

Digital Humanities Venice Fall School

2013 – 2015



Ca' Foscari
**Summer
School**

The **Digital Humanities Venice Fall School** is an opportunity offered by the research and educational platform **Digital Humanities Venice**, established in 2013 between Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland and Ca' Foscari University Venice (CFUV) in Italy. The Fall School selects a group of students from the fields of Humanities, Social Sciences, Computer Science and Engineering who participate in the historical, economic, artistic and geographical reconstruction of Venice over the past 1000 years.

PhD and Post-Doc students follow a week of seminars by leading academics, conduct fieldwork in Venice and present a concrete case study as a conclusion to the scientific adventure. With the guidance of experts in Humanities, Computer Science and Engineering, students will take on a new scientific frontier – the exploration and simulation of the history of one of the world's most fascinating cities, and will work towards concrete contributions to the **Venice Time Machine**.

The Venice Time Machine

A scientific project of ambitious proportions, the Venice Time Machine aims to reconstruct the past with unparalleled details. The project is based on a massive digitization program of the Venetian archives through partnerships with the Venetian State Archives and several Venetian libraries. Its goal is to build a multidimensional model of Venice and its evolution over time, combining information about the city's environmental evolution (climatology, pollution, hydrology), urban changes (architectural structure, archaeology), human factors (demography, mobility, trade networks) and culture (history of art) into a single interactive database.

DVH Blog <https://digitalvenice.wordpress.com/>

Professional Master's Programme in Digital Humanities <https://www.unive.it/pag/9180/>



1st Edition 2013: Enhancing Cultural Heritage

Franziska Frey - Harvard University, USA

Dr. Franziska Frey is the Malloy-Rabinowitz Preservation Librarian and Head of Preservation and Digital Imaging Services at Harvard University. Previously, she was a faculty member at the Center for Imaging Science in the College of Science and has been instrumental in moving RIT to the forefront of digital asset management and imaging. She was also a Faculty in the "Mellon Advanced Residency Program in Photograph Conservation" at George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography.

Frédéric Kaplan - Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Switzerland

Prof Frederic Kaplan holds the Digital Humanities Chair at Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and directs the EPFL Digital Humanities Lab. He conducts research projects combining archive digitisation, information modelling and museographic design.

Elena Pierazzo - King's College, London, UK

Elena Pierazzo is a Lecturer in Digital Humanities at King's College in London, UK. Her research is primarily concentrated around modern manuscripts, in particular modern draft manuscripts: how to edit them, which form of edition is more appropriate (diplomatic, critical, genetic) and how any of the above changes if the medium of publication is digital.

Jeffrey T. Schnapp - Harvard's Graduate School of Design, USA

Before moving to Harvard in 2011, Jeffrey T. Schnapp occupied the Pierotti Chair of Italian at Stanford University, where he founded the Stanford Humanities Lab in 1999. A cultural historian, designer and curator, his most recent books are *The Electric Information Age Book* (Princeton Architectural); *Modernitalia* (Peter Lang); and *Digital Humanities* (MIT), co-written with Anne Burdick, Johanna Drucker, Peter Lunenfeld and Todd Presner. He is director of metaLAB (at) Harvard and co-director of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society.

Roberto Scopigno - National Research Council of Italy (CNR)

Roberto Scopigno is a Research Director at CNR-ISTI (Pisa, Italy) and leads the Visual Computer Lab. He is currently engaged in several EC and national research projects concerned with multiresolution data modeling and rendering, 3D digitization/scanning, scientific visualization, geometry processing and applications to Cultural Heritage.

Simon Levis Sullam - Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy

Simon Levis Sullam teaches Modern History at the Department of Humanities of Ca' Foscari University of Venice. He has been an Andrew W. Mellon postdoctoral fellow and a visiting lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley, a Max Weber Fellow at the European University Institute in Fiesole, a Leverhulme Research Fellow at the University of Oxford. He specializes in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century European (especially Italian and French) history, Jewish history, Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

Sabine Süssstrunk - Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Switzerland

Sabine Süssstrunk has led the Images and Visual Representation Group (IVRG) in the School of Computer and Communication Sciences (IC) at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale in Lausanne (EPFL), Switzerland, since 1999. Her main research areas are in computational photography, color imaging, image quality metrics, image indexing, and archiving. She has consulted with several cultural institutions on image capture and image archiving.

Seminars

Monday to Thursday morning sessions will be taught by leading researchers in the field of Digital Humanities from around the world. These classes will focus on theoretical foundations for establishing goal-oriented projects in the field.

Fieldwork

Activities are planned for each afternoon where students put into practice the theory they learned in the morning sessions. The vast Archivio di Stato di Venezia -with over 70 kilometers of archival documents - the multi-ethnic Ghetto, and the immense museum of the Accademia are three planned trips which will be submersed in culture, brainstorming and elaborating solutions for the Venice Time Machine.

Virtual Research Proposals and Presentations

What would you do if you had six months in Venice for a digital humanities scholarship? Students will be divided into inter-disciplinary groups and choose a case study early in the week. The group will then work together and prepare a presentation of a virtual research proposal, given on Friday morning. A vote will be taken at the end to decide which group had the best research proposal. Possible research studies include OCR solutions for manuscripts, modeling maritime trade, or a social network of past Venetian families. In general, the projects will center on a historical and geographical reconstruction of Venice throughout the ages.

Case Studies and Presentation of Projects

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Interdisciplinary Content

One of the major challenges for the summer school, and for teaching Digital Humanities in general, is to provide content that speaks to students who have relatively disparate scientific backgrounds. Both Humanities and Computer Science/Engineering-minded students will follow the same seminars and will need to rely on each other to work through the themes and scientific challenges unique to their disciplines.

2nd Edition 2014

Cristiano Guarneri:

Between function and ceremonial: interior architectural planning in Italian Renaissance palaces
A private display for a public space: the Statuario Pubblico (1587-1596) - a Venetian approach to ancient sculpture exhibition.

Dorit Raines – Giovanni Colavizza – Andrea Mazzei – Isabella di Lenardo:

Venice: panorama of ongoing projects. The Venice Time Machine.

Gilian Crampton Smith:

The role of the interactive design

Lorenzo Calvelli:

Exploring lost museums and touching classical inscriptions: A multi-perspective approach to Venetian collections of antiquities

Fabio Pittarello:

Web 3D Representation and Cultural Heritage: from Annotations to Narrations

Bernard Aikema:

From private collections of art to public spaces

Shelley Mannion:

How to communicate for a large public: the role of the devices for the museums

Valeria Vitale:

Ontology for 3D visualization in Cultural Heritage

Valeria Vitale – Olivier Dalang – Isabella di Lenardo:

Historical sources, 3D representation and GIS system

Jan Rossler:

Venetian palaces, 1400-1700: architecture and typology

3rd Edition 2015: Venice 1740

The Veduta del Canal Grande e della Pescheria (Milano, Pinacoteca di Brera) by Francesco Guardi depicts a specific moment of the Rialto market everyday life. Thanks to Guardi, Canaletto and other great painters of 'vedute', we can still today picture Venice in the XVIII century, in that moment of progressive decline of its past splendor. The descriptive richness of the painting can now be matched with other highly dense sources of information, that can be extracted during the digitization the Venice Time Machine project, a ten year research program that aim at reconstructing how Venice was in the past, based on historical sources.

The Digital Humanities Fall School 2015, "Venice 1740", organized as a collaboration between the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), the Ca'Foscari university and the State Archives of Venice will focus on the exploration and reconstruction of Venice in the year 1740. Who lives in Venice at his moment, what was the government structure, what were the most common professions, how was the commercial activity distributed in the city, what were the principal causes of death, these are some of the questions that will be addressed by the Fall School students based on the historical documents and the various reconstruction that can built upon them.

This year, the students will work the tools and data of the Venice Time Machine project, analyzing the historical sources that are currently being digitized, annotating them and linking them with one another with new open source powerful software developed in the context of the project. In archival terms, 1740 is a key date, before the revolution introduced in 1808 by the Napoleonic cadaster. The urban structure of the ancient regime Venice can be reconstructed using various data series can be aligned with more recent one. For instance the Catastici, report of Venetian official controlling houses one by one following specific trajectories in the city, can be matched with other fiscal sources to recreate the precisely who was leaving where and what activities were conducted.

The indexes of the administrative and fiscal series serve as a base for extracting the "entities" of the information system of the Venice Time Machine, like persons, institutions, places and their relations. All the entities present in the document and recontextualized historically, are inserted in a Geographical Information System (GIS) capable of reconstructing the Venetian urban physiology in 1740 and producing thematic maps relevant for historical research covering the social, political, urban, economic and artistic dimensions of Venice.

Thanks to the supervision of the specialists of the Venice State of Archive in Venice, the students of the Fall School will be able to analyze and interpret the original documents, extract relevant data and construct historical interpretations following the lines that will emerge during their research. In

addition with the lab activities conducted in the archive, keynote speakers will introduce during the week specific focus on some historical aspect relevant for theme and new frontiers currently being investigated in the digital humanities field.



Organization

Isabella di Lenardo
Simon Levis Sullam
Dorit Raines

Speakers

Fabio Bortoluzzi; Giovanni Caniato; Isabella di Lenardo; Martina Frank; Frédéric Kaplan; Dorit Raines; Andrea Zannini.

Keynote Speaker

Sigurdur Gylfi Magnusson (University of Iceland, Reykjavik).

Coordination of the work in the archive

Giovanni Caniato; Fabio Bortoluzzi; Paola Benussi

Coordination of the work with the information system of the Venice Time Machine

Isabella di Lenardo; Giovanni Colavizza; Maud Erhmann