FROM MANUSCRIPT TO METADATA: ADVANCING DIGITIZING WORKFLOWS IN SERBIAN LITERARY RESEARCH

Abstract

The Institute for Literature and Art has undergone a pivotal transformation in digitizing Serbian literary research workflows, transitioning from manuscript-centric methodologies to metadata-driven paradigms. Digitization brought about twofold discussion: the one primarily concerned with technological issues and the one dealing with thematic challenges that digital visibility enforces (Bode, 2018). Since the 1970s, the Institute for Literature and Art researchers have been nurturing approaches that nowadays can be labeled as avant-garde and non-canonical. Research practice says that exploring minority cultures and women's contributions to the cultural capital as literary translators, editors, and authors constitutes a tradition of significant longevity. Digital repositories, which could be centered around this criterion, enable and facilitate a comprehensive integration of previous and emerging trends and cultural and literary studies shifts (Longley & Bode, 2014).

A comparative examination of two so-far repositories within the Institute's purview unveils distinct efficacy differentials and their consequential impact on scholarly visibility and citation metrics.

The initial repository, founded on the Islandora platform in 2019, grappled with inherent deficiencies detrimental to scientific documentation depositing. At the time, the absence of experienced practice in adhering to metadata standards and a permissive approach to non-Latin scriptural entries within the Islandora platform compromised the repository's discoverability, particularly on scholarly indexing behemoths like Google Scholar.

The transition to the EPrints platform in 2021 heralded a seismic advancement in the Institute's scholarly landscape, unequivocally corroborating the necessity of tailored platforms for managing scientific documentation. Replete with meticulously crafted features, including citation tracking, metadata standardization, peer review workflows, and download statistics, EPrints emerged as the quintessential repository solution. The salubrious effects of this transition are manifest in the palpable amplification of scholarly visibility and citation metrics (Simpson & Hey, 2005). Works hosted on EPrints, adorned with comprehensible metadata descriptors, manifestly accentuate their presence on Google Scholar, EBSCO, and Scopus, warranting prominent indexing and augmented citation accrual. This workflow transition heightened visibility confers

manifold advantages upon authors, increasing their scholarly influence while elevating the institution's academic prestige within the scholarly community.

These developments within the Institute for Literature and Art portend a seminal evolution in scholarly workflows within the Serbian literary domain. Could we ponder whether adopting EPrints as the repository of choice highlights the transformative power of digital archives platforms in enhancing scholarly visibility and dissemination effectiveness? Moreover, could this catalyze an epistemic renewal within Serbian literary research?

Digitizing seminal monographs, articles, and collections of papers that belong to the corpus of minority voices in the cultural capital plays a vital role in epistemic revitalization. This vision and a project proposal consist of seven platforms, each belonging to specific departments (as research units) at the Institute for Literature and Art. Digitized texts should be followed by annotations that govern and accompany advanced searches with limited keywords. We want to explore how searches based upon narrow keywords may contribute to further identification and expansion of the target groups beyond academia (curation specialists, human rights activists, feminist groups), thus contributing to the popularization of research results.

References

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