Mapping the Grand Tour: Digital Methods for Historical Data

Winter 2019

Classics 115/History /Italian 115/English

WAY-A-II, WAY-SI, and Core DH Minor Course

Instructors Giovanna Ceserani & Rachel Midura

Class Time & Location: Tues & Thurs, 10:30-11:50 AM, 200-102

Office Hours & Location: TBD

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Course Description:

Classical Italy attracted thousands of travelers throughout the 1700s. Referring to their journey as the “Grand Tour,” travelers pursued intellectual passions, promoted careers, and satisfied wanderlust. They wrote letters, published literary accounts of their journeys, sought visual depictions of the sites they visited, while also collecting ancient remains to fill museums and private houses. What can digital approaches tell us about who traveled, where and why? How can we transform innovative scholarship on eighteenth-century literary, visual and material culture of travel into original digital methods for the study of the past? We will read, discuss, and interpret travel accounts and collections, and experiment with parsing, curation and visualization of historical data. Final projects will form credited contributions to the Grand Tour Project, a cutting-edge digital humanities platform (see https://grandtour.stanford.edu). No prior digital humanities experience necessary.
Requirements/Assignments:

Grade Breakdown:
Attendance & Participation: 40%
Weekly Practicum Assignments: 20%
Midterm Assignment: 20%
Final Paper: 20%

1. Attendance & Participation
Attendance and active participation are a mandatory component of the class. Students are expected to have completed the reading and bring points to class in preparation for discussion. Absence due to illness or pre-arranged absence (such as athletic commitment) should be arranged with the instructors.

2. Required Texts & Reading
Please purchase the course reader from the Stanford Student Bookstore. All other readings will be made available via Canvas and held on reserve at Green Library.

3. Midterm Assignment Description
Students frame a historical research question based on the data available through the Grand Tour Explorer. Examples might include “Why did travelers choose Venice? What age were most travelers? How did travel to Florence change over time?” Students will select a set of 5-10 Grand Tour Explorer entries in order to provide a preliminary hypothesis for their question. Students can then summarize their findings as either a:

   A. Research Paper
   Students will locate primary sources related to the chosen entries, and write a 2-3 (4 credit) or 3-5 (5 credit) page paper based on their readings. The paper should be accompanied by a 5 minute prepared presentation to be given Thursday 2/17.

   B. Visualization & Analysis
   Students will use the data from the entries in order to produce a polished single or set of visualizations accompanied by a 2-3 (4 credit) or 3-5 (5 credit) page summary of their process and analysis of their findings. The visualization should be accompanied by a 5 minute prepared presentation to be given Thursday 2/17.

4. Final Paper Description
Students will work in groups or as individuals to design and carry out a digital humanities mini-project of their own design. Students are encouraged to draw inspiration from course readings, but should choose new primary source material—be this an original literary published traveled account, or art collection resulting from travels to Italy—and devise a research question expanding on course themes. Students will use a digital methodology to create 2-3 helpful visualizations to support their analysis and
conclusions. Final products should take the form of 2-3 page PDF combining visualization and explanatory text, with appropriate historical background to analyze and interpret the original literary or artistic sources. Polished assignments will become part of the digital release of the Grand Tour Explorer digital platform. Students will be asked to propose their final project by Week 7 (?) and will be given course time in remaining weeks to consult with course instructors and carry out group work.

**Note:** Students opting to take the class for 5 credits will also be asked to provide a 3-5 page short research paper providing historical context for the digital project from primary sources consulted in and outside of class. These papers must be completed individually.

Late Work: Late work may be submitted up to one week following the deadline. It may not be eligible for full credit.

Use of Electronics: Electronics are permitted in class, but should not be abused. The instructors reserve the right to revoke privileges.

There is no pre-requisite to take this course: discussions will benefit from a variety of academic backgrounds. Assigned reading consists of selections available in the Course Reader for this class (available from the Bookstore).

**Course Objectives**
This course aims to fulfill a number of learning goals and to allow you to practice various intellectual skills:

- Critically absorbing, processing and questioning information and arguments in the reading and discussing of current scholarship about the intersection of art, culture and history in eighteenth-century travel to Italy.
- Writing short but incisive discussion prompts.
- Understanding the motives and conditions of diverse groups associated with pre-modern travel and its associated genres of literary accounts and art study and collecting.
- Handling primary textual and visual sources, and building expertise in how to analyze them and use them in your arguments.
- Blending texts and data with critical consideration of the process and its product.
- Becoming conversant in the emerging field of digital humanities and its applications to the study of the human past.
- Engaging wider audiences in the exploration of historical research questions in visual and textual form.

**Course structure:**
Each class consists of assigned reading. Tuesdays will focus on the primary and secondary sources, while Thursday will involve a short reading in preparation for a related digital practicum (hands-on exercise). Beginning in the second week, students should formulate 2-3 well-developed questions (each not exceeding 50 words) based on the readings for discussion and e-mail them to the instructors by 10:00AM on Tuesdays at the latest. On Thursdays, students will be asked to prepare a brief digital humanities
exercise and e-mail it to the instructors by 5:00PM on Wednesday to demonstrate comprehension of the previous week as well as prepare for the current practicum.

**Reading:**
The importance of careful reading cannot be stressed enough: completing the reading assignments will allow you to profit from the lecture components of class and participate in the discussions. Exercise note-taking to organize and give meaning to the reading you will be engaging.

6. **Resources**

Honor Code: All students are responsible for fully understanding and complying with the Honor Code. If you have any questions about plagiarism and the Honor Code, you should speak directly with me and/or visit: [http://judicialaffairs.stanford.edu](http://judicialaffairs.stanford.edu)

Students with Documented Disabilities: Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is made.

Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (Phone: 650-723-1066, Web: [http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae](http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae)).

History Writing Specialist: A dedicated writing specialist, Clara S. Lewis, offers regular drop-in consulting hours to all history students and by appointment. Clara is available to consult on history assignments at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming a topic to revising a final draft. You can contact her directly at [cslewis@stanford.edu](mailto:cslewis@stanford.edu)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Tuesday Readings</th>
<th>Tuesday Class Content</th>
<th>Thursday Readings</th>
<th>Thursday Class Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1: Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Tues. 1/8</td>
<td>Introduction to class, syllabus review</td>
<td>Thurs. 1/10</td>
<td>Examples of DH projects, intro to GTE</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2: What was the Grand Tour?</strong></td>
<td>Tues. 1/15 J. Black, “Accommodations,” “Activities”, “Transport”, “Food and Drink” (2003, 68-118); pages from Anna Miller’s 1776 Letters from Italy, and from J. Boswell’s Grand Tour Journals (1765-1766)</td>
<td>Discussion of readings</td>
<td>Thurs. 1/17 Dr. M. E. Davis, “The Database as a Methodological Tool,” Digital Medievalist (August 10, 2017)</td>
<td>Intro to Sheets (Filters, Pivot &amp; Linked Tables, Quantitative Methods)</td>
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<td>Week 5: Where was the Grand Tour? <strong>Part two: Vicinities &amp; byways, out of the cities, on the road, off the map</strong></td>
<td>Tues. 2/5</td>
<td>Discussion of readings</td>
<td>Thurs. 2/7</td>
<td>Mapping Part 2 Spatial Networks, Distance &amp; Terrain Metrics</td>
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<td>Readings on the rediscovery and visual representations of Paestum; and pages from Warcupp’s 1660 <em>Italy</em>, and R. Colt Hoare’s 1815 <em>Recollections Abroad 1785-91</em></td>
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<td>R. White, “What is Spatial History?”, Spatial History Lab (2000, 1-6)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 6 Mid-Term Assignment</th>
<th>Tues. 2/12</th>
<th>Mid-Term Assignment Presentations</th>
<th>Thurs 2/14</th>
<th>Special Collections Visit at SUL</th>
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<th>Week 7: Why and how long for the Grand Tour? <strong>Professions &amp; durations of trips</strong></th>
<th>Tues. 2/19</th>
<th>Thurs. 2/21</th>
<th>GTE Revisited; Downloading and Cleaning /Manipulating Data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giovanna Ceserani &amp; als, “…The Grand Tour and the Architects” (2017, 425-50); pages from C. Burnett,’s 1771 <em>Present state of music ...Italy</em> and T. Jones, “Memoirs ...Italy” 1776-1782</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<th>Week 8: Framing and Pursuing a Research Question</th>
<th>Tues. 2/26</th>
<th>Thurs. 2/28</th>
<th>Research questions, elements of visualization layout &amp; design</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit from Writing Tutor Clara Lewis</td>
<td>Selections from E. Tufte, <em>The Visual Display of Quantitative Information</em>(2001)</td>
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<th>Week 9: Independent Work (In Class)</th>
<th>Tues. 3/5</th>
<th>In Class Group Work</th>
<th>Thurs. 3/7</th>
<th>Data cleaning &amp; Troubleshooting</th>
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<th>Week 10: Independent Work (In Class)</th>
<th>Tues. 3/12</th>
<th>In Class Group Work</th>
<th>Thurs 3/14</th>
<th>Class Presentations of Drafts, Conference-Style Peer Review</th>
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| Final Project Due Wed March 20 | | | | |