to model these relationships. Comparative analyses will develop an understanding of
the importance of issues as varied as trade, identity and migration. The GIS will be
made freely available to the general public. It will be possible to search the website to
generate maps that are tailored to the requirements of the individual. The presenta-
tion will provide an introduction as to how the website will work. As the project is
at an early stage of development, data that will be presented comes from two pilot GIS projects only: Jewish communities living on Crete and those mentioned in the
travels of Benjamin of Tudela (mid-12th century). The two studies have raised
methodological issues that are of significance to the use of computing for the study
of history generally, for example, database design and spatial analysis.

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LOOKING FOR A BYZANTINE NEEDLE IN THE WEB’S HAYSTACK: A NEW TOOL
FOR BYZANTINE STUDIES ON THE INTERNET (A PROJECT OF THE IBR/NHRF)

Information management on the World Wide Web has become extremely problem-
tical and one of the most discussed issues for the last few years. It is a fact that con-
tentional search engines alone are not sufficient to meet the needs of specific scientif-
ic searches. Researchers and institutions are constantly looking for ways of organizing
the data produced and managed on the Web, creating local or thematic criteria tools,
directories and networks, trying to ensure direct access to unlimited on-line data.

In many cases, however, the rapid developments on the Internet overpower any
good effort. The new IBR/NHRF project aims at creating a dynamic tool for the
management of Byzantine Studies data on the Web. It will produce a practical and
structured application rendering access to the on-line scientific material produced
worldwide on Byzantine history and culture easy. The project will be forged by the
collaboration between Byzantinists and IT specialists, developing an original meth-
odology which will answer specific needs for research in Byzantine Studies.

This paper intends to outline the current situation of Byzantine Studies on the
Internet and introduce the innovative approach adopted by the project. Solutions
to a number of the basic problems will be proposed, and new issues and perspectives
will be suggested taking into consideration multilingualism and diversity in Byzant-
ine Studies on the Web. The main goal of the project is to facilitate the work of
researchers on the World Wide Web and to assist the dissemination of scientific ma-
terial within the wider community, using a non-profit academic platform.

In sum, this new project of the IBR/NHRF intends to offer assistance to those
who work in the field of Byzantine Studies. Methodologically it is based on close
cooperation with IT specialists who will adequately be monitoring developments on
the Internet. This academic service will be constantly updated in order to reduce user
time and effort, and to ensure the most accurate search result possible.