Book Review

Digital Classics Outside the Echo-Chamber: Teaching, Knowledge Exchange & Public Engagement, Gabriel Bodard and Matteo Romanello, editors, London: Ubiquity Press, 2016. ISBN (Paperback) 978-1-909188-48-8 – Book Presentation

This volume reunites several papers from the Digital Classics, a relative narrow field of Digital Humanities. Some of the chapters were among papers presented at seminars in London and Berlin, however most of them were especially drafted for the present volume. The volume targets scholars in Classics, Archaeology and History, but the editors believe it will also be accessible to teachers and students, as well as non-academics with an interest in the topic.

The volume opens with a list of contributors to the volume, delineating their expertise in the topic of Digital Humanities, as well as their past and ongoing projects. It is followed by an Introduction signed by the two editors, who underline their concern to increase public awareness into this topic, thus making the volume available on open access (http://www.oapen.org/search?identifier=649985).

The book is divided in three sections as we can also see from the title: Teaching, Knowledge Exchange, and Public Engagement.

Section 1 Teaching presents the contribution of digital humanities in teaching and learning the classics. It has five chapters. In Chapter 1 "Learning by Doing: Learning to Implement the TEI Guidelines Through Digital Classics Publication" Stella Dee, Maryam Foradi and Filip Saric talk about the encoding of texts by XML following the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) Guidelines. They are also give a review of the current online resources available for learning TEI and the challenges that arise - like technical difficulties, the need for internalisation, localisation and vertical scripts.

In Chapter 2 "Open Education and Open Education Resources for the Teaching of Classics in the UK", Simon Mahony emphasizes the importance of open repositories for teaching classics with focus on the UK. He is discussing a few online repositories from UK and reveals the need of creating and sharing these resources on every level of teaching.

Gabriel Bodard and Simona Stoyanova discuss the training workshops for teaching EpiDoc in Chapter 3 "Epigraphers and Encoders: Strategies for Teaching and Learning Digital Epigraphy". They start with a history of the EpiDoc training with 2 major phases and continue with the structure and the content of these workshops. The

main target is represented by the classical epigraphists and papyrologist, with no skills in digital humanities. They discuss the new models that can be integrated in the future like XSLT, XPath and project management. In the second part they draw a parallel between teaching epigraphy and digital epigraphy, and emphasize that there are no differences and thus they can be taught together.

Chapter 4 "An open Tutorial for Beginning Ancient Greek" by Jeff Rydberg-Cox describes the developing of an online tutorial for learning Ancient Greek addressed to the Beginners. The author presents the main functions of the web page and how it tries to keep the users engaged by methods outside the traditional academic teaching. Based on Google Analytics the author shows how this online resource is useful for the students, but also for people outside the academia.

The last Chapter of Teaching section is "The Ancient Greek Dependancy Treebank: Linguistic Annotation in Teaching Environment" by Francesco Mambrini. In Treebank the syntactic structure of the sentence is represented in a tree form. Using an example from Sophocles' Women of Trachis the author shows the advantages of using the Treebank and how the students can learn how to read complex literary texts and the methods of interpretation.

The Section 2 Knowledge Exchange is centred on interdisciplinary studies and the challenges in making different disciplines work together. In Chapter 6 "Of Features and Models: A Reflexive Account of Interdisciplinarity across Image Processing, Papyrology, and Trauma Surgery" Segolene M. Tarte is discussing her work in image processing applied on different areas like Papyrology and Medicine. She talks about the need to have an understanding of the same word used in different areas. Words like 'feature' and 'model' which the author calls them T-Words - Trigger Terminology Twitch and identifying them by collaboration and communication can be a first step in a productive interdisciplinary project.

In Chapter 7 "Cultural Heritage Destruction: Experiments with Parchment and Multispectral Imaging" the authors Alberto Campagnolo, Alejandro Giacometti, Lindsay McDonald, Simon Mahony, Melissa Terras and Adam Gibson describe a project that involves multiple disciplines: medicine, conservation and image science. The project create an open dataset of multispectral images on intentional deteriorated parchments. The datasets can be used to create methods for the recovery of writing on damaged parchments. Using several forms of damage like mould or fire, the datasets provide a test for the effectiveness of the text recovery on manuscripts.

The Chapter 8 "Transparent, Multivocal, Cross-disciplinary: The Use of Linked Open Data and Community -developed RDF Ontology to Document end Enrich 3D Visualisation for Cultural Heritage" is the last of the Section. Valeria Vitale discusses a method to document 3D Visualisation in cultural heritage for academic acceptance. How 3D reconstruction can be documented in a transparent way? She is proposing

SCOTCH - Semantic Collaborative Ontology. The documented 3D objects are useful and have a great impact on sectors outside the academia like museums, restoration, urban planning.

The last Section Public Engagement contemplate on how the resources produced within academia environment can be made accessible to a larger public and how the public can be actively involved in the creation of these resources.

In Chapter 9 "The Perseids Platform: Scholarship for all! " Bridget Almas and Marie Claire Beaulieu discuss the collaborative platform Perseids where anybody can view, edit, annotate, translate ancient documents thus contributing to an open repository of data sets. The contribution is published after an editorial review maintaining this way the quality and standards of academic scholarship.

The Chapter 10 "Engine Greek: Ancient Lives" is a description of the MySql database with over 1.5 million of ancient Greek papyri. The author James Brusuelas discusses the challenges of engaging the public in the process of papyrology and finding a method (borrowed from DNA sequence) that process the transcription of the same document.

Finally in Chapter IX "Ancient Inscriptions between Citizens and Scholars: The Double Soul of the EAGLE Project" Silvia Orlandi is discussing the Europeana network of Ancient Greek and Latin Epigraphy and the efforts made to engage a broader public. While the main goal is to create a digital resource of epigraphy the EAGLE project developed two applications - a mobile app and a storytelling application for the public in order to promote ancient inscriptions to interested citizens.

This volume discusses a broad range of issues and is worth being read by those interested in digital classics and interdisciplinary themes. The authors of the chapters have many areas of expertise like archaeology, ancient languages and linguistics, epigraphy making this book an interesting collection for a larger public

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