digital humanities - digital libraries: visions, challenges, and deliverables

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some basic thoughts on ...

... digital humanities: visions and ambitions
... digital libraries: visions and ambitions

... digital libraries: challenges
... digital humanities: challenges

... dividing the tasks efficiently: deliverables

... the role of a funder: the DFG as an example
digital humanities: visions and ambitions

definition (Wikipedia):
“DH are an area of research, teaching, and creation concerned with the intersection of computing and the disciplines of the humanities.”

the new “paradigm”:
• breaking down the limitations of traditional disciplines
• old questions - new methodologies, new answers
• new questions
• new ways of working, new career paths
• new opportunities for people & society
digital libraries: visions and ambitions
digital libraries: visions and ambitions

Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek:
“to offer everyone unrestricted access to Germany’s cultural and scientific heritage, that is, access to millions of books, archived items, images, sculptures, pieces of music …”

Europeana:
“Explore millions of items from a range of Europe’s leading galleries, libraries, archives and museums. Books and manuscripts, photos ..., television ..., ... maps, ... recordings, they’re all here. No need to travel the continent ...”
digital libraries: visions and ambitions

Cambridge University Library:
“We want to make our collections accessible to anyone, anywhere in the world with an internet connection and a thirst for knowledge”

Max Planck Digital Library
“... a broad portfolio of services in the fields of information provision, publication support and research data management.”
digital humanities: challenges

is there one “DH” approach? (new “discipline” vs. pragmatism)
what about common or shared demands?
what is really new?
should it be “different” (from humanities as such)?

“practical” issues:
what about the expertise, education and training?
what about communication (across disciplines)?
what about the infrastructure?
digital humanities: challenges

“digital” archaeology as an example

it’s not new
it’s not about texts, only
it’s about methodology (models of subject matter preparing it for analytical approaches)
it’s about mentalities

it’s reality, necessity & it’s chaotic - is there something wrong about this?
digital libraries: challenges

transformation problems
- books -> books on screen -> text as “data”
- local holdings -> the web
- traditional cataloguing -> index based discovery systems

practical and technical problems:
- what to start with? whom to join up with?
- today’s standards are tomorrow’s limitations?
- am I allowed to? (legal & financial problems, that is ...)
digital libraries: challenges

crucial implementation issues:

strategies for

- international “collection” management & coordination
- international access management
- handling intellectual property rights & privacy issues
- solutions for long term preservation

(let’s forget about the funding for a moment ...)

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dividing the tasks efficiently: deliverables

libraries
• catalogues as complete bibliographies
• direct access to resources
• publications as data (it’s not about books …)
• get in touch with the DH community!
dividing the tasks efficiently: deliverables

“DH” community:
[are there deliverables?]

• exchange about common grounds, shared demands
• defining standard and/or minimal requirements for resources and services
• get in touch with the libraries!
how to get there? more quickly?

it’s not a job for individuals, so focus on common grounds & go for simple solutions and not for sophistication

texts as an example:
library services | humanities research demands
interface: basic encoding standards & metadata
certificate for data quality as standard for services (libraries) AND for publishing data (researchers)

More sophisticated services should be tailored according to special - if not individual - needs
how to get there? more quickly?

intensify pragmatic **dialogue** on this interface

similar scenario’s for:
- searching engines
- Publishing tools and environments
- other data types?
the role of a funder: the DFG as an example

existing funding programmes on
• purchasing licenses on a national level
• coordinated collection & access management
• digitisation and cataloguing
• tools & procedures (publishing, all technical issues)
• open access publication funds
the role of a funder: the DFG as an example

“taking digital transformation to the next level”
(position paper 2012)

• coordinated system of information infrastructures
• free and comprehensive access
• appropriate legal, technical and financial framework
• interests of researchers!
• not only providing information, reuse!
• beyond national borders!
the role of a funder: the DFG as an example

targeted approach vs. “bottom up”
• should we continue to fund licenses?
• should we continue to extensively fund image digitisation?
• should we push more towards a union catalogue?
• should we invest in access management projects
• should we have more international calls?
• should we primarily invest in dialogue on interfaces?
thanks for your attention.
questions?

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