The European Summer School in Digital Humanities, Leipzig 2014

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With the summer of 2015 coming soon, bringing the new session of renown Leipzig summer school in Digital Humanities[1], we find it convenient to review our own last year experience in that school, in order to encourage and stir some of the readers to consider applying themselves.

Summer school in digital humanities lasted from July 21th to August 1st of 2014 and was held in the premises of the Faculty of Philosophy of Leipzig University, just across the beautiful neo-renaissance building of the Bibliotheca Albertina, the University Library. The concept of the school was the following: every day, starting from the morning, participants attended three hours' workshops (break included) in the field of their preference. After that a lunch was scheduled. In the afternoon hours, with previous application for optional activities, participants had some room to present and give the gist of the projects they were currently involved in. The end of the day was reserved for invited lectures of experts from various fields, which approach the digital humanities from different positions and using various methods.

As for the workshops, which were encompassing smaller groups, we were informed that their offer was by far the most diversified in 2014. The range of following topics was available:

1. XML-TEI encoding, structuring and rendering
2. Query in Text Corpora
3. Comparing Corpora
4. Historical Text Corpora for the Humanities and Social Sciences. Digitization, Annotation, Quality Assurance and Analysis
5. Open Greek and Latin
6. Advanced Topics in Humanities Programming with Python
7. Stylometry: Computer-Assisted Analysis of Literary Texts
8. Editing in the Digital Age: Historical Texts and Documents
9. Space - Time - Object: Digital methods in archaeology
10. Spoken Language
11. Multimodal Corpora: How to build and how to understand them
12. Large Project Planning and Management

Each participant will naturally find more than one topic attractive, which will surely make his choice harder. By reason of that both working weeks' ends included one afternoon reserved for summaries of all workshops and presentation of

1 Culture & Techonology – The European Summer University in Digital Humanities (http://www.culingtec.uni-leipzig.de/ESU_C_T/node/393) organized by the University of Leipzig in cooperation with Clarine

the results in front of an entire conference body. This availed everyone of the opportunity to at list skim the surface of every program during the fifteen minutes' rounds. That is how we, although being enrolled for *Open Greek and Latin*, were able to hear the short presentation of the course *Stylometry*, and estimating that the content of that course might be interesting, and after informing about it at other participants, decided to plunge into that area.

Our course, *Open Greek and Latin*, was divided into several instructional units: during week one we were working with *EpiDoc*[3] and its application to epigraph fragments, later broadened our work to fragmentary remnants of historiography work, and finally on the last day of the week one we had a chance to get more acquainted with hyperlinks which enable connection of quotations with digital all-accessible issues on the Internet. Week two was devoted to Treebanks in Greek and Latin, with all functionalities of the new program *Perseids*, by word of mouth from one of the founders of this program himself, Giuseppe Celano[2]. These courses did not include a load of homework, instead of which we managed to acquire the subject matter swiftly and easily through individual tasks, by the means of suggestions and information provided directly by lecturers.

The afternoon sessions were also rich in the string of interesting lectures, which, although not necessarily being in all details connected to the area of direct interest of every single participant of the summer school, provided keen and deep insight into the terrain covered by the digital humanities so far, with diversified areas and purposes exploited by researchers. I would single out two of these lectures: one on digital humanities applied to visual arts, which offered systematical view of seeking the answer to the question of searching of pictures using key words, as if they were a text (for instance, there is a rather elaborate and relatively well controlled system of massive tagging of paintings on the sites of large museums of the world); as well as the more striking and intriguing one, in the level of how far the science advanced in enabling computers to read human mind. These are innovations which can be of the utmost use, for instance, in the process of gaining of independence in everyday activities in case of immobile patients who suffered a stroke or similar unfortunate incident. Also the police investigation may harvest many benefits from it – when it is to be ascertained whether a witness or a suspect speaks the truth. After this lesson a fruitful debate developed among the audience, mostly on the moral aspects of automatic mind reading and the limits which should be set concerning these issues.

Last but not the least, the social life of Leipzig was by no means neglected – organizers of the event, especially the chief organizer professor Elisabeth Burr, did everything to give the participants the chance to get to know each other better. On every second evening we had a dinner in one of the city's restaurants, which was an exquisite opportunity to have a chat in much more relaxed atmosphere compared to the one in the classroom or at the University. There were plenty of scheduled cultural events – among them a visit to the Museum of the Printing Arts, and to the beautiful building of the University Library. For Sunday, July 27th there was even a one day trip to the nearby lake in the schedule (although that segment was hindered to a certain point due to extremely unfavorable weather conditions).

All in all, taking part in the Leipzig Summer school of Digital Humanities was useful and interesting experience which I would gladly recommend to all those who are interested in widening their knowledge and gaining new contacts in that area.

2 EpiDoc: Epicgraphic Documents in TEI XML (http://sourceforge.net/p/epidoc/wiki/Home/)
3 Giuseppe G. A. Celano (http://uni-leipzig.academia.edu/GiuseppeGACelano)