Coordinator's Foreword

The present issue of the *Studia UBB. Digitalia* is exclusively dedicated to articles written by students of the Babeș-Bolyai University. The idea of this special issue was born during a module of digital humanities we taught in the spring of 2020. The course was dedicated to students from different social sciences and humanities faculties from the university. Some of their final projects were so well accomplished and interesting, that we considered publishing them, and thus a special issue of our journal appeared as the best option. Given these prerequisites, we stress on the fact that all authors are at their first (major) editorial experience and while the peer-reviewers suggested many improvements for the texts – which were subsequently taken into account – their greenness might still be noticeable. Upon reflection, we did not consider this as a drawback, but rather a refreshing feature, pointing to the future of digital humanities research.

The contributions are original, methodologically correct and well-written, but their main accomplishment is the valid use of digital methods and tools, in order to highlight a research idea or to obtain an instrument potentially useful for a wider group. Through this issue, we try to support and encourage young researchers and help them further uncover the potential and beauty of employing digital techniques in humanist research. The texts go from the very practical, community-oriented, to academic endeavours building-up for future larger research.

The articles are diverse in nature, as they all revolve around historical research questions and problematics, but employ very different digital tools. Worth mentioning is that they all showcase samples, rather than work on exhaustive datasets, and have the potential to be further developed in the future. The first contribution deals with the pupils of the Greek Catholic High School in Beiuș in the 1876-1877 school year. The author's purpose is to ingest the information extracted from the school's yearbooks into an Airtable database and make certain geographical annotations and visualizations with QGIS. The database facilitates systematization and opens the possibilities for more profound analyses – especially given the fact that the author also encoded the occupations of the fathers in HISCO. The geographical annotation, made on a historical 19th C map, highlights the predominant area of provenience of the students. The conclusions are nicely drawn and show the potential of the undertaking. The second contribution aims at creating an interactive map comprising certain cultural personalities from the Sibiu area, from the modern era. As in the case of the previous study, the first step was creating an Airtable database. This time, as we are dealing with major personalities, the database doesn't offer all available information, but concentrates on external links and geographical information – the map being, in this

case, the final product. The map shows the important geographical locations from each personality's life course, with biographical data and additional information available. As this map basically tells a story, it was imagined as a touristic tool, destined for the wider public. The next text is a network analysis on the foreign travelers who left accounts on the Romanian provinces, during the 1831-1840 period. The research employs Nodegoat and visualizes, besides geographic itineraries on historical maps, networks on education and professions, purpose of journey, as well as visited principality. The analyses results are valuable, serving as an example on how a relatively simple management and visualization tool can be used in historical research. The final article tackles a contemporary historic event, namely the Romanian 1989 revolution and works on interviews of eye witnesses. As digital technique, it uses text encoding, following the TEI guidelines and employing Oxygen as a tool. XML encoding proves, of course, very effective in systematizing the information and making them searchable and transposable into an online environment. This type of enterprise is worthwhile when working on oral sources. The review enclosed in the issue presents an important piece of bibliography, namely a book on the employments of GIS, photogrammetry and geophysics in Romanian prehistoric archaeology. Besides the numerous useful and punctual information it contains, the book is valuable because is one of the few overviews of these tools written in Romanian.

Digital humanities, when applied scientifically, has two main stakes: one is advancing knowledge on a certain field and getting to scientific results otherwise 'invisible', and the second is creating tools and instruments which can be used by other scholars or by the general public. Both these ends were met in the case-studies published in this issue. The thematic of the selected papers is very diverse, but all presented projects are characterized by solid methodology, original research scheme and desire to give back to the community through open access resources.

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