Preface

$\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ is a software system which over the years has been developed at the Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte in Göttingen, with support from many different research institutions and individuals. The most recent example for such a cooperative effort is the translation of the system into English, which has been organised by a consortium of British institutions. The University of Southampton, Queen Mary and Westfield College of the University of London, the British Academy and the Royal Historical Society all contributed to it. The history of this project is described in detail in the introduction to the set of manuals, which forms volume B 12 of this series.

$\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ has been known widely for being the only substantial software system, which had a Latin command language. This decision was originally taken in 1977, considered a practical joke at the time. Now the command language has been translated into English as well as the documentation. A concordance of both command languages forms appendix 'A' of this manual. For at least three years the Latin commands will still be supported: they shall be gradually replaced by the English ones, more recent parts of the system being available only by English commands. For the time being, this manual is not only a translation of the German version, therefore, but the most complete description of the system available.

The translation of the system and its documentation into English coincides with some significant changes in the *internal* structure of the system. While to the general user $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ 5.1.1/6.1.1 seems to be almost identical to the older version 4, the most central structures of the system have been changed, to open new possibilities for the future. For the time being, this is more or less a potential of the system only, as great care has been taken, that no individual command which worked under version 4 has to be rewritten or rethought to be applied under version 5/6. Basically two major changes in the design philosophy have been made:

- $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ 5/6 has been prepared to handle individual components of databases more independently than so far. Besides being convenient for many applications, this is a precondition for the possibility to use some of the tools of $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ – like spelling standardisation or handling of medieval coinage – without preparing the data upon which these tools shall operate as a full fledged $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ data base.
- Furthermore, the system can be "configured" now, to create, without modifying the software, versions which look radically different and are adapted to casual users of prepared data bases.

Both capabilities are almost hidden from the users at the moment: while the configuration system is introduced briefly in appendix 'B' of this manual, the new logic of administering the "logical environment" of data bases is not described in the printed documentation at all. We expect these two areas to provide a rapidly increasing number of additional tools, which will be described in additional release-related material, which is easier to update than the printed documentation.

- Finally: the new internal structure of the databases reduces in some cases their size quite spectacularly.

The current version of $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ is referred to as version "5.1.1/6.1.1". Why two versions at the same time? Version 5.1.1 (popularly known as *low-tech* $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$) comprises the command language and the non-graphic menu interface. As such this version is machine independent and works independent of the platform on which $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$ is running. Version 6.1.1 (popularly known as *high-tech* $\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega$) is identical to version 5.1.1; restricted to a number of UNIX platforms at the moment, it provides, though, a first graphical user interface, which is so far predominantly geared to the handling and processing of image data.

The rather cumbersome designation was choosen, because version 5 will more or less be "frozen" at its current stage: it will continue to support the DOS operating system, no effort at any graphic components will be made, however. Version 6 will in the near future be ported to Windows NT; whether after that it is feasible to bring it from there to other Windows versions remains to be seen. All future development efforts will be dedicated to version 6.

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