links may be technically recoverable but scientifically difficult to reuse. A publication without the underlying records may leave a future researcher unable to explain a discrepancy. We therefore propose that each soil project identify the unresolved questions and the conditions for returning to them. Continuing observation still needs resources and authorized access. Institutional continuity makes resumption possible only when the necessary records and rights survive the project.

Slide 15 Sources and institutional commitments

13:07–14:00 / 53 seconds

The four supplied publications establish the institutional and analytical basis of this presentation. The military ecotones charter describes the field function. The information systems charter describes preservation, processing and analytical responsibility. The common framework specifies their organizational relationship and project governance. The Verdun and Somme contribution explains why accumulated fragments can remain insufficient for understanding a long material process. The infrastructure paper states the overall model, and the soil protocol gives it a research object. These sources have different statuses. Charters establish intended responsibilities. A conceptual paper develops an interpretation. Neither replaces project evidence. The next test is whether the laboratory arrangement produces records and methods that make a difficult environmental question more tractable and allow another team to examine how the conclusions were reached.

Slide 16 Continuity around the research object

14:00–15:00 / 60 seconds

Our conclusion is organizational. If we study soil after war as a developing configuration, the research infrastructure must preserve relationships that a short project can easily lose. The two laboratories provide a proposed division of responsibility: one for investigation of the affected territory, the other for the continuity and interpretation of complex information. Projects assemble the expertise needed for particular tasks. The permanent framework retains the basis for further work. We have no reason to treat prestige as a substitute for verification, and no reason to exempt our own structure from the same examination. The Gordienko case illustrates the cost of allowing authority to outrun evidence.

The constructive response is to make the question, the sources and the operations traceable. A project ends. The soil continues to change. The next investigation must be able to continue the cognitive work.

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Laboratory of Military Ecotones. War Affected Soils and the Imitation of Knowledge: A Critical Case Study of Evidence Omission and Scholarly Certification. Supplied case study accompanying the Gordienko presentation.

Illustration credits

Slide 7 reproduces the first pages of the published Laboratory of Military Ecotones Charter and Laboratory of Information Systems Charter, version 1.0, without alteration. The QR code on slide 16 links to the infrastructure paper, article 69.