Digitization of Material Written in Three Scripts and Three Languages: A Croatian Example of Cross-Institutional Collaboration in DH

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INTRODUCTION

Zadar is a small town situated at the middle of Croatian part of east Adriatic coast. Its convenient geopolitical position, as well as its indented coast contributed to its imposition as an important cultural and political center of Dalmatia throughout the rich history of Croatia. Its university tradition is centuries-old and begins with ecclesiastical education first mentioned in 10th century. In 2002, the University of Zadar was founded and a base of contemporary University is faculty of Philosophy, Teaching College, as well as Dominican university.

Due to its geographical position on the crossroads of Western and Eastern Europe, Croatian had a significant role in European history and culture, with a strong influences of Latin as well as Byzantine cultures. The corpus of Croatian Mediaeval literature is therefore written on three scripts – Glagolitic, Latin and Bosnian variant of Cyrillic scripts, called *bosanica*, and in three languages – Church Slavonic, Croatian redaction of the Church Slavonic language and Latin (Hercigonja, 1999, 2009). Although Glagolitic script was in use in several other countries, it is only in Croatia that it took angular form, used also for the first Croatian printed books, as early as in 1483. The most important Mediaeval written heritage in Croatia is written on Glagolitic and Latin scripts, and an important part of that corpus is nowadays part of collections of heritage institutions in Zadar.

In accordance with current interdisciplinary trends in cataloguing, research and communication of cultural heritage in digital age, the interdisciplinary scientific project *Digitization, bibliographic description and research of texts written on Glagolitic, Croatian Cyrillic and Latin scripts until the end of 19th century in Zadar and Šibenik area* is being carried out at the University of Zadar in co-operation with Vestigia Manuscript Research Centre of University of Graz, Austria. The goals of the project are: (1) **digitization** of old and rare books written on Glagolitic, Croatian Cyrillic and Latin scripts, primarily manuscripts (2) **Machine readable cataloguing** based on existing printed catalogues, **making of inventory lists, registration and inclusion** of Croatian manuscript and early print, primarily Glagolitic, collections in Croatian and European portals of written heritage. This goal includes the research in the field of information sciences, by focusing on research of standardization of bibliographic description of manuscripts and early prints and their digitization, and in the fields of digital humanities and humanities user needs. In order to achieve this goal, the project connects also to national project *Production, publishing and maintaining national cataloguing rules: 2014-2016.* This goal became the major goal, as research in semantic web, linked open data and other standards of publication of data, as well as research data are

conducted here. FRBR-LRM, CIDOC-CRM and other conceptual models, as well as machine-readable formats are being mapped and researched together with standards for description of manuscripts in different communities, in order to achieve appropriate metadata scheme for the description of manuscripts coming from different institutions. (Varniene-Janssen, Juškys, 2013) (3) **Gathering scientists** from various scientific fields, especially humanities, interested in research of Croatian written heritage in digital environment, to enable their research of written heritage, to research their needs and to create proper conditions for their research, to digitize the material of their interest, as well as to implement and develop tools for manuscript research in digital environment (tools for transliteration and transcription, visual tagging, etc.) (Holm, Jarrick, Scott, 20015) Some tools are designed specially for palaeographic research of Glagolitic material and will be tested on the project (visual tagging of digitized pictures of Glagolitic and Cyrillic manuscripts) as well as tools for visualization of research data on manuscripts and collections (Essert, et al.); (4) **communication of the heritage** is an important part of a project, respectively presenting heritage in a contemporary creative and innovative manner to various groups of users, using information technology, web portal, virtual exhibitions, presentations, mapping locations on touristic and other geographic maps as well as in the wider touristic offer. In this goal, inclusion of public is planned, particularly of associations of citizens interested in Glagolitic heritage, the most important segment of Croatian written heritage, following the EU recommendations connected with open science, citizen engagement and citizen researchers in the age of digital culture. As the project supports educational activities at university, it involves students in each project phase and enables conditions for laboratory and field education. In order to achieve those goals, several working groups are formed and workflow with indicated activities and methodology for the activities of each group are designed, and will be presented in this presentation, together with the assumptions for cross-institutional cooperation in the field of digital humanities will be listed on the example of Zadar University and main research goals and expected results will be presented.

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