

Digital Curation and Digital Cultural Memory

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Abstract. The last two decades have witnessed an ever increasing penetration of digital media initially in the management and, subsequently, in the study of culture. From collections management, object documentation, domain knowledge representation and reasoning, to supporting the creative synthesis and re-interpretation of data in the framework of digital productions, significant progress has been achieved in the development of relevant knowledge and software tools. Developing a standard ontology for the cultural domain stands out as the most prominent such development.

As a consequence of this progress, digital repositories are created that aim at serving as digital cultural memories, while a process of convergence has started among the different kinds of memory institutions, i.e., museums, archives, and libraries, in what concerns their information functions. The success of digital cultural memories will be decided against rivals with centuries-long tradition. The advantages offered by technology, mass storage, copying, and the ease of searching and quantitative analysis, will not suffice unless reliability, long-term preservation, and the ability to re-use, re-combine and re-interpret digital content are ensured. To this end digital curation is exercised.

In this talk we will examine the development of digital cultural memories using digital curation. More specifically, we will discuss issues of knowledge representation and reasoning, we will present some examples of interesting research and development efforts, and will refer to certain current trends.