



Science Meeting – Scientific Report

Proposal Title:

Digital Cultural Empowerment

Application Reference N°: 5503

Summary

Workshop at the DH 2014, Lausanne 8th of July 2014

<http://dh2014.files.wordpress.com/2014/04/dh-2014-workshop-022.pdf>

Facilitator(s):

Fredrik Palm, research and development coordinator, HUMlab, Umeå University

Orla Murphy, School of English at University College Cork

Shawn Day, Lecturer in Digital Humanities, University College Cork

Nicolas Thély, Professor in Digital Humanities at University of Rennes 2

Digital Humanities acts as an agent of digital cultural empowerment. Critical awareness of used methods and tools in Digital Humanities can bridge the gaps between the range of humanities corpora and the actual digital practices used to understand, analyse, and share them.

NeDiMAH is about bridging these gaps, and work groups on Space and Time, and on Information Visualisation, have successfully worked together across disciplines to consider these tools and methods and to define critical design principles both for research itself and also for creating and using digital tools for different aspects of the research process.

The focus of the workshop was on visualisation as the representation of knowledge in a multiplicity of new, engaging and challenging approaches across humanities disciplines.

The 13 participants took part of inspiring talks and collaborative exercises (in 3 groups) where the following questions were answered:

Data capturing:

How is data collected?

Data modelling /data selections / data quality:

How do we ensure consistency and high quality?

Representation/visualisation /complexity vs “easy to read” :

What do you choose to represent?

Analysis:

What does your reading of visualization bring to you?

Purpose of visualization /Audiences:

How do we make different representations for different audiences?

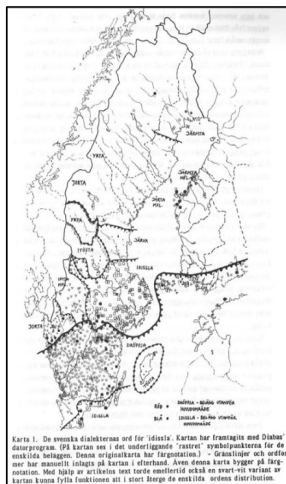
Workshop result and discussion, visualization, data and the research process

The facilitators shared 4 case studies as an inspiration for sharing, discussing and summarizing experiences.

The talks were related to different disciplines in the humanities where visualization is an import component in the research process.

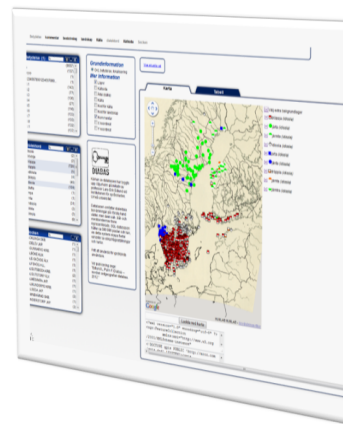
1. Data Mining the Nordic Folklore database - faceted browsing aligned to research questions.

Fredrik Palm shared the work made in collaboration with Lars-Erik Edlund, a professor in Scandinavian language. Palm emphasised the importance to relate to, and understand, the researcher’s language and mindset when providing new forms of interaction and visualization. Palm presented an online framework for data mining and creation of cartographic maps for a planned book publication.



1991

Lars-Erik Edlund
Umeå University,
Department of Language studies



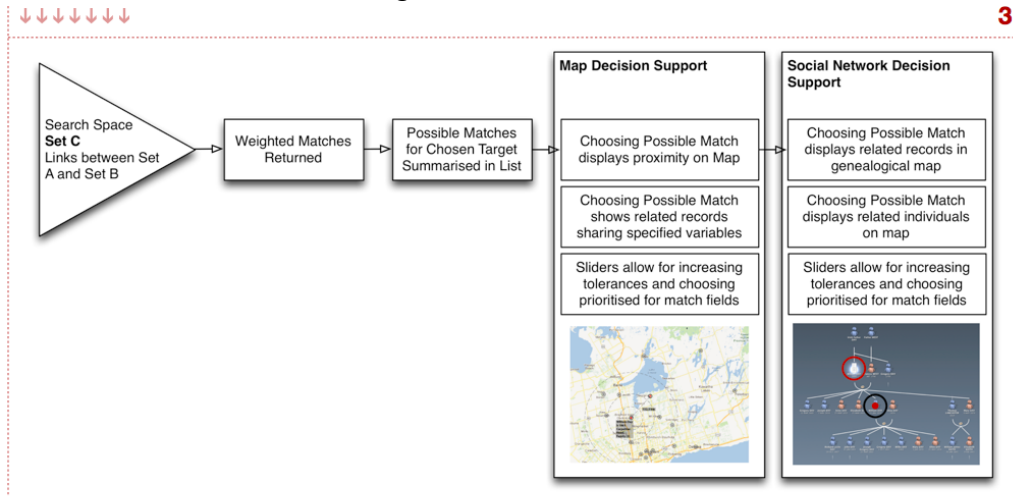
2013

Fredrik Palm
Umeå University, HUMlab

2. Visualisation of time/space

Shawn Day shared his perspective on modelling and representing time and space through the use of creative data visualisation. He provided an overview of emerging methods and tools in this context and specifically the role of data in the visualisation, emphasising a number of the challenges that have emerged recently surround geo-temporal aspects such as: capturing and

allowing for varying deliberate levels of ambiguity, data representation, control of quality and harmonisation of shared ontologies.



Visualisation Intervention

3. The text or the narrative in representation:

Orla Murphy

Murphy focused on the role of narrative in visualisation - exploring the responses to the NeDiMAH survey and their insistence that narrative is at the core of the visualisation of research.

From narrative C:

...the interdisciplinary nature of this area and the question of narrative coalesce in a concern for good, legible visualisations – transparency and documentation, moving towards 4D in terms of a multidimensional approach...

This theme was repeated throughout a variety of responses by a range of domain experts, from English, to History to Cultural Heritage and Archaeology.

From narrative B:

... narrative is primary but is too often sacrificed for the “wow” factor

and
Narrative ... is the most important thing in any type of representation.

4. Dataviz: Art or Representation of Knowledge

Nicolas Thely

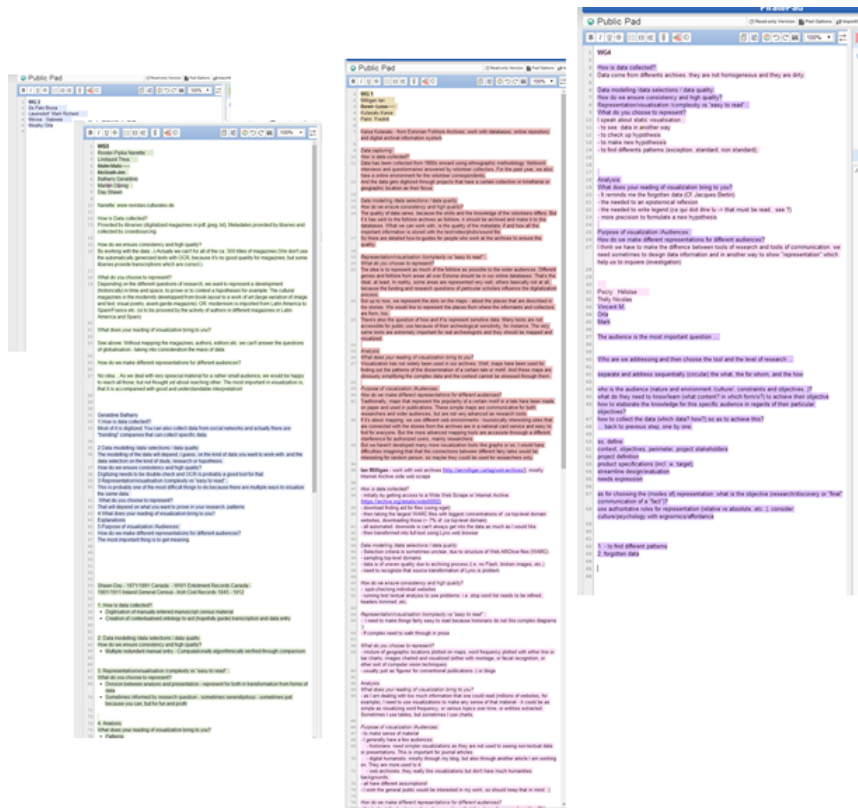
Prof Thely queried the aesthetic elements of visualisation - exploring the relative artistic merits in the creation of visualisation - the act of making a representation in a research context in order to make meaning, to express knowledge concretely. He considered how representation and the remediation of research can and should be visually interesting and meaningful - with engaged choices by participants. In other words that the aesthetic is a powerful agent in the act of meaning making and representation in a research context and those who are creating visualisations must be cognisant of this.

Collaborative exercises

The participants gathered in their pre-assigned groups after the introduction. Each participant answered the prepared questions in written form which later on was presented and discussed in the each group. There was an immense creativity and dynamic discussion among the participants.



Working groups and discussions



The participants used a collaborative online editing tool (Piratepad) to share their work. This helped to gather immediate contributions and results as well as ensuring that all participants were actively involved in co-creation of the workshop direction. Participants shared their experiences from a diverse set of projects including:

- Estonian Folklore Archives, work with databases, online repository and digital archival information system.
- Rockcarvings database of Nämforsen, Rockart.humlab.umu.se
- Web archives [http://ianmilligan.ca/tag/web-archives/], Internet Archive, www scrape
- Library service for digitized magazines www.revistas-culturales.de. Metadata provided by libraries and collected by crowdsourcing.
- Enlistment Records Canada -1901/1911 Ireland General Census - Irish Civil Records 1845 - 1912.
- Gateway to EU integration (historical) sources + analysis tool www.histogramm.eu (demo, expect bugs) Crowdsourced image identification + digitized texts, audio, video + Q&A tool inspired by stackoverflow.com.
- Analysis of new articles and web resources related to art exhibitions.

Impact of the workshop and future directions

The participants expressed appreciation for the prepared questions and the well organized discussions. It enabled creative discussions beyond what would have been possible in a panel discussion.

The workshop provided an opportunity for peer-to-peer learning and some expert guidance to the participants. Furthermore, the knowledge and reflections related to the prepared questions were shared and compiled. This gave a deeper understanding of the inter-dependency between the research processes and visualization, and created added value for the wide range of participants, from librarians, to cultural heritage managers, to social analysts, historians, and participants from the private sector.

One issue that arose with frequency was the difficulty for ESRs to have their digital work understood for tenure and promotion purposes. There was a sense internationally that the reliance on paper had a “flattening” effect on the potential for visualisation as a methodology to be more widely accepted. There was a sense that innovative methodologies push disciplines forward, and that being at the forefront of such activity is sometimes not enabled in traditional academic practice - particularly the use of paper, and 2D representation in publication. 3D and 4D engagement needs to be incorporated into research infrastructures, and peer reviewed, to foster exciting developments in representing, analysing and valorising innovative research in the humanities, in knowledge creation and in meaning making across the domains in the workshop.

Such an engaged, European wide effort will also empower future digital research methods and tools throughout the digital humanities and have a generative effect throughout humanities research as open data, open access and eResearch become acceptable modes of publication and scholarly engagement.

Workshop leaders continue to engage with the participants, and expect future collaboration to emerge in advancing a network for visualisation and for time and space. There are also plans to work with a publisher for further dissemination.

4) Annexes 4a Workshop programme

8.30 Arrangement of room (organizers)

9.00-9.15 Welcome and roundtable by all participants

Name, expectation and contributions

9.15 - 9.55 - Inspiring Experiences

1. Data Mining the Nordic Folklore database (Fredrik Palm)

2. Visualisation of time/space (Shawn Day)

3. Narrative and representation (Orla Murphy)

4. Dataviz: Art or Representation of knowledge (Nicolas Thely)

9.55- 10.00 Introduction of individual and group work.

Data capturing:

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10-11.15 Breakout with coffee break

<http://tinyurl.com/Digital-Cultural-Empowerment>

11.15-12.00 Reporting and conclusion

WG 1 report and QA (10 minutes)

WG 2 report and QA (10 minutes)

WG 3 report and QA (10 minutes)

WG 4 report and QA (10 minutes)

Overall conclusions

Organized lunch

Annex 4b full list of speakers and participants

- 1. Milligan Ian, University of Waterloo, Canada**
- 2. Kulasalu Kaisa, Estonian Folklore Archives, Tartu, Estonia**
- 3. Palm Fredrik , Umeå University, Sweden**
- 4. Lauersdorf Mark Richard, University of Kentucky College of Arts & Sciences, United States**
- 5. Mircea Gabriela , McMaster University, Canada**
- 6. Murphy Orla, University College Cork, Ireland**
- 7. Rissler-Pipka Nanette , University of Augsburg . Germany**
- 8. Geraldine Balharry, Universidad Finis Terrae, Santiago, Chile**
- 9. Marten During , Centre virtuel de la connaissance sur l'Europe (CVCE), Luxembourg**
- 10. Day Shawn , University College Cork, Ireland**
- 11. Pocry Héloïse ,Collection suisse de la danse, Lausanne, Switzerland**
- 12. Thély Nicolas University of Rennes II, France**
- 13. Vincent Maugis , Consultant UNESCO, Paris, France**