



The Digital History Seminar for the Mediterranean and the Balkans

The Digital History Seminar for the Mediterranean and the Balkans is a joint initiative by the École française d'Athènes and the Research Centre for Modern History, Panteion University. It aims to bring together scholars working on any period of Mediterranean or Balkan history (including prehistory) using digital methods. It aspires to contribute to the formation of a community exchanging ideas and benefiting from the individual or collective experiences in addressing methodological challenges, novel approaches, or interdisciplinary solutions. Equally important is to communicate and share unresolved questions, mistakes, or epistemological limitations encountered while dealing with different kinds of datasets, research questions, or projects. The Seminar will function as a collaborative body that transcends the traditional archetype of the solitary scholar to promote a different way of historical work by pooling together ideas, methods, experiences, datasets, and resources. Thus, our primary aim is to help foster a community.

Central to the Seminar's problematique is to move beyond descriptive and face-value readings of the results of Digital Humanities methods. While this is common, if not expected, for new methodologies, the challenge is to (a) put emphasis on the research questions that these methods will answer, and (b) produce critical approaches that do not take for granted either the data or the analytical tools upon which these methods rely. Put briefly, we believe that employing Digital Humanities methods should not be limited to documentation, visualisation, or the online presentation of different kinds of data. Maps, charts, data visualisations, or word clouds carry little explanatory potential and cannot provide answers in themselves. More beneficial, if challenging, is to use these methods to understand and analytically employ these data to maximise their potential, particularly for heuristic purposes that will produce new and more elaborate questions.

The Seminar Series will start in the Winter Semester of 2024. Presenters will discuss their work, research questions, datasets, and challenges they have encountered. Seminars will not be limited to the customary presentation and Q&A session, but will also entail informal opportunities for extensive discussion and exchange that will help ferment a sense of community.

Interested parties at any career stage, working on a historical topic geographically located in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, and involving any of the three above-described methods from the perspective of a range of disciplines including, but not limited to, History, Archaeology, Classics, Geography, Philology/Comparative Literature, Sociology, or Political Science, are invited to send an abstract by **1 September 2024** to seminardigitalhistory@gmail.com. Please include your CV and a short statement of half to

one page, where you discuss your research, the specific digital tools they are interested in, and any previous engagement. While desirable, previous experience with digital methods is not a prerequisite. In those cases, participants may discuss their dataset and the questions they would like to pose. Graduate students, doctoral candidates, or early career scholars are particularly encouraged to be part of the Seminar. The organizers will contact interested parties by **15 September** to discuss possible dates for their presentations. Because of the emphasis we lay on in-person interactions, events will take place **in-person** at the École française d'Athènes. We encourage, however, those residing outside of Athens to contact us and we will discuss alternative possibilities for engagement.

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