Thematic issue

Digital Classics and Ancient History

Coordinators Foreword

The forth issue of *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Digitalia* focuses on digital classics and ancient history. The initiative was rooted in the Digital Ancient History and Archaeology workshop hosted by the Babeş-Bolyai University in June 2018. Some of the papers published herewith were presented there, while others are later additions, which we believed best-fitted to the thematic of the volume in order to help us render a more thorough image of what *studia digitalia* in these fields mean today.

The published articles illustrate the diversity of what digital ancient history (with classics and archaeology included) represents and the variety of research branches that have developed during the last decade. The first study is representative for digital classics, P. Soldo and P. Šoštarić presenting the process of treebanking Lucian's work in Arethusa. Their endeavor has an important didactic component as well, as the treebanking was undertaken over one semester at a BA level course on Greek syntax, at the University of Zagreb. Remaining in the realm of written sources, but moving from literature to epigraphy, S. Gazzoli presents a 'work-in-progress', namely a relational database for inscriptions, being created as part of a project dealing with infant mortality in northern Italy. Dealing with Roman inscriptions as well, but focused on prosopographic data, is Romans 1by1, the database documented through the article of R. Varga, A. Pázsint and A. Lumezeanu. The next article, signed by V. Popovici and R. Varga, keeps us in the realm of historical prosopography, as the published investigation showcases examples from completely different historical periods, which point out the relevance of employing digital tools in historical researches. The last article, signed by a working group led by A. Timofan and C. Șuteu, is a project presentation dealing with the digitization of the archaeological heritage of the Museum of Alba Iulia. Their work is concentrated on 3D scanning and printing statues of divinities, to the benefit of scientists and the public alike.

As one can see, the problems dealt with in the current issue are very diverse in nature and so are the applied and described methodologies. The motivations of the authors are also multi-folded, ranging from building efficient didactic means, to building efficient research tools and from gaining historic knowledge by employing new techniques, to popularizing and preserving in digital format a given archaeological heritage. This great variety speaks for itself about the fruitfulness brought into the research, teaching and outreach of the ancient world by the employment of digital tools and methods.

As digital humanities are still sometimes regarded as the outsider – or at least the late-comer – of Humanities in general, our main stake is to highlight and underline their utility for the advancement of knowledge. Besides their obvious employment in the fields of teaching and 'speaking' for wider audiences, *digitalia* help us gain knowledge and uncover historical facts otherwise hidden – speaking of historical disciplines in particular. Because we live in a digital age, we must take advantage of its means, as scientists and as teachers. Thus, presenting and publishing convincing results of researches which imply digital components means encouraging the development of digital humanities and presenting them to the academic community as a worthwhile, necessary branch of our environment.

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