READ

Recognition and Enrichment of Archival Documents

D2.12
Workshops

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READ
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Executive Summary

Workshops are a key means of disseminating information about the READ project and expanding the Transkribus user community. Over the past year, we have continued to deliver workshops and conference presentations about READ and Transkribus in various cities to audiences of archivists, scholars, students and computer scientists. Altogether about 60 workshops, presentations and events with a focus on READ/Transkribus were managed by the READ team. We also organised the first Transkribus User Conference, which took place in Vienna on 2-3 November 2017.

1. Workshops

1.1. Format

Transkribus workshops are small, interactive sessions, comprising fewer than 20 people and lasting 2-3 hours. Workshops are usually led by the Dissemination Working Group, which contains representatives from ABP, NAF, StAZH, UCL and UIBK.

During these workshops, we explain the purpose of READ/Transkribus project technology and its enormous potential to make the transcription and searching of historical documents more efficient. Workshop leaders provide examples of digitised collections that have already been processed automatically to make it clear that Transkribus can work with documents of varying dates, languages and layouts. We then teach participants how to use the main features of Transkribus. Participants work with the platform on their laptops, experimenting with both test pages and their own documents.

For a more detailed summary of the format of a Transkribus workshop see *D2.11 Workshops*.

1.2. Transkribus workshops delivered by READ project members

During 2017, READ project members have delivered a total of 25 workshops. We have again surpassed the targets set in KPI-I11 and KPI-I12.

Archivists, librarians and (digital) humanities researchers make up the main audience for these workshops. The following list divides the workshops into those that were delivered as stand-alone events and those that took place during international conferences.

Stand-alone workshops

- Transkribus workshop, National Archives of Finland, Finland, 23 February 2017.
- Transkribus workshop, University of Turku, Finland, 7 March 2017.
- Transkribus workshop, National Archives of Finland, Finland, 9 March 2017.
- Transkribus workshop, City Archive Bozen, Italy, 11 March 2017
- Transkribus workshop, National Archives of Finland, Finland, 23 March 2017.
- Transkribus workshop, State Library of Berlin, Germany, 21 March 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, University of Graz, Austria, 28 April 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, *Machine Reading the Archive* programme*, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, 25 April 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, University of Klagenfurt, Austria, 22 May 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, part of Hack day at State Archives of Zürich, Switzerland, 9 June 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, University of Haifa, Israel, 12-13 June 2017.

- Transkribus workshop for The Genealogical Society of Finland, National Archives of Finland , Finland, 21 June 2017

- Transkribus workshop, University of Oslo, Norway, 17 August 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, University of Zürich, Switzerland, 29 August 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, University of Basle Library, Switzerland, 1 September 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, King's College London, United Kingdom, 8 September 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, State Archives of St. Gallen, Switzerland, 10 October 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, University of Salzburg, Austria, 9 November 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, Munch Museum, Norway, 13-14 November 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, State Archive Linz, Austria, 23 November 2017.

- Transkribus workshop, Säkylä High School, Finland, 30 November 2017.

Workshops at international conferences

- *Digital Humanities in German-Speaking Countries,* University of Berne, Switzerland, 13-18 February 2017.

- *Digital Humanities in the Nordic Countries,* University of Gothenburg, Sweden, 14-16 March 2017.

- *DATeCH 2017,* University of Göttingen, Germany, 31 May-2 June 2017.

- *International Medieval Congress,* University of Leeds, United Kingdom, 3-6 July 2017.

- *Digital Humanities 2017,* McGill University and University of Montreal, Canada, 8-11 August 2017.

- *Monasteries in the Digital Humanities,* Kraków-Tyniec Benedictine Abbey, Poland, 15 September 2017.

- *Transkribus User Conference 2017,* Technical University of Vienna, Austria, 2-3 November 2017.

- *Data First!? The 4th Digital Humanities Austria Conference,* University of Innsbruck, Austria, 4-6 December 2017

1.3.   Transkribus presentations delivered by READ project members

In addition to active demonstrations in workshops, we have also presented Transkribus in more formal presentations. We have given 39 such presentations during 2017. These presentations take place as both stand-alone events and as part of conferences and workshops.

The technical partners in the project have also presented their research at various conferences during 2017. This section focuses on presentations relating to the Transkribus research infrastructure.

UIBK helped to organise and also presented at two major digital humanities conferences (*DATeCH 2017* and *Data First!? The 4th Digital Humanities Austria Conference*). READ project partners attended the *International Medieval Congress,* the biggest European conference for medieval historians, to show how Transkribus might be used to process medieval documents. We also made contact with scholars outside Europe with our workshop at *Digital Humanities 2017,* the world's biggest digital humanities conference which took place in Canada.

Stand-alone presentations

- Presentation for e-manuscripta, Zürich, Switzerland, 24 January 2017.

- Presentation for e-codices, Fribourg, Switzerland, 2 February 2017.

- Presentation for delegation of National Archives of Australia, National Archives of Finland, Finland, 27 February 2017.

- Presentation at Brunel Institute, United Kingdom, 27 March 2017.

- Presentation at Turku Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Finland, 11 April 2017.

- Presentation at University of Split, Croatia, 23 March 2017.

- Presentation for the delegation of Tatarstan and Bulgarian Islamic Academy, National Archives of Finland, Finland, 10 May 2017.

- Transkribus webinar, University of Göttingen, 12 June 2017.

- Transkribus presentation, Europeana transkribathon, Berlin, Germany 20-21 June 2017.

- Presentation at University of Innsbruck, Austria, 23 June 2017.

- Presentation at École Nationale des Chartres, France, 23-24 June 2017.

- Presentation at University of Eastern Finland, 13 October 2017.

- Presentation at National Museum of Finland, Finland, 16 November 2017.

- Webinar presentation for members of IMPACT and Open Preservation Foundation, 14 December 2017.

- Presentation at Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, United Kingdom, 14 December 2017.

Presentations at conferences, workshops and other events

- *<philtag* n="14"/>, University of Würzburg, Germany, 22-23 March 2017

- *Family 2017,* conference organised by The Genealogical Society of Finland, Finland, 19 March 2017.

- *Digital Editing and Analysing – Digital Humanities between Research and Teaching,* Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany, 4-5 April 2017.

- *Digital Scholarly Editions and Modern Greek Studies,* workshop organised by DiXiT, National Library of Greece, Greece, 24-28 April 2017.

- *Time and Modality,* workshop organised by the Prior Project, Skagen, Denmark, 29 May-1 June 2017.

- *Interoperability of Digital Objects and Metadata,* workshop at University of Basel Library, Switzerland, 16 June 2017.

- *British Academy Soirée,* London, United Kingdom, 20 June 2017.

- *Digital History Summer School,* University of Lausanne, Switzerland, 20-26 June 2017.

- *Southwest German Archives Day*, Bretten, Germany, 22-23 June 2017.

- *Big Data and Medieval Studies: the Present and Future of Medieval Text Archives,* Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, 27-28 June 2017.

- *International Medieval Congress,* University of Leeds, United Kingdom, 3-6 July 2017.

- *Digital Humanities Cologne,* workshop at Cologne Centre for eHumanities, Germany, 13 July 2017.

- *Editionsportale,* workshop at Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena, Germany, 3-4 August 2017.

- *Deutscher Orientalistentag,* University of Jena, 22 September 2017.

- *DIGIMET 2017,* Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany, 25-26 September 2017.

- *German Archives Day*, Wolfsburg, Germany, 27-30 September 2017.

- *Researchers' Night*, Athens Cultural Centre Hellenic Cosmos, Greece, 29 September 2017.

- *Digital History Autumn School*, University of Zürich, Switzerland, 29 September-1 October 2017.

- *Editing and Text Criticism in the Digital Age,* University of Zürich, Switzerland, 6 October 2017.

- *Turku Book Fair*, Turku, Finland, 6-8 October 2017.

- *Le Crowdsourcing: pour partager, enrichir et publier des sources patrimoniales,* University of Angers, France, 18-20 October 2017.

- *Helsinki Centre for Digital Humanities Summit*, Helsinki Centre for Digital Humanities, Finland, 18 October 2017

- *Conference of Historical Research*, Finland, 21 October 2017.

- *Bentham Hackathon*, UCL, United Kingdom, 27-29 October 2017.

- *Transkribus User Conference 2017,* Technical University of Vienna, Austria, 2-3 November 2017.

- *German Archives Day*, Wolfsburg, Germany, 22. November 2017.

- *Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities,* Salford, United Kingdom, 27-29 November 2017.

- *Data First!? The 4th Digital Humanities Austria Conference,* University of Innsbruck, Austria, 4-6 December 2017.

1.4. Transkribus User Conference 2017

In addition to these events, the READ project organised the first Transkribus User Conference at the Technical University of Vienna on 2-3 November 2017. Slides of the conference presentations are available on the conference website and videos will soon be uploaded to the Transkribus YouTube channel.

Around 80 users came together in Vienna to share their experiences with Transkribus, hear about the latest advances in Automated Text Recognition and find out how documents they were interested in could be processed with machine learning.

The conference included 11 presentations delivered by users from different archives, universities and research groups who talked about how they had already been working with Transkribus on various kinds of documents and projects, from transcription and scholarly editing, to the recognition of non-Western scripts and printed texts. We heard about the research being conducted by READ project partners, including improved tools for segmenting documents into lines, powerful mechanisms for keyword searching huge digitized collections and the new Text2Image matching tool that allows users to use existing transcriptions as training data for text recognition. The conference programme contained a Transkribus workshop where we taught new users how to work with the platform, as well as an interactive feedback session where users could speak about their experience with Transkribus, suggest improvements to the workflow and ask questions about best practice. Finally, READ project partners demonstrated prototypes of new tools in the Transkribus research infrastructure, including the Transkribus My Collections web interface, the DocScan mobile app, the ScanTent device and the Transkribus Learn e-learning app.

The conference was an impressive collaboration between developers, computer scientists, humanities scholars and archivists. Transkribus users had the opportunity to see how Automated Text Recognition technology has been applied successfully to different collections and also get feedback on the feasibility of using this technology on the particular features of their documents. The conference appears to have boosted wider interest in Transkribus. Across November 2017, an average of 15 users registered for an account each day, compared to a usual registration rate of 10 users per day. The success of the event will be built upon with a second user conference planned for 2018.

1.5. Feedback

We ask workshop participants to fill in a simple survey (using Google Forms) at the end of our workshops. The responses to this survey help us to understand which features of

Transkribus are of particular interest or may require more detailed explanation. In the Dissemination Working Group we evaluate and refine the format of workshops and presentations.

1.6.   Promotion and Dissemination

We have created an 'Events' page on the READ website where people can access information about upcoming events and request that a Transkribus workshop or presentation take place at their institution. We also use the READ website 'News' page, the Transkribus Twitter account (1,356 followers as of December 2017) and scholarly mailing lists to promote our events.

We make sure that we use our platforms to report on events that have taken place, so that all interested parties can find out about the latest developments in the project. We tweet about events, write blog posts and post slides from presentations on the READ website. We also upload videos of presentations to a playlist on the Transkribus YouTube channel.

1.7.   Future workshops and events

Over the past two years, most of our events have taken place in the areas associated with members of the Dissemination Working Group: Austria, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the Nordic Countries. But as the READ project network expands, we are also increasingly being invited to organise events in new locations. We have started to extend our work beyond Europe with events in Israel and Canada. READ has also strengthened links with areas of Europe where fewer workshops and events have hitherto taken place, signing MOU agreements with partners in France, Spain and Serbia.

We will continue to deliver a large number of workshops and presentations, mainly in Europe, during the next reporting period. We also plan to organise regular live webinars, similar in format to a Transkribus workshop, so that people around the world can learn about the platform. The Dissemination Group will refine the format of the workshops so that new Transkribus features like Keyword Spotting and improved segmentation tools are showcased. We will also explore the possibility of associating some of our events with the European Commission's Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018.

As the business plan for Transkribus becomes more important in the final reporting period of the project, we need to consider how we can offer business services at book fairs and archives days. We will also increasingly need to present, promote and gain feedback on new tools being readied for use by the READ project, such as the Transkribus Learn e-learning app, the Transkribus My Collections web interface and the FamousHands volunteering platform. These more accessible platforms should give us opportunities to disseminate the project outputs in different venues such as undergraduate courses, schools, public libraries and local history groups. We are already planning to hold an event to publicise the ScanTent device on International Archives Day (9 June 2018).

2. Conclusion

The READ project has organised many workshops and presentations to publicise the project's technology. Workshops and presentations about Transkribus have been primarily aimed at

archivists and humanities researchers, who are currently the main audience of Transkribus. Workshops are vital to the dissemination of the READ project and hence to its long-term future; they allow us to communicate directly with users and make it clear that Transkribus has the power to process various kinds of handwritten and printed text. They also allow us to collect feedback and questions from new users, which ultimately feed into development work to improve the usability of the platform.