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TOWARDS THE MAELSTROM THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES IN ACTION

1ST CETAPS MEETING ON
DIGITAL HUMANITIES
DOSSIER

THEMATIC SECTION

EXTRA

Foreword:

The 1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities

LUCIANO MOREIRA

CETAPS Digital Lab Coordinator

On the 29 and 30 of October 2024, the CETAPS Digital Laboratory organized the *1st CETAPS Meeting on Digital Humanities* at the Department of Anglo-American Studies of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto (FLUP).¹ It is meaningful that we have met in an English Department, in a room furnished with books, given the historical relationship between English Departments and the Digital Humanities (Kirschenbaum 2012).

Over two days, representatives of both branches of CETAPS and representatives of two well-established digital humanities centres with complementary expertise shared experiences and discussed ideas for the future. From Venice, we received Federico Boschetti, and from Cologne Nils Geißler.² We had preliminary talks over the Internet to prepare for the meeting, but it was a true pleasure to meet both in person and get to know their human qualities alongside the technical and scientific ones.

On the morning of the first day, after the welcoming words of CETAPS coordinator Carlos Ceia, we had a short presentation of each centre, and we discussed the opportunities to collaborate in the short and long terms. To be sure, not all the ideas will be implemented, but we set up a shared horizon that may inspire our next steps.

In the afternoon, we started with the first of three workshops summarised in this dossier. Put together, they represent quite well the cycle of research in the Digital Humanities. Niels Geißler delivered a workshop entitled *An Approach to Linked Open Data: From Wikidata to Authority files data*. Openness is a core value of the Digital Humanities (Spiro 2012), one core value dear also to the CETAPS Digital Lab (Moreira *et al.* 2023; Moreira 2024), and critical to promoting Open Science.

However, as Drucker (2011) reminds us, data is not given but built from interpretative standpoints. Thus, early in the morning of October 30, the Digital Lab and the Junior Researchers

in Anglo-American Studies delivered the workshop “Looking from a distance: an approach to text analysis with R” based on the research paper that they would come to present at *2nd International Conference Data & Digital Humanities* in December (Moreira *et al.* 2024). The sensitive process of building data became visible, with a case study that echoes one of the concerns of the Digital Humanities with feminism (see Gold & Klein 2023).

The rest of the morning was spent on the workshop by Federico Boschetti, *Shared Visions: Marco Polo’s Travels from Medieval Collective Imagination to Contemporary Computer-assisted Imagery*. We completed the circle of research, moving from Digital Humanities to Public Humanities.

The meeting ended with a roundtable entitled *The Digital Humanities – A Common Ground for Experimentation* that sat together our special guests, Federico Boschetti and Nils Geißler, and CETAPS’ coordinator, Carlos CEIA, the CETAPS Digital Lab leader, Fátima Vieira, and the junior researcher Joana Pinela (representing JRAAS). With the moderation of Luciano Moreira and Raquel Souza, the roundtable looked back at the two-day meeting and discussed the digital humanities as a common ground for experimentation, which is to say, for taking risks.

This is the *possible* record of the meeting. Here, I cannot express the experience of seeing young and senior researchers with different backgrounds sitting and learning together, making the tent of digital humanities a reality.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wouldn't have been able to put up this “Big Tent”³ without the collaboration of the organising committee, the support of CETAPS direction, the Department of Anglo-American Studies, and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto. To all, thank you.

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END NOTES

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² Federico Boschetti holds a PhDs in Classical Philology (2005) and Brain and Cognitive Sciences (2010). He is a researcher at the CNR-Institute of Computational Linguistics, where he coordinates CoPhiLab and teaches Digital Humanities. He also collaborates with the CNR-ILC unit at Ca' Foscari University of Venice and co-leads the CLARIN Knowledge Centre for Digital and Public Humanities. Nils Geißler studied Information Processing and Philosophy in the BA at the University of Cologne (currently: MA Information Processing - with participation in the a.r.t.e.s. Research Master Programme) and has been working as a student/research assistant at CCEH in various projects since 2014 (mainly: Capitularia, Modelling between Digital and Humanities: Thinking in Practice, NFDI: Text+). Unfortunately, Mark Algee-Hewitt from the Stanford Literary Lab had to cancel his participation due to last-minute personal reasons.

³ If puzzled by the expression, see the Editorial to this thematic section to understand the image.

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