

## **Virtual Representation of Written Cultural Heritage: Heterogeneous Data – Uniform User Interface**

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The present paper is based on the experience of the Czech National Library concerning digitization and creation of the digital library Manuscriptorium. Its fundamental concept is virtual reality that diverges from the natural and objective ones as well. Another fundamental concept is representation that is not just a simple reflection of reality but its conceptual interpretation. This conception of the reality and representation is completely different from that traditional one and it arises from the requirements of the new information and/or knowledge society in terms of history and cultural heritage. While creating simple and consecutively complex digital document, there is substantial need of standardization because standardization is the necessary condition for the use of information and communication technologies and consequently for the automatic processing of huge amount of data. On the other hand standardization does not mean using standards in a homogenous way. Cultural heritage has not only various forms in itself but it is used for different approaches and manifold interpretations as well. Also various standards must exist for usage at various levels of representation and processing. Thus, the main requirement for creating digital library is the heterogeneity of standards. The usage of heterogeneous standards only enables creating complex digital document that is an integrated interpretation of an original historical document or collection from various points of view. As so as the information and communication technologies enable creation of the net environment they also enable connection between individual resources of documents and that way integration of more resources together. Thus, there is need of communication standards that allow a transformation of documents form one resource to another. The necessary condition for any transfer of data between the resources is standard for common exchange format. Heterogeneous data standards, communication protocols and common exchange formats allow creating uniform user interface and consequently integrating entire virtual environment for the representation of historical documents and cultural heritage. Of course, uniform user interface means one access point to multiplicity of resources. On the other hand there can be also a multiplicity of such access point that means every access point may pose other point of view concerning the same content. It is heterogeneity of a higher level. Virtual environment is, because of its heterogeneity, a field for cultural, intercultural and transcultural studies as well as for interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. It is clear that it generates push on

paradigm shift. Thus, there are two fundamental issues at present: to enrich the electronic content and to develop conceptual framework. It is the task for the nearest future.